

Communication Best Practices

SPEAKING WITH SOMEONE EXPERIENCING MEMORY LOSS AND DEMENTIA

Conversation Tips

- Before starting a conversation take 5 deep breaths to center yourself
- Start the conversation and present topics of interest
- Listen carefully and avoid asking many questions
- Treat every statement as if it were true (even if it is not factually correct)
- Do your best to refrain from using the word “remember”
- Use loved ones names as often as possible (rather than “mom”, “your daughter”, “your brother”, etc.)
- Avoid all topics known to cause irritability or anger
- Avoid fact-checking, corrections, or contradictions, which may confuse someone with memory loss

Body Language

- Make frequent eye contact
- Stay present and focused on the conversation; avoid multi-tasking
- Smile – do your best to stay positive
- Move slowly and stay still during conversation
- Create a partnership by sitting side-by-side
- Sit at eye level as often as possible

About Me / My Life

1. Preferred name: _____
2. _____
3. _____

Favorite Things

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Things I dislike

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

