



How to Connect with the Person with Dementia

- Approach from the FRONT respecting personal space
- Move SLOWLY in a non-threatening manner
- Make EYE CONTACT
- Initiate the greeting and introduce yourself
- Move to the SIDE and OFFER YOUR HAND
- Wait for their response
- Make POSITIVE STATEMENTS: "Let's try..." or "Could you please help with..."

REMEMBER TO:

- Stay calm and be understanding
- Speak slowly using a low-pitched voice
- Be patient and flexible, go with the flow
- Step into their shoes to look for a reason for each behavior
- Ask questions using fill in the blanks
- Introduce yourself, "My name is xxx, and you are?"
- Offer simple choices instead of asking yes/no questions
- Respect personal space
- Don't argue or correct

When the person is in distress...

- Focus on their feelings
- Respond to the emotion, not to the action
- Ask the person to tell you more about it
- Move from *talking* to *doing* (go for a walk, get a cup of coffee)

ALWAYS...

- Greet the person before moving into action
- Explain what is happening but keep it simple
- Don't take it personally
- Break the task down into single, one-at-a-time steps
- Give the person time, don't rush

IT IS COMMON FOR THE PERSON WITH DEMENTIA TO...

- Say or do things that are inappropriate
- Not respond the way you expect
- Say things that don't make sense
- Use words that are close but wrong
- Have poor grooming habits or look slightly off
- Repeat themselves or not remember instructions
- Deny what you know is true
- State as true what you know is false
- Appear irritated, scared, or too personal

1-800-733-1476

Monday through Friday 8 a.m.-5 p.m.