



Please remember that the time you are giving the people you are calling may be the only company they have. Give them a chance to tell you stories, to tell you their worries and concerns, help them to feel reassured and safe. It may be a person living with dementia or it may be their carer.

- Speak slowly
- Speak clearly
- Do not shout
- Do not over talk or answer / finish off their sentences

Conversation Starters

- Have you been listening to music lately?
 - What sort of music do you enjoy listening to?
 - Can you play or have you ever played an instrument?
 - Do you know anyone who can play an instrument?
- What hobbies do you have?
 - Cooking/Baking – favourite foods
 - Sports/Crafts
- Do you go on holidays still?
 - Where do you / did you like to travel to?
 - What was one of your favourite holidays?
 - How did you travel there?
 - Who would come on holiday with you?
- What sports do you / did you like?
 - Who do you support?
 - Did you play any sports?
 - What position did you play?
- Have you got / have you had any pets?
 - What was their name?
 - Do you have a favourite animal? Domestic and Wild
 - Have you ever visited a zoo?
- Are you interested in history?
 - Have you visited any interesting museums?
 - Have you travelled to see any history sites?
 - Do you know any stories about the war/army/navy/evacuation?



Coping Strategies

If a person is becoming confused or disoriented it may help to try and distract them.

Distraction Techniques:

- Change conversation topic
- Offer reassurance
- Encourage them to tell you what they can see out the window
- Use a conversation starter
- Offer to make a drink
- Ask them to help you with something (like making a drink, tidying up, folding clothes)
- Look through photo's
- Encourage them to come into the garden (if weather is suitable)
- If they allow you to then gently hold their hand
- Play some calming music or their favourite music

Try to be selective on the language you use:

- Avoid arguing
- Encourage with positivity – words and giving tasks you know they can do
- Ask, don't instruct or demand

If the person with dementia thinks you are another family member, don't correct them, be that person for a short while.

If the person with dementia becomes tearful or upset about a past memory comfort them, if they allow you, pass them a tissue and reassure them.

If the person with dementia becomes agitated reassure them and tell them you are just going the bedroom/kitchen/another room then remove yourself from the room until they have calmed down. If they follow you and are raising their voice do not raise your voice back (we know this can be difficult at times) keep as calm as you can and revisit the distraction techniques.

Do not ask them to remember history, phrase it in a way where you prompt the conversation say "tell me about" "what was it like" "did you like".