

DOS AND DON'TS FOR COMMUNICATION

Do not:

- ⊗ Argue, confront, correct
- ⊗ Give orders, make demands
- ⊗ Talk down to a person
- ⊗ Talk about a person in his or her presence
- ⊗ Ask questions that require too many facts
- ⊗ Try to explain or prepare too far in advance
- ⊗ Take negative comments personally
- ⊗ Be insincere by asking questions when you are not offering a choice
- ⊗ Give too many choices
- ⊗ Take anything for granted

Do:

- ☺ Listen carefully
- ☺ Help the person fill in the blanks
- ☺ Read facial expressions and body language and try to respond appropriately
- ☺ Give compliments
- ☺ Ask opinions
- ☺ Ask open-ended questions
- ☺ Give generous praise
- ☺ Use common sense
- ☺ Enjoy the person in every way possible
- ☺ Take the blame, apologize
- ☺ Be sincere
- ☺ Use the person's life story regularly
- ☺ Use positive language
- ☺ Rely on humor
- ☺ Keep language simple

THE BEST FRIENDS PHILOSOPHY OF COMMUNICATION

Remember the basics

- ♥ Volume
- ♥ Eye contact
- ♥ Slow and direct language

Make a good first impression

Check the environment

Treat the person as an adult

Maintain caregiving integrity

Respond to emotional needs

Nonverbal communication is important

Remember that behaviors communicate a message

Do not take the person too literally

Employ good timing

Use repetition

Screen out troubling message or news

Do not argue or confront

Speak using positive language

Employ humor

Do most of the work

IMPACT OF DEMENTIA ON LANGUAGE

Agnosia – the inability to interpret sensations and recognize familiar objects. The person has trouble knowing the meaning of what is seen, heard, smelled, touched, and tasted. He or she may not recognize familiar faces, may not recognize where he or she is, and may not recognize what belongs to him or her or others.

Anomia – the inability to find the right word, to name an object, or express an idea

Aphasia – Difficulty understanding and/or expressing language. Affects an individual's ability to follow instructions, participate in conversations, and express needs.

Apraxia – Difficulty translating thought into action. Someone with apraxia may agree to brush her teeth, but will be unable to organize and carry out the process.

Paraphrasia – syllables, words, and phrases become jumbled and mixed up. Speech can become meaningless sounds, although it may retain the tone and expression of normal language.

Perseveration – a persistent repetition of an activity, word, phrase, or movement such as tapping, wiping, or picking. People with dementia can “get stuck” on certain words and actions.

Word salad – the use of words that are mixed up or used together without meaningful content.