

12 Top Tips in Working with People with Dementia

1 Get to know the person

- Know their likes and dislikes
- Gather life history
- Have three points of conversation

2 Smile!

The person with dementia will notice

- Your emotional state
- Your body language
- Tone of voice

3 Slow down

- Provide care in a relaxed manner
- Enable the person to do things for themselves
- Keep it simple and slow-one concept at a time

4 Introduce yourself

- Let the person know who you are
- Tell them what you are there for
- Obtain their permission to assist with care

5 Communicate clearly

- One point at a time
- Make sure glasses and hearing aides are used if needed
- Use an interpreter if needed

6 Step back

When the person is aggressive

- Leave the area
- Reassess and try again later
- Try to identify the trigger to the behaviour

7 Keep it quiet

- Stop and listen
- Reduce conflicting noises
- Avoid crowds and lots of noise

8 Don't argue

- Go with the flow
- Acknowledge and respect what the person is saying and doing
- Telling them they are wrong may have a negative effect

9 Engage and encourage

- Get the person started with a meaningful activity
- Set activities up to succeed
- Thank them for assisting you and themselves

10 Consider safety

- Approach safely
- Keep a safe distance
- Allow yourself an exit

11 Distract

- Talk / yarn about their life
- Give them something to do
- Provide a relaxed environment

12 Talk with others

- What has worked and what hasn't
- Talk together about what has happened
- Record what you did

Dementia Australia is the peak body for people with dementia, their family and carers. For information, support and advice, call the National Dementia Helpline 1800 100 500 or visit dementia.org.au