Effective Person Centered Communication for Individuals with Cognitive Limitations

Deepika Ahuja, ADC, CDP  
Dementia Care Coordinator  
Francis E. Parker Memorial Home

Mary Anne Ross, CSW  
Training Coordinator, Comprehensive Services on Aging  
Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care

Lisa Slater, MSN, RN  
Director, Professional Education  
Francis E. Parker Memorial Home
Welcome and Introductions

• Our experience:

Deepika

Mary Anne

Lisa
Ice Breaker

Choose a Partner

Bathroom

Lonely

Sad – worried

Pain

Hunger

I want to go home
Objectives

• Define the communication challenges experienced by individuals with cognitive limitations

• Explore communication techniques as related to forming relationships with others

• Understand the importance of one’s own communication style and how this can enhance your work day

• Relate the importance of relationship building to the promotion of quality person centered care for residents with dementia and/or depression.
Brain and Communication

NORMAL

MILD COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT

ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE
Affected Brain Centers
Communication Changes and Challenges

- Receptive and expressive aphasia
- Processing
- Lost meaning of words
  - Echolalia
  - Automatic speech
Communication Involves Many

CNA

Family

MD

Healthcare Providers

staff
Person Centered Care and Communication

• **Communication** is the basic building blocks of relationship and care giving...

• **Communication** involves every aspect of one’s work, home, life...

• The IOM (Institute of Medicine) defines patient-centered care as: "Providing care that is respectful of and responsive to individual patient preferences, needs, and values, and ensuring that patient values guide all clinical decisions."
Important Factors in Developing and Promoting Communication

- Thinking out of the box
- Get to know the person
- Relationship building
- Resident/family/staff collaborative partnerships
- Developing a “bag of tricks”
Characteristics of Communication as Related to Cognitive Limitations

- Verbal
- Physical
- Tone
- Space
- Culture

Non verbal techniques
- Touch
- Gesture

"I respectfully disagree with his/her opinion."
Using Cues

• Role Play
TIPS and Triggers

• Based on the Individual – This is Person Centered Care!

• Staff should share Tips and Triggers for each person

• TIPS- are interventions that create a positive response.

• TRIGGERS – are comments or experiences that make the person feel agitated, restless, uncooperative, angry.
Cues - Your Secret to Success

- Levels of Cueing
  - Visual
  - Verbal
  - Tactile
- Emotional Environment
- Physical Environment
Communication Video

Group Sharing

• Discuss communication techniques used in this video clip.

http://www.youtube.com/user/memorybridge

What are the Benefits of Leader Engagement?

• Staff knowledge - less behavioral expressions
• Less staff turnover - praise for a job well done
• Staff feel empowered - decision making
• Better reputation - positive feedback
• Friendships - nice working environment
• Less call out - stable staffing
• Less abuse
Setting the Tone

• Company culture and values
• Leadership sets the direction for company objectives
• Training
• Team composition
• Me and my team
• Employees create the environment
Invest in your staff by allowing 1:1 time to building relationships outside of staff roles & responsibilities.
Managing Depressive Expressions

- Mood
- Attitude
- Trust
- Security
- Stability
- Companionship

All of the above can be influenced through effective communication
Behavioral techniques are based on effective communication skills

- Good communication skills and techniques can help to identify and manage one’s well-being as well as potential depressive symptoms.
- Techniques are individual for every person.

http://www.alz.org/care/alzheimers-dementia-depression.asp#ixzz2xIYRE0mI
"Every Human Being is a Sacred Mystery"
Erik Fromm

• It is important to develop meaningful relationships, good communication skills and good observational skills and techniques. The goal is to promote and maintain each person’s optimal level of health and well being and provide a dignified living experience.
Thank you

Questions
references