

How to Connect with the Person with Dementia:

Approach from the **FRONT** respecting personal space

Move **SLOWLY** in a non-threatening manner

Make **EYE CONTACT**

Initiate the greeting & introduce yourself

Move to the **SIDE** and **OFFER YOUR HAND**

Wait for their response

Make **POSITIVE STATEMENTS**: "Let's try..." or
"Could you please help with..."

Remember to...

- Stay calm and be understanding
- Speak slowly using a low pitched voice
- Be patient and flexible, go with the flow
- Step into their shoes to look for a reason for each behavior
- Ask questions using fill in the blanks
- Introduce yourself, "My name is xxx and you are?"
- Offer simple choices instead of asking yes/no questions
- Respect personal space
- Don't argue or correct



**DEMENTIA
ALLIANCE**

of North Carolina

A STATE OF CARING

9131 Anson Way, Suite 206 | Raleigh, NC 27615

919.832.3732 | info@DementiNC.org

www.DementiaNC.org

When the person is in distress...

- Focus on their feelings
- Respond to the emotion, not to the action
- Ask the person to tell you more about it
- Move from talking first to then doing (go for a walk, get a cup of coffee)

ALWAYS...

- Greet the person before moving into action
- Explain what is happening but keep it simple
- Don't take it personally
- Break the task down into single one at a time steps
- Give the person time, don't rush

It is common for the person with dementia to...

- Say or do things that are inappropriate
- Not respond the way you expect
- Say things that don't make sense
- Use words that are close but wrong
- Have poor grooming habits or look slightly off
- Repeat themselves or not remember instructions
- Deny what you know is true
- State as true what you know is false
- Appear irritated, scared, or too personal



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