

Communication Strategies for Care Partners

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- Use **clear** language, but convey **respect**; Don't "talk down" to them.
- **Tone matters**, so it's important to try to speak in a gentle, positive tone not just to the person living with dementia, but to others around them.
- **Eliminate distractions** to maximize attention
- Stay on **one topic at a time**
- Be **patient** and allow time to process
- **Encourage** and **invite participation** in the interaction
- **Validate** communication attempts and focus on communication rather than accuracy. Step into their reality.
- Provide **visual and verbal cues**: expressions, objects, pictures, symbols, colors, textures, sounds, written and spoken words
- Use **supportive statements** rather than quizzing.
"It looks like you enjoyed the sandwich you had for lunch!" rather than "What did you eat for lunch?"
- Consider giving **answer choices** in the question you ask.
"Do you want eggs or oatmeal for breakfast?" rather than "What do you want for breakfast?"
- Provide **gentle reminders** along with **visual cues** when transitioning into a new activity. Break complex activities down into **simple steps** with **clear goals**.
- Dementia is progressive, so needs may change and **flexibility** is key. Continue to get to know your person throughout this process.
- Give yourself **grace** and seek **support** from your community as you navigate this.