



Ten Ways to Effectively Communicate with Alzheimer's Residents

1. Speak to the individual in a clear, warm and pleasant manner.
2. The tone of your voice may have more impact than your message when communicating with someone with Alzheimer's Disease. Lower the pitch; a lowered pitch is more comforting and less threatening.
3. Speak slowly and avoid long, complex sentences.
4. Deliver only one instruction at a time. Wait until the first instruction is processed before delivering the next. A single task may need to be broken down into several steps.
5. Do not talk about the person in the presence of others as if they were not there. A person with Alzheimer's Disease many times understands and can be humiliated or embarrassed.
6. Lower your body to their level and look directly at the person when communicating. You may be able to read their eyes for signs of frustration, distress or anger.
7. Make use of comforting gestures: touching a hand or back, pointing to an object or handing an object to the resident.
8. Show the Alzheimer's resident a pleasant smile and show affection where appropriate.
9. Respond to the feeling content of the message from the Alzheimer's resident. Recognizing the resident's feelings and offering reassurance, even if you can't fix the problem, provides comfort.
10. Always treat the person with dignity and respect. Do not call older adults "Honey," "Pops," "Sweetie," etc. Ask them what they prefer to be called and follow their preference.