

SLP-chosen for you, from the Nicespeechlady.com library SPEECH PATHOLOGY PATIENT: \_\_\_\_\_

SPEECH PATHOLOGIST: \_\_\_\_\_

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_



### **HANDOUT-ABLE: Ways to Improve Interactions with Cognitively-Involved Patients**

There are challenges that accompany the communication process with individuals who exhibit cognitive-linguistic involvement. The following are recommendations to consider in improving interactions:

#### **Increasing receptive language opportunities —**

- Slower rates of speech that are still appropriate in rate will assist in not losing focus or receptive abilities to be maintained in interactions.
- Nonverbal communication that is open and gentle in nature will be better received
- Tone of voice, body language and intensity of communications could benefit caregivers or hinder meaningful interactions.
- Recruit humor and opportunities for laughter. If caregivers “poke fun” at themselves, persons with cognitive issues may let go of anxiety if there is awareness that memory difficulties exist.
- Communication mood should be kept as light as possible. Caregivers and loved ones should avoid communicating unpleasant or negative emotions for the time of interactions. This will encourage open communication.
- Short questions encourage quick understanding; least amount of words will assist in processing.
- Using gestures or pointing to objects, if indicated, increases comprehension of the spoken word.

#### **Encouraging optimal mood opportunities, and encouragement —**

- Finding common ground in the same interests encourages improved mood
- If caregivers choose one activity a day, as it relates to the patient’s strengths and areas of involvement -- this will encourage stimulation, cognitively. And, it will allow for bonding and being able to see “eye to eye.”
- Pleasurable experiences assist with decreasing the opportunity for vulnerabilities for behaviors
- Providing opportunities for persons with cognitive issues to choose the task for the day is empowering, as often choices that were available previously are no longer offered to the same extent. Any opportunity for choice, control, or opinion on what tasks to perform will support communication and participation.
- Utilizing senses such as touch, taste, hearing, visual input and smells allow for greater participation in tasks, and incorporates natural self-soothing properties.
- Reminiscing about common subjects from the past bring a commonality that will allow for greater rapport
- If persons with communication disorders are asked to perform tasks, it is best that these are reasonably challenging, but not to the point of frustration.

#### **Redirection --**

- If undesirable behaviors emerge, it is recommended to redirect back to an earlier activity.
- Making a list ahead of time of potential activities that would assist the patient in occurrence of needing redirection would be beneficial.
- Unusual events which could occur in the environment may provide a distraction and redirection.

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