

Tips for Communicating with People with Dementia

Here are some instructions on how to best communicate with someone who has dementia.

- Approach the person from their front.
- Identify yourself by name (and where the person knows you from, if appropriate)
 - For example: “Hi, I’m Mary Lou Smith. We met at the Senior Center.”
- Engage them one on one in a quiet place, if possible.
- Listen actively with your whole body.
- Speak slowly and clearly.
- Keep your language simple.
- Read facial expressions and body language and try to respond appropriately.
- Be patient and give the person time to respond.
- Ask yes/no or either/or questions.
 - For example: “Mike, would you like chicken or fish for dinner?”
- Avoid arguing. You don’t need to correct everything they say incorrectly.
- Provide visual clues when possible.
- Offer praise and compliments.

Bluegrass Elderlaw is a Dementia-Friendly Designated Business through Dementia Friendly Lexington. To learn more about Dementia Friendly Lexington's mission, or for more resources, visit their website: <https://www.agefriendlylexington.org/>

To see which other businesses in the community are designated as Dementia-Friendly, click here: <https://www.agefriendlylexington.org/caregiver-corner>

