

FEBRUARY 2021

REDEEMED IN HOME CARE



Tips for Communicating with Your Loved One Who Has Alzheimer's or Dementia

BY REDEEMED IN HOME CARE

If someone you care about has Alzheimer's or dementia, you know that communication can be challenging. By understanding what has changed with their communication skills and how to approach them differently, we as caregivers can support them in the most kind and loving way possible.

A person with Alzheimer's may have problems with the following communication skills:

- Finding the right word or losing his/her train of thought while speaking
- Understanding the meaning of words
- Paying attention during long conversations
- Remembering the steps in common activities they've done thousands of times, such as getting dressed or cooking a meal
- Blocking out background noises from the radio, TV or secondary conversations
- Sensitivity to touch, tone and loudness of voices



To make communication easier, you can:

- Make eye contact and call this person by name.
- Be aware of the tone of your voice, your body language, and how you look at a person. If these appear to contribute to their distress, adjust your approach.
- Encourage two-way conversation for as long as possible.
- Use other methods besides speaking, such as gentle touch.
- If communication creates a problem, try a distraction.



To encourage them to communicate with you, you can:

- Show a warm, loving, matter-of-fact manner.
- Hold the person's hand while you talk.
- Be open to the person's concerns, even if he or she is hard to understand.
- Let him or her make some decisions and stay involved.
- Be patient with angry outbursts. Remember, it's the illness "talking."

To communicate effectively with a person who has Alzheimer's, you can:

- Offer simple, step-by-step instructions.
- Repeat instructions and allow more time for a response. Try not to interrupt.
- Don't talk about the person as if he or she isn't there.
- Don't talk to the person using "baby talk" or a "baby voice."
- In your communication, be direct, specific and positive.
- Say "Let's try it this way," instead of pointing out mistakes.
- Say "Please do this." Instead of "Don't do this."
- Say "Thanks for helping." Even if the end results aren't perfect.

At Redeemed In-Home Care, our caregivers are trained in these methods of effective, sensitive communication to reach individuals who have Alzheimer's or dementia. To start a conversation about our team coming alongside you to care for your loved one with Alzheimer's or dementia, reach out to us.

"This is the care I need as I am out of state. Piece of mind knowing that a company like Redeemed is being an advocate for my Mom until such time that I can be there for her means so much."

— DAY WILHELM

