

Communication



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**Cognitive Abilities
and
Intervention Strategies
(CAIS)
Educational Series
Session 4**

**On Improving MI Practices
website at**

<https://www.improvingmipractices.org>

Today's Topic

- How well do my **interactions** with a person meet their cognitive needs and use their strengths?
- A series of **questions** to explore why a person communicates more easily some times than other times
- These questions are based on **brain** functioning and **cognitive abilities**

Communication Questions

- **Anyone can ask** these questions about their communication with another person
- These questions can generate **support strategies** (intervention ideas)
- These strategies might be changes to your **communication**, the **environment**, or the **task**
- These strategies will be useful at **all times** and with **all tasks** including leisure activities and all activities of daily living

YOU (All of Us)

- Make the **most difference** in how a person feels or performs a task
- Can prevent or reduce distress and distressing situations by:
 - **Carefully observing**
 - **Warmly reassuring**
 - Immediately **adjusting your interactions**

Respect

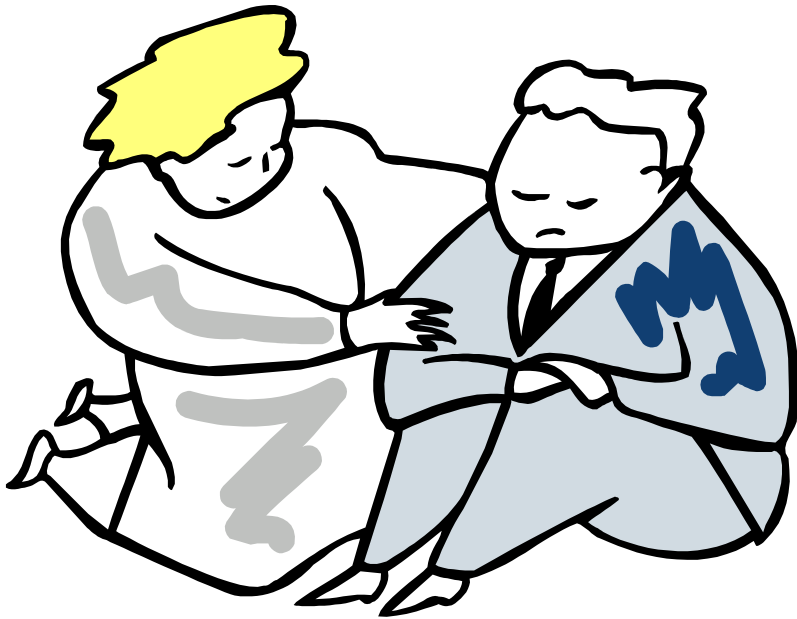


- Communicate respect **verbally** and **nonverbally**:
 - Show respect
 - Treat an adult as an **adult**
 - **Show you care about this person**
 - **Express warm friendliness**

Examples

- **Honestly examine** whether you feel respect. If you don't, consider changing your feelings or finding someone else to assist this person
- Provide **simplified**, not childlike objects, task steps, and interactions

More Examples



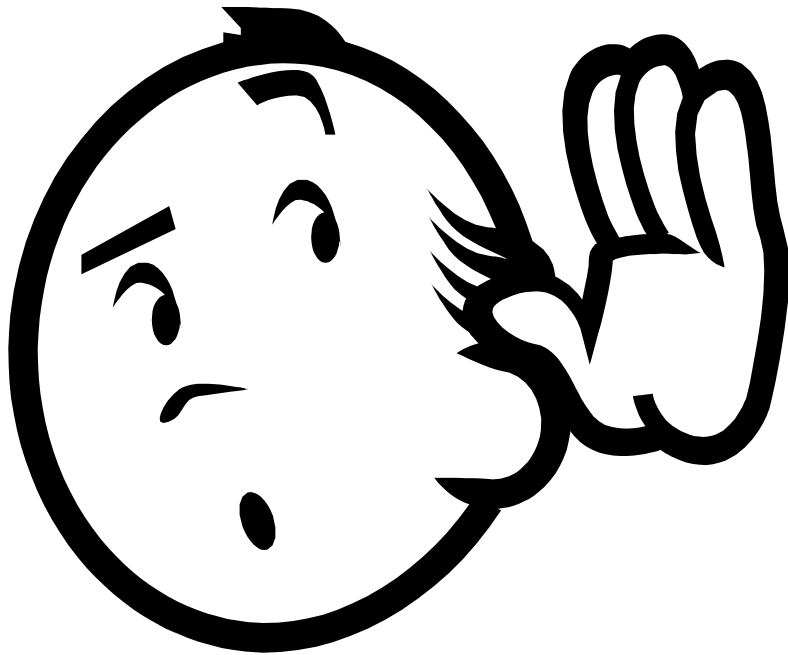
- Respond **discreetly** to any embarrassing behavior, rather than trying to correct it
- Show respect and enhance understanding with **gentle, kind, clear requests**

Explanation and Reassurance

- **Show reassurance**
- **Clearly explain** events, requests, and the environment



Examples



- Due to brain and age-related sensory changes, a person may need to hear:
 - An explanation or instruction **several times** before being able to respond
 - Words spoken in a **low-pitched voice**

More Examples

- If a person asks a question repeatedly because:
 - They **forget** they have already asked, then **answer** their question the **same way each time**
 - They **inaccurately sense how much time has passed** since they had asked the question, then gently give them the information they are asking for or need

More Examples

- A person can easily misinterpret information or feel uncertain about how to respond:
 - **Explain**
 - **Soothe** them
 - **Distract** them
- They may be startled when their body is touched or moved unexpectedly:
 - **Ask them to move it.**
 - **Ask permission** to help them move it.

Body Language

- **Use your body** to communicate
- Be aware of what you **unintentionally communicate** with your body
- Address sensory & cognitive abilities by how you **position and move your body**



Examples

- Your **body** (nonverbal) language needs to **match** your **words**:
 - Look and sound friendly, because they will respond more to how you **look and move** than to your words
- They can remember emotions better than words:
 - They will remember their anxiety more than your reassuring words

More Examples

- A person may not be able to notice all objects in their visual field
 - **Where** you position yourself is important: they may respond more easily when you are **in front** of them, rather than off to their side
 - When you **move slowly**, they will be less distracted and have more energy to understand you and to accomplish the task

Approach

- Help a person **feel positive** about a task or request
- Set an upbeat, cheerful, relaxed **emotional tone**
- Prevent anxiety, uncertainty or frustration

Examples

- Cognitive needs due to brain changes may mean their feelings and behavior will increasingly **match** what they see and notice about **your feelings and behavior**:
 - Provide a **relaxed, cheerful, upbeat** emotional tone
 - Be **friendly, smile, and converse warmly**

More Examples



- A person may feel overwhelmed with all the **task steps**
 - Suggesting **just the first step** may help them respond
 - Giving them some **simple choices** may distract them from the entire task

More Examples

- Sometimes just walking to a destination can be challenging
 - **Singing** or **marching** with them may help them walk more quickly and easily

