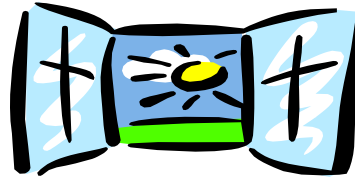


HEARING LOSS: THE INVISIBLE HANDICAP

TIPS FOR TALKING TO PEOPLE WHO ARE HARD OF HEARING



Gain attention. Face the hard of hearing person directly, and on the same level, whenever possible. Make eye contact when speaking to a person who is hard of hearing.



Be careful that the light is on your face, not behind you. People with hearing loss need to see you clearly to watch your lips and facial expressions to help them understand.



Speak normally, if anything a little slower. Don't exaggerate lip movements. Don't shout.



Get to the point. If you are not being understood, say the same thing in different words. If necessary, write it down.



Understand that people with hearing loss have more difficulty when they are tired and ill. Even with the best hearing aid, a person may have difficulty understanding speech.



Speech-Language Pathologists are trained to develop individualized communication strategies for people with hearing loss.



Avoid background noise. Turn off or turn down the TV or radio. Do not talk from another room. Close the door to a hallway and/or move away from air conditioners or other noise producing appliances.

8 Communication Techniques To Use With Patients Who Have Alzheimer's Disease



1. Identify Yourself
2. Use Eye Contact
3. Use a Calm Voice
4. Eliminate Background Noise
5. Use Short Sentences
6. Use One Step Commands
7. Ask Yes or No Questions
8. Use Word Cues
9. Contact a Speech-Language Pathologist to develop an individualized plan of care for communication.



**For more information call the
Alzheimer's Association at 1-800-272-3900.**

Source: A Common Sense Approach To Communication,
Karen Feldt, St. Paul Ramsey Medical Center, 1990.

HAVING A CONVERSATION WITH A MEMORY IMPAIRED PERSON

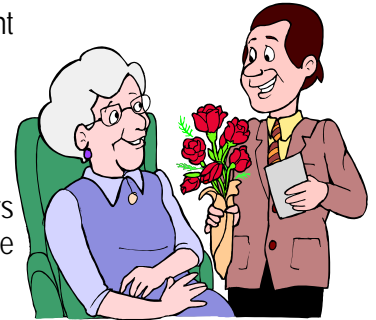
Your job in having conversation with your memory impaired friend or relative is to help them feel comfortable talking and to minimize their frustrations when they forget what they want to tell you.

You do this by:

1. Asking them to have a conversation with you.
2. Guiding the conversation onto specific topics and redirecting the conversation back to the topic when the person begins to ramble.
3. Reassuring them and helping out when they get stuck or can't find the word they want to use.
4. Smiling and acting interested in whatever they're talking about even if you're not quite sure what they are trying to say.
5. Thanking them for talking with you.

SUGGESTIONS FOR WORKING WITH PEOPLE WITH ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

1. In the early stages of the disease, help the person to remain as independent and active as possible.
2. Remind the person of your name, visitors and family names.
3. When reminding the person to attend to their own daily needs, caregivers must think in terms of the present (here and now). Do not rely on the person's use of past knowledge.
4. For some people, large print calendars and large clocks in their room may help keep him/her aware of time and place.

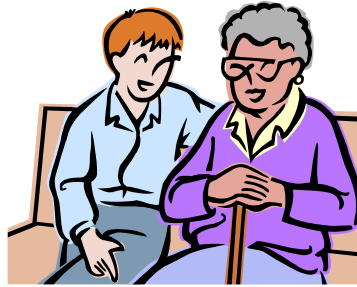


5. Exercise should be encouraged to help keep the body healthy and to help relieve feelings of anxiety.
6. Encourage activities or projects that call upon skills known long ago in order to provide the person with something meaningful to do.
7. Help the person to avoid stressful situations as much as possible. Provide a calm environment and minimum restriction of movement.
8. Offer positive alternatives when restrictions must be enforced.
9. Allow wandering within safe limits if possible. Use locks on doors and physical barriers if necessary to prevent the person from causing harm to himself/herself.
10. Keep instructions simple, one at a time, and use gestures.
11. Eye contact and touch will help to communicate a sense of caring. It is essential to establish trust. The person will retain a sense of being with people and being cared for.
12. Appeal to the senses rather than to thought patterns. Use brightly colored objects, mobiles, pictures, music, and words spoken in a calm manner. Taste and touch are essential too. For example, eating favorite foods, sitting outside on a nice day may make the person happy.



SOURCE: Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Association (ADRDA)
360 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 1104
Chicago, IL 60601

Communicating with A Person Who Has Aphasia



- Continue to treat the person as the mature adult he/she is.
- Regard him as an individual who can communicate even though he may not understand what you are saying. Don't bombard him with too much speech or too many people talking.
- Do not talk about the patient in his presence, even if he appears comatose, or if he has shown no comprehension of speech. Don't assume that, because he is not reacting, or because he can't speak, he does not understand.
- Remember the patient with aphasia gets cues from the environment, gestures, and facial expressions. The person's ability to grasp the meaning of what is said to him may be due to these situational cues, rather than understanding of the actual words.
- When speaking to him, stand on his uninvolved side so you will be within his visual field.
- Speak in a natural voice. Unless you know there is a hearing loss, don't assume that by you speaking more loudly, the patient will understand better.
- If the patient's "yes" and "no" responses are reliable, ask direct questions requiring these responses, rather than open-ended questions.
- If the person has little or no intelligible speech, play "20 questions" with words or gestures, depending upon his comprehension.
- If it is impossible to understand him, and "20 questions" has not been effective, then tactfully change the subject or suggest that he skip it for the moment and come back to it later. Availability of vocabulary is often very inconsistent.
- Don't get angry or scold the patient who can't communicate. The fact that he can speak in one situation does not mean he can do so in others.
- Speech-Language Pathologists are specialists trained to help patients with aphasia improve functional communication.
For more information contact _____.