

Tips to Communicating

What to say:

Speak face to face.

Use simple, exact words and phrases.

Speak slowly, calmly, and clearly.

Allow time for response.

If no response, repeat phrases.

If no response after a few tries, say it another simple way.

Use positive statements. Say what you want, not what you don't want.

Ask for one thing or one task at a time.

Speak respectfully. You are not addressing a child.

Listen to your tone of voice. Would you like to be addressed like this?

Avoid distractions, disruptions, and arguments.

Don't offer a choice when you have already decided.

Don't say anything if you cannot say any of the above.

What to do:

Get eye contact.

Move slowly and calmly.

Approach person from the front.

Watch your mood and body language. It's contagious!

Use gestures and physically guide the person, when it helps to get the message across.

Demonstrate what needs to be done. Act things out instead of giving instructions.

Use gentle touch and genuine smile whenever you can.

Watch and respond to the resident's body language.

Use signs, written words and pictures to assist where possible.

Try to be aware of the mood in the room; calm things down if you sense stress/chaos.

Avoid overwhelming or asking too much at a time.

Keep a list of favorite activities.

Affirm and validate feelings, then redirect.