

# How to Talk to People with Alzheimers or Dementia



## Never...

## Instead...

Reason

Divert!

Shame

Distract!

Lecture

Reassure!

Say "Remember?"

Reminisce!

Say, "I told you..."

Repeat and Regroup!

Say, "You can't!"

Find Out What They Can Do!

Command or Demand

Ask and Model!

Condescend

Encourage and Praise!

Force

Reinforce!

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# 12 WAYS TO CREATE AN EMPOWERING DEMENTIA ENVIRONMENT



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- 1. DEVELOP PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITIES.** *Negative behaviors are often a result of boredom or frustration.*
- 2. SPEAK FACE TO FACE,** *no more than three feet away from the person. Being on her left side helps activate her social right brain.*
- 3. GAIN THE PERSON'S ATTENTION.** *Use few and common words. Wait for responses, because processing is slowed.*
- 4. MAKE CONSPICUOUS WHAT YOU WANT HIM TO NOTICE;** *camouflage what you wish to have him avoid.*
- 5. KEEP ITEMS IN PLAIN VIEW FOR POSITIVE RESPONSES TO A TASK.** *Procedural memory lasts the longest.*
- 6. DO NOT ARGUE;** *you will lose.*
- 7. VALIDATE THE EMOTION YOU HEAR.** *("You sound afraid.")*
- 8. DO NOT DISAGREE WITH HER SENSE OF REALITY;** *it is her only reality now. Enter her reality.*
- 9. ORIENT.** *("Bruce, it's Monday morning; time for breakfast.")*
- 10. SIMPLIFY EVERYTHING.** *Make it possible for her to DO things in small steps.*
- 11. FIND THE TRIGGER TO THE BEHAVIORS YOU WISH TO DECREASE.** *Negative behaviors are often due to fear and/or confusion.*
- 12. OFFER CHOICES** *(no more than two); it empowers.*



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