

ON THE FLY REFERENCE GUIDE FOR THE HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL

*TIPS FOR WORKING WELL WITH
PEOPLE WITH MEMORY LOSS*

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The Leader in Alzheimer coaching™

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HOW A PERSON WITH DEMENTIA THINKS DIFFERENTLY...

Thinking is slower so understanding takes longer

Remembering is hard at first, then perhaps impossible

What is remembered, different from what you remember

Understanding explanations is hard

Time and sequence of events may be distorted

Social appropriateness may be lacking

Organizing and doing tasks in the right order is difficult, impaired

HOW A PERSON WITH DEMENTIA THINKS DIFFERENTLY...

It is harder to pay attention and concentrate on something
Memory for recent events is lost before memory for
events of the distant past

HOW YOU CAN HELP BY RELATING DIFFERENTLY

Say their name first

Turn off background noise

Keep eye contact

Speak slower and simpler

Avoid open ended questions

Apologize

Encourage participation

Do not correct

Treat them with respect

BASICS OF GOOD COMMUNICATION

Approach from the front

Speak slowly using simple and familiar words

Give encouragement and reassurance

Make positive suggestions

Avoid long explanations

Be aware of your communication style

Avoid confrontation, remain calm

Listen carefully

Avoid interrupting and arguing

CHARACTERISTICS OF AN ACTIVITY

**The purpose of an activity is
about the process, not the result**

Make it simple

Meaningful, personal, individualized

Realistic and understandable

Stress Free

Designed to create success

Energizing but not exhausting

ACTIVITIES, CONT.

Tap into past interests and skills

Playing cards

Cleaning

Arts & Crafts

Music

Exercise

Board Games

Work related history

Cooking

Housework

Just spending time
together

HANDLING EMOTIONS

Anxiety, confusion, disorientation

Home

Delusions

Hallucinations

Depression

Shadowing, rummaging, pacing

SUNDOWNING

Increased irritability, restlessness or agitation, typically towards evening.

Morning activities help spend energy

Rest after lunch

Provide companionship while person is pacing

Check lighting and noise levels

Create distractions, old photos help

Listening to music can help

Avoid bathing in the late afternoon

CHANGES IN SLEEP PATTERNS

Create an inviting sleep environment

Maintain regular schedule

Discourage staying in bed while awake

Establish a regular, familiar routine

Avoid caffeine, coffee, soft drinks

Limit fluid intake before bedtime

Avoid long daytime naps during the day

Use soft music for relaxation

Consider the environment

MORE ON SLEEP

What if they won't sleep?

Offer to read

Offer a magazine or snack

Do not require that they return to bed

Allowing freedom to roam might help
spend some energy

Keep track of sleep patterns for waking at
night

SAFETY TIPS

**People with a memory disorder
may not think with good judgment**

Driving

Getting lost in their own home

Depth perception is off

Aggression could spike when confused

UNDERSTANDING AGGRESSION IN DEMENTIA

**Understanding aggression as a behavior,
a response**

Frustration

Inability to communicate

Poor impulse control

Violation of personal space

Lack of understanding

Overstimulation

Boredom

Hearing/Vision Loss

Insecurity

**Misinterpretation of
surroundings**

SIGNS OF INCREASING AGITATION

Pacing

Perspiring

Restlessness

Loud voice

Pounding an object

Breathing fast

Paranoia

Clenched jaw or fist

Obscene language

Defensive movements

THERAPEUTIC FIBLETS

Fiblets help gain a person's trust, here's how we might encourage cooperation and lessen anxiety.

Use fiblets to

Encourage bathing or dressing

Encourage a day care visit or medical equipment

Encourage nutrition

Looking for a deceased family member

As a response when a member wants to go home