Improving Effective Communication: Use of Written Cues

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At a Glance…

If you tell me…
…I’ll forget

If you show me…
…I’ll remember

If you involve me…
…I’ll understand

Chinese Proverb
Strengths of Persons with Dementia

• Curiosity
• Sense of humor
• Willingness to help
• Retention of memory for past events
• Ability to read
• Automatic skills
Communication, Cognition and Behaviors

Communication can be affected by cognitive decline, deficits in auditory comprehension and challenging behaviors.
Communication symptoms
Early and mid stages

- “Where is it?”
- “Where are you?”
- “I want....” or “I need...”
- “Where is my daughter” or “I need to get out of here”

- Decreased awareness of communicative partner and of our answers
- Decreased auditory comprehension
Cognitive Symptoms
Early to mid stages

• Decreased:
  – Short term memory
  – Problem solving skills
  – Orientation and awareness of environment
Challenging behaviors:
Early to mid stages

• Agitation; anxiety
• Verbally disruptive
• Paranoia
How do written cues help?

• Research shows:
  – ↓ challenging behaviors
  – Improved quality of life by increasing independence and sense of control
  – ↑ ability to elaborate on topics (↓ perseverations and ↓ word finding difficulties)
  – Initiation and improved content
  – They can be used in any setting (home, Adult Day Program, Nursing Home)

References at end of presentation
Reminder Cards: Quality of life

Tom,
Bingo is at 17h00 in auditorium

Tom,
Your son is stuck in traffic. He will come at 19h00 tonight.

Tom,
This afternoon, you will take a shower. Wait in your room at 15h00.

Tom,
Make sure you drink your milkshake at 16h00.
Considerations

Tom,
12pm: lunch in dining room
12pm: go to dining room

Tom,
Lunch is at 12pm
Go to dining room at 12pm

Tom,
Lunch is at 12 pm.
Go to dining room at 12 pm
Tom,
There is a big storm coming. We should all stay inside until it passes.

Tom,
The nurse will take you to the bathroom at 15:15. Wait here.

Tom,
Your physical therapist is coming at 11:00. Wait in the gym.

Tom,
Nancy is at school today.
Reminder Cards: Well Being versus challenging behaviors

The medication will help me feel better.

Eating keeps me strong

Showering makes me feel good and clean.

Walking outside is good for me.
## Reminders Cards: Rehabilitation

### Before I sit down:
1. Feel for the chair with back of my legs
2. Reach back with 2 hands

### Safe swallow strategies:
1. Take one sip at a time.
2. Clear your throat after each sip

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I can pick a new outfit everyday.
**Reminder Cards: Expression of needs and wants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Toast</th>
<th>Exercise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ice cream</td>
<td>Paint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yogurt</td>
<td>Watch T.V.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheese and crackers</td>
<td>Listen to music</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Reminder Cards: Routines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Meal</th>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00</td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Breakfast" /></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Lunch" /></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16:00</td>
<td>Snack</td>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Snack" /></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19:00</td>
<td>Dinner</td>
<td><img src="image4.png" alt="Dinner" /></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Toothpaste</td>
<td><img src="image5.png" alt="Toothpaste" /></td>
<td>Brush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rinse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Modify as needed

1. Wet the toothbrush
2. Squeeze out the toothpaste
3. On to the toothbrush
4. Brush your teeth
5. Rinse your mouth
6. Wipe dry your face
7. Rinse clean the toothbrush
<p>| My name is Earl. I was born in Vevey, Switzerland on December 5th, 1945. I was 1 month early | ![Image of Vevey, Switzerland] |
| I married Marie, on June 4th 1965 in Lausanne. It did not rain that day! Both our families were present and got along very well. | ![Image of wedding party] |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Memory Books</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Together, we had 3 children: Tom, Laurie and Isabelle. Tom is a protective brother. Laurie and Isabelle are good daughters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I worked for many years as a mechanical engineer, repairing trains. I loved my job and did not retire until I was 73 years old. My company threw me a big retirement surprise party.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Memory Books

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I was born in Vevey, Switzerland.</th>
<th><img src="image" alt="Image of Vevey, Switzerland" /></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I married Marie, on June 4(^{th}) 1965.</td>
<td>![Image of wedding party]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Memory Books

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I have three children: Tom, Laurie, Isabelle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Image of children" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I had a big party when I retired.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Image of party" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References


