

Communication: Verbal

You need to *know* your care receiver to communicate effectively. People will be at different levels so some of these may not apply.

1. Slow down

We are so used to speaking quickly. Record yourself and listen to how fast you speak.

2. One instruction at a time

Processing takes longer and more than 1 instruction will be forgotten.
See # 3 & 8

3. Be Specific

"Go there." "Sit by her." "Put that on your head." All of those can be misunderstood. Make sure you are as clear as possible.

4. Who Where What.

Begin with orienting information. "Good Morning Mr. Jones! I'm Karen and I am here to take you to therapy."

5. Don't argue

You won't win. Ever.

6. Repeat. And repeat it exactly the same.

If you are having trouble being understood. Look at # 8. And repeat what you said exactly the same way. The person is trying to remember and process what you said the first time. Don't change the words around to try and help them. It won't. If repetition does not work, try saying it in a new way.

7. If you ask questions - try to give 2 choices or a "yes/no" question.

"Bill, here's your sweaters, would you like to wear your blue seater or red sweater?"

When giving choices, put the choices at the end of the sentence. You may have to show the items.

8. Stay away from pronouns.

He. She. It. We need to be specific.

9. Avoid abstract words.

Use "Let's eat soup" instead of "Let's eat lunch".

10. Validate Feelings & Empathize

Be aware of the persons facial expression and the tone of their voice.
Let them know you understand.

11. Use their name

If you are not sure if you know someone - but they know and say your name, it is reassuring.

12. Be Patient

Sometimes it is very hard. You want to just do it yourself or finish the sentence. Give respect and dignity. Take a deep breath.

13. Think about the environment.

Is the TV blaring and 4 or 5 people talking in the background and your care receiver is not responding at all ? Be aware of distractions and new surroundings.

14. Praise. Praise. Praise.

Everyone wants and needs to know they are doing well.

15. Laugh

Universal way of communicating !

Communication: Verbal

Change the sentence to be more appropriate when communicating with persons who have Alzheimer's/dementia . Although everyone is an individual and can be at different levels - please make the sentences clearer for any level.

1. Do you want to go have lunch now ?
2. You can wear the red or blue sweater when we go outside.
3. Put your socks on and then your shoes and we can go do the activity.
4. Sit next to him in there.
5. I need you to stay by her for a while.