



FEEDING ASSISTANT TRAINING SESSION #4



Vanderbilt Center for Quality Aging & Qsource

Presenter



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- Assistant Professor
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- Research Interests: quality of life and quality of care in long-term care; dementia care

Feeding Assistant Training Session 4

1. Highlight the importance of good communication
2. Discuss the different ways staff and residents communicate (verbal v. non-verbal)
3. Provide specific strategies for communicating with residents with sensory impairments
4. Explain how dementia influences communication
5. FOCUS philosophy for communicating

Clear Communication w/ Residents

- Why is it so important?
 - It's essential to provide residents with good, quality care

- What prevents good communication between staff and residents?
 - Talking too fast
 - Changing the subject
 - Clichés and false assurances
 - Insensitivity
 - Sensory impairment

Being an Active Listener

- Be attentive
- Show interest & ask clarifying questions
- Avoid interruptions and distractions
- Restate what the resident has said to check understanding



Verbal v. Non-verbal Communication

VERBAL

- Spoken word including word choice, tone, and speed
- May be a challenge for some residents



NON-VERBAL

- Body language including:
 - ▣ Posture
 - ▣ Eye Contact
 - ▣ Hand movements
 - ▣ Facial expressions
 - ▣ Touch

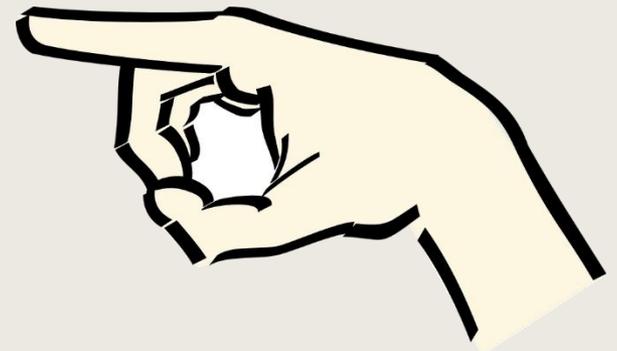


Positive Verbal Communication

- Speak on the resident's "good" side
- Use the resident's proper name
- Utilize a friendly tone
- Be patient
 - ▣ Speak slowly
 - ▣ Use short sentences or one step commands
 - ▣ Allow time for resident to process and respond
- Repeat statements as originally made

Positive Non-Verbal Communication

- Approach slowly and calmly
- *Do not* approach from behind
- Face the resident while speaking
- Make eye contact
- Smile, nod, move hands

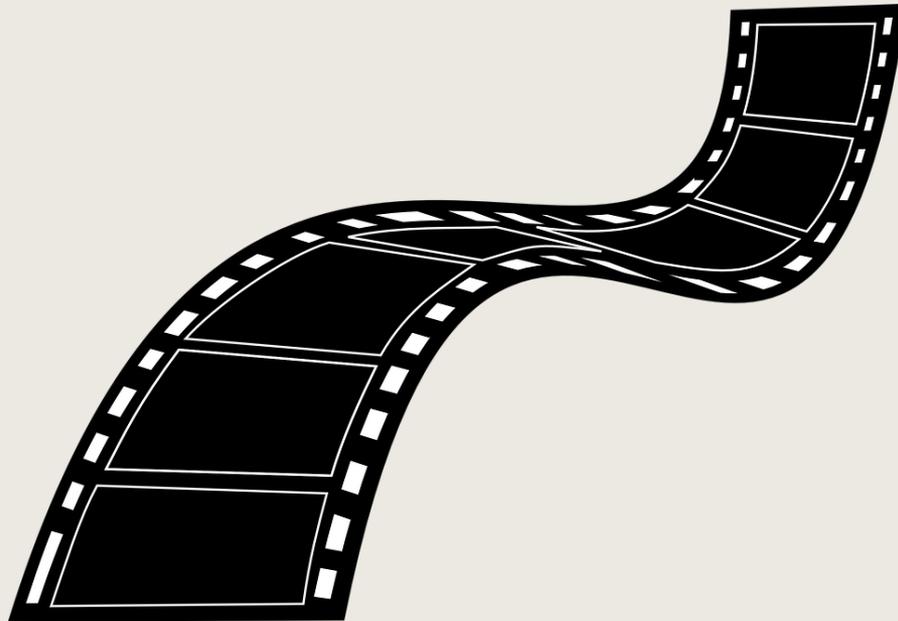


Verbal v. Non-Verbal Communication Video

Identify 2
non-verbal
communication
techniques.

Was the staff
actively
listening?

How could the
communication
be better?



Communication & Sensory Impairments



VISION IMPAIRED

- Identify yourself by name and title
- Position yourself close to resident in good lighting
- Use talk and touch
- Inform resident before you leave

HEARING IMPAIRED

- Speak
 - ▣ Slowly and clearly
 - ▣ At a lower pitch
 - ▣ At a slightly higher volume
- Keep conversations short and directed to a single topic



Communication & Sensory Impairments

APHASIA

- ❑ Keep conversations short
- ❑ Ask yes/ no questions
- ❑ Encourage resident to point/ nod
- ❑ Give resident plenty of time to respond
- ❑ Paraphrase
- ❑ Avoid frustrated body language

COGNITIVE/ UNDERSTANDING

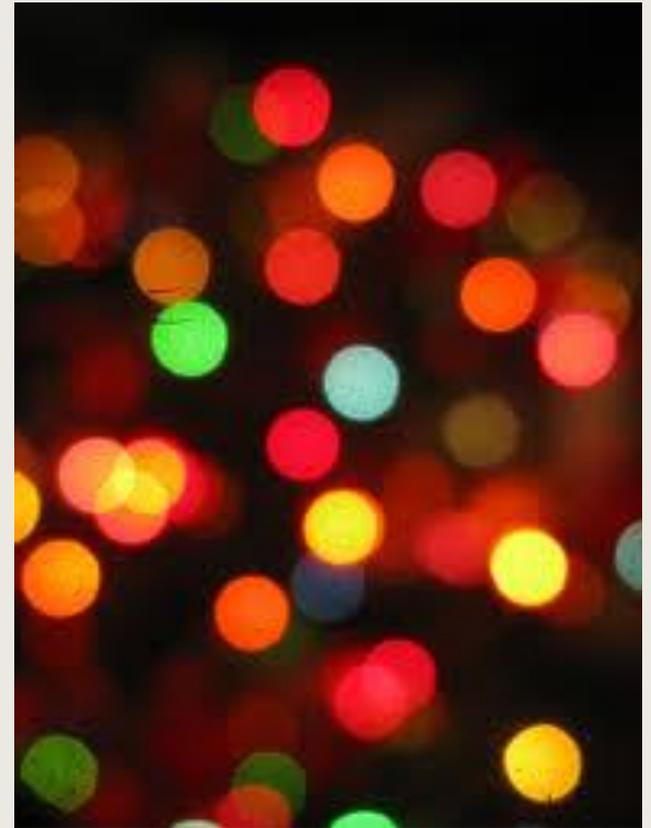
- ❑ Use simple words, sentences
- ❑ Give 1 step instructions
- ❑ Focus on 1 topic
- ❑ Use gestures to reinforce your verbal communications

Communication & Dementia

- What is dementia?
- Dementia can impact the parts of the brain related to:
 - Memory
 - Language (speech & comprehension)
 - Concentration
 - Orientation
 - Judgment
 - Sequencing

FOCUS Technique

- F- Face to Face
- O- Orient
- C- Continue
- U- Unstick
- S- Structure



FOCUS: Face to Face

- Face the patient directly
- Smile
- Talk before you touch
- Maintain eye contact
- Speak in soothing tones



FOCUS: Orient

- Guide the conversation
- Redirect
- Allow plenty of time to respond
- Use visual aids



FOCUS: Continue the Same Topic

- Short attention span/ loss of interest in food in front of them
- If they refuse, offer them something else
- Use verbal reminders
- Try to stay with the resident



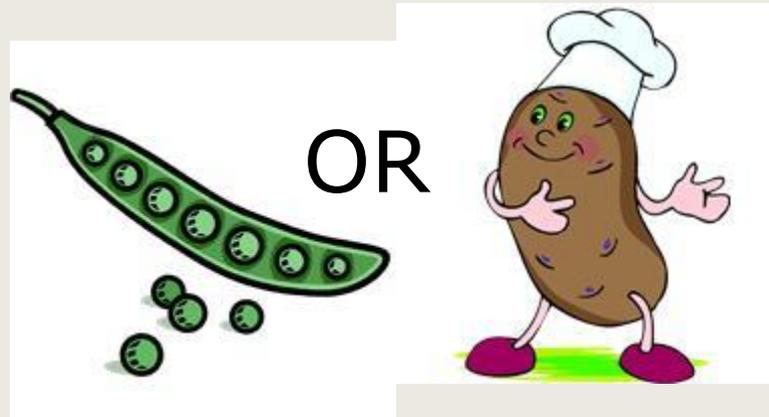
FOCUS: Unstick

- Residents may have difficulty finding the right words
- Be patient and respectful, not corrective, when they get the words wrong
- Ask them to point to what they want



FOCUS: Structure Your Question

- Sentences: short, simple, direct
- Provide only 2 choices at a time
- Example: “Do you want peas or potatoes?”



Communication & Dementia

How does the person with dementia interpret the staff's communication in this video?



Communication Session Summary

- Key points
 - Good communication is important
 - Communication involves active listening
 - Communication is both verbal and nonverbal
 - Special techniques help communication for residents with sensory impairment or dementia