

# **DUKE DEMENTIA FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM**

## **Caregiver Connections**

**An Educational Webinar Series With The Experts**

**The presentation will begin shortly.  
Thank you for your patience!**

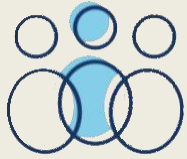
**[dukefamilysupport.org](http://dukefamilysupport.org)**

**919-660-7510**

# BRIDGING THE DEMENTIA COMMUNICATION GAP: TOOLS AND STRATEGIES



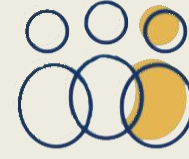
- TAP started in 2003
- Nonprofit Organization 501-c-3 committed to increasing Life Participation & reduce communication barriers.
- Values are HOPE, PURPOSE, DETERMINATION & ENGAGEMENT.
- Collaborative partner in the community.



**TAP** | TRIANGLE  
APHASIA  
PROJECT  
UNLIMITED



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UNLIMITED



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# OBJECTIVE

**Dementia symptoms vary, but it is common to experience changes in language. Maybe you've seen your loved one struggle with recalling or spelling words or reading comprehension, and wondered how you can help them. If so, tune into this webinar to learn how to improve language comprehension and expression and maintain dignity in communication.**

# OBJECTIVE

Dementia symptoms vary, but it is common to experience changes in language. Maybe you've **seen your loved one struggle** with recalling or spelling words or reading comprehension, and wondered **how you can help** them. If so, tune into this webinar to learn how to improve language comprehension and expression and **maintain dignity** in communication.

# COMMUNICATION ISSUES



A word cloud containing various terms related to communication and cognitive issues. The words are arranged in a non-uniform, overlapping manner. The colors of the words range from light beige to dark brown. The words include: memory, comprehension, Functioning, dysarthria, speaking, writing, apraxia, aphasia, executive, listening, processing, expression, cognition, and anomia (written vertically on the left side).

memory  
comprehension  
Functioning  
dysarthria speaking  
writing apraxia aphasia  
anomina executive listening  
processing  
expression  
cognition

# COMMUNICATION BARRIERS

- *“I don’t know what he wants!”*
- *“She gets frustrated with me because she thinks it’s coming out right.”*
- *“He looks to me, so I just fill it in.”*
- *“Our friends and family don’t even include her in the conversation anymore.”*
- *“He just repeats himself, it’s like a skipping record.”*

# BARRIERS = FRUSTRATION





# “THE STRUGGLE”

**Why?**

- **Uneven playing fields**
- **Unawareness**
- **Communication Pressure**
- **Untrained communicative partners**
- **Lack of Communicative Supports**

# THE ANSWER...OR AT LEAST THE IDEA

- Uneven playing fields
- Unawareness
- Communication Pressure
- Untrained communicative partners
- Lack of Communicative Supports
- Even them out!
- Admit the elephant in the room
- Environmental Modifications
- Train them (ALL of them)
- Identify barriers and provide supports

# COMMUNICATION TOOLS & STRATEGIES



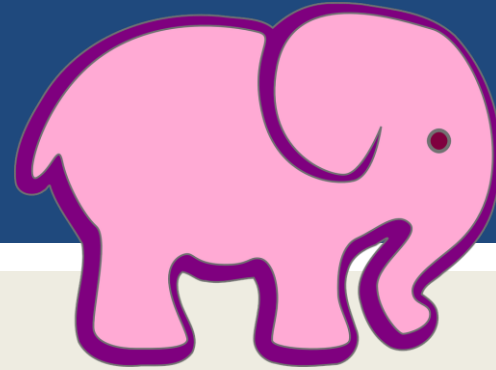
- ❖ It's a skill set you can learn
- ❖ Improve exchanges in both transactions and interactions!
- ❖ Maximize INPUT and OUTPUT!

# AN EVEN PLAYING FIELD



- **Acknowledge Competence and Assure Support.**
- **Utilize all communication modalities (multimodal support)**
- **Seek out resources and obtain training**

# AWARENESS



- Let family / friends know about the communication challenges.
- Use communication ID bracelet /card, etc.
- Become involved in programs to spread awareness.

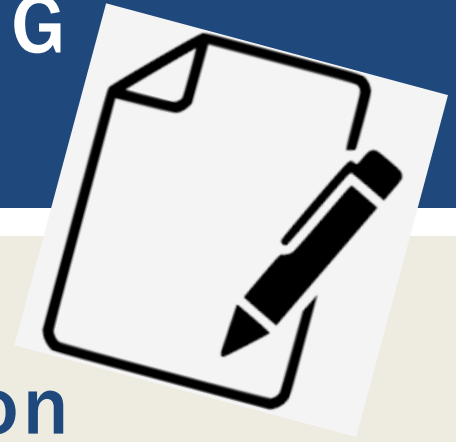
# ENVIRONMENTAL MODIFICATIONS




- Identify communication barriers  
*“What does he/she need help with?  
Where are the breakdowns?”*
- Reduce distractions
- Get visual and auditory attention

*Communication Breakdown  
Detective!*

# COMPRHENSION/UNDERSTANDING HINTS

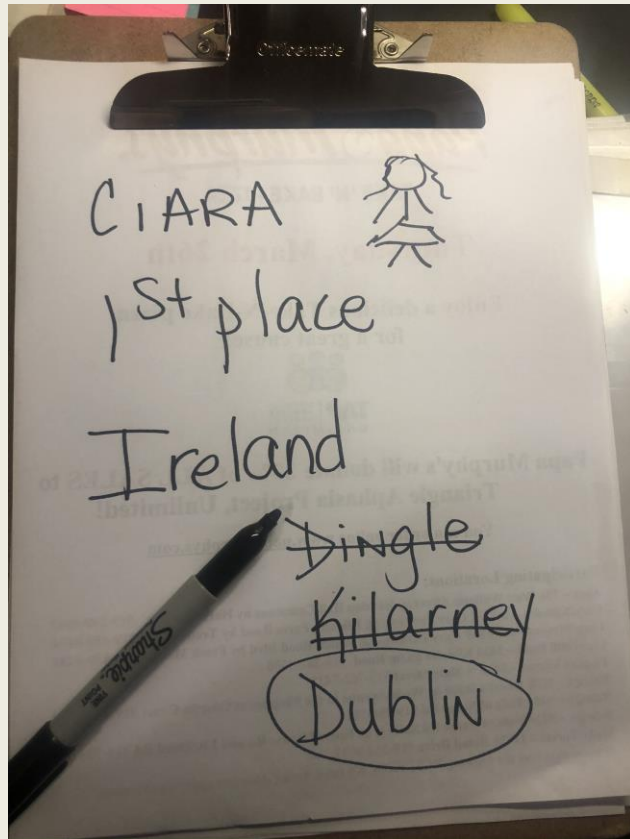


## ➤ Get visual and auditory attention

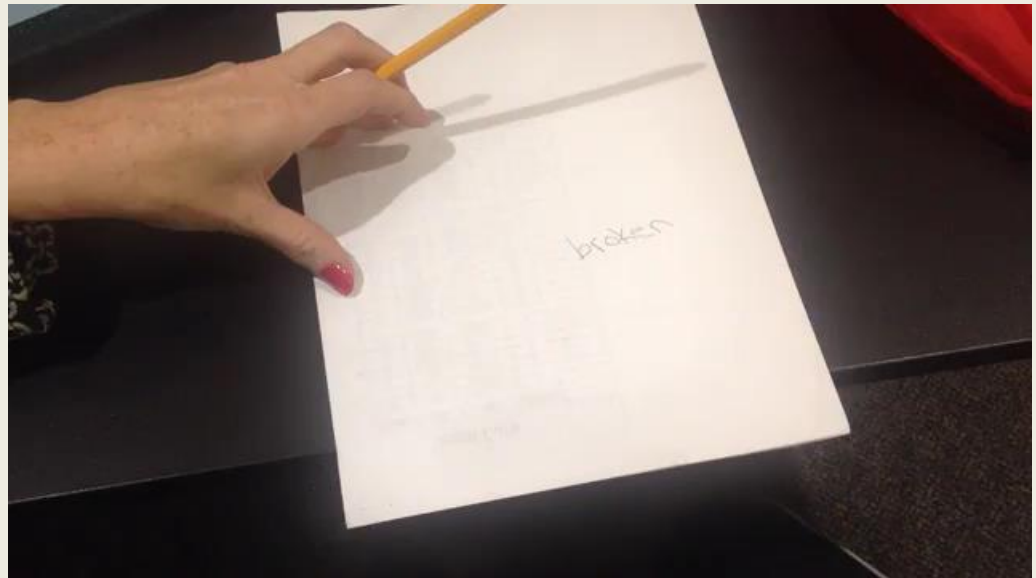
<i>Honey/Dad/etc.</i>	<i>When is mom coming home?</i>
	

- Shorter sentences (i.e. avoid conditionals)
- Use hand movements/gestures with speech
- Refer to props, diagrams, & other visuals.

# AND EVEN MORE HINTS...



## Key Words!!





# EXPRESSION HINTS

- Communication is MORE than talking!
- State back what you hear/see/perceive.
- “Ask” if you can assist
- Offer paper/pencil with shared exchanges.
- Offer choices (visual!)

Soup

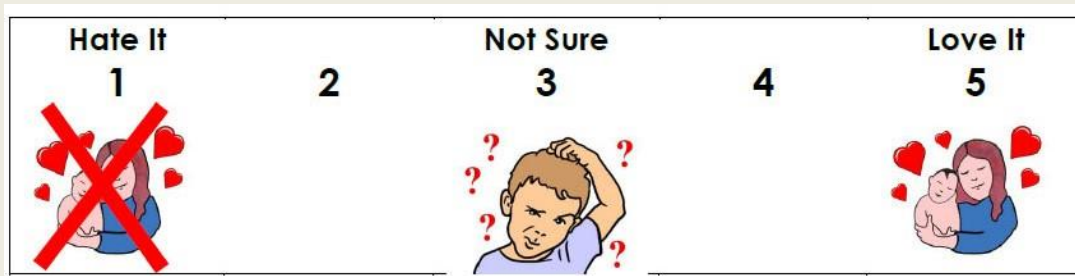
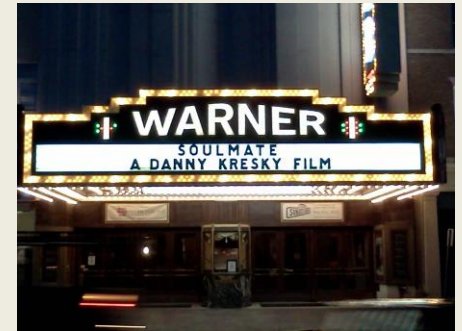


Salad



# MORE EXPRESSION HINTS

- Ask for the “marquee” word.
- Use Likert scales



- Use Communication Supports!

# COMMUNICATION SUPPORTS



- Any tool, strategy, method or person that aids in the exchange of information from one individual to another.

## ACCESSIBILITY



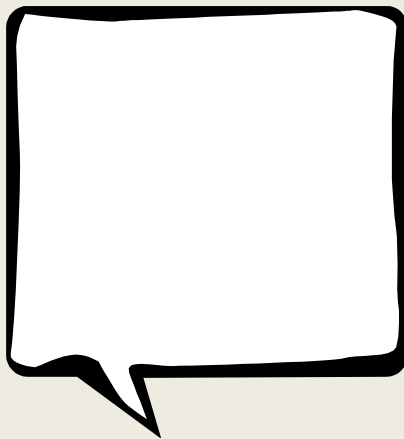
Congratulations on your  
new position!

## THE NARRATOR

*“This is what I got so far...”*

*“Let’s review and see what’s missing?”*

*“So, we were talking about (highlight,  
draw, comment, etc.)...”*



# WHO SHOULD BE TRAINED?



# WHY?

- Because breakdowns in communication have serious consequences.
- Because it's mandated as the standard of care by law, policy and regulations.
- Because it's a human right!
- Because it's the right thing to do!



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**Thank you for joining us today!**

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