Caregiver Connections
An Educational Webinar Series With The Experts

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

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.
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

memory
comprehension
Functioning
dysarthria
writing
apraxia
aphasia
executive
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

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Obstacles</th>
<th>Solutions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uneven playing fields</td>
<td>Even them out!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unawareness</td>
<td>Admit the elephant in the room</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication Pressure</td>
<td>Environmental Modifications</td>
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<tr>
<td>Untrained communicative partners</td>
<td>Train them (ALL of them)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of Communicative Supports</td>
<td>Identify barriers and provide supports</td>
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COMMUNICATION TOOLS & STRATEGIES

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

It’s not Rocket Science

Silverman / TAP Unlimited 2020
➢ Acknowledge Competence and Assure Support.
➢ Utilize all communication modalities (multimodal support)
➢ Seek out resources and obtain training
Let family / friends know about the communication challenges.

Use communication ID bracelet / card, etc.

Become involved in programs to spread awareness.
Identify communication barriers
“What does he/she need help with? Where are the breakdowns?”
Reduce distractions
Get visual and auditory attention

Communication Breakdown Detective!

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➢ Get visual and auditory attention

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

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AND EVEN MORE HINTS...

Key Words!!

- Ciara
- 1st place
- Ireland
- Dingle
- Kilarney
- Dublin
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!)
MORE EXPRESSION HINTS

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

➢ Use Communication Supports!

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

ACCESSIBILITY

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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?
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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