

Communication Tips for Dementia Caregivers

While the exact progression of the disease is different for each person, it is common for them to repeat stories or not be able to find the words they need to get their point across. Other communication issues may include disorganized speech, easily losing track of thoughts and speaking in tangents, inventing new words, speaking less or speaking in a native language.

Even if the person who is affected by dementia cannot properly express themselves, they can often still experience feelings and emotions. They may have trouble understanding others, but can often still respond. This makes communicating with someone who has the disease more complicated and can make some dementia caregivers feel anxious, irritated and helpless.

When communicating with a person affected by dementia, how you say something is often more important than what you say.

Dos and Don'ts for Communicating with Someone Affected By Dementia (Button 1)

- Don't be personally offended if the person who has dementia becomes paranoid or accusatory
- Do encourage reminiscing if it's enjoyable for your loved one
- Do ignore offensive language and try to redirect attention if the person with dementia begins using bad language
- Do keep it simple by asking one question or giving one direction at a time if your loved one does not remember how to perform activities of daily living
- Do speak in a normal tone of voice at a normal volume
- Don't stop trying
- Don't use negative statements
- Do use their first name to get their attention
- Do your best to eliminate any distractions such as TV or radio

Tips for Communicating with Someone Affected by Dementia (Button 2)

1. Avoid criticizing or correcting, and repeat what they say if something needs to be clarified.
2. Do not interrupt the person speaking.
3. Do not talk about your loved one like they are not in the room. Always assume he or she can understand what you are saying.
4. Focus on feelings rather than facts and be aware of body language and tone of voice.
5. Let them know it's okay if they have trouble finding their words.
6. Show respect in your speech by avoiding baby talk.

7. Stay calm even if the conversation becomes frustrating.

<https://www.alzheimers.net/9-8-14-dementia-communication-tips/>