

Tips for Successful One-on-One visits

Simple tips to help you create mutually meaningful and positive visits.

1. Morning is best

Residents are most alert at this time, or mid-afternoon after rest time can work.

2. Put yourself in their shoes

Prepare yourself mentally by thinking about who you're visiting. We all have good and bad days, and so does your friend or relative.

3. Eye contact is important

When you arrive, set the tone with a warm greeting. Look them in the eyes and give a hug, if appropriate and expected.

4. Tune in to their needs

Genuine, undivided attention is precious and value adding to the resident's day. Even people with dementia can sense if you are not present.

5. Take along a helping hand

A magazine or newspaper creates a great focal point. Past Father's/ Mother's Day cards or old postcards can be useful props for triggering conversation starters.

6. Reduce background noise

Offer to turn off the TV or radio and close the door if there's a lot of ambient noise elsewhere.

7. Change of Scene

Invite your resident out. Ask a Lifestyle staff member to assist if need be. There are several secure balconies and verandahs throughout ABH as well as two courtyards, the gardens behind Parr Wing, the café area and the new Lewis Herman Park next door.

8. Silence is not negative

Sometimes your company is enough. Learn to enjoy quiet times. Some residents fatigue easily during a long conversation.

9. Pay attention to body language

If they aren't receptive and nodding off to sleep, come back another time.

10. Practice patience

Visiting someone with dementia is not the same as meeting a friend for a coffee. Remember this person has changed from the one you knew before. Their likes and dislikes may continue changing - a favourite biscuit one minute may not be the next. Latch on to any glimpses you may see of their former self. Be prepared to repeat conversations.

If you want to chat with our Care Staff team about your loved one's changing social needs, please schedule a Care Conference, and we will be in touch.
<https://abh.org.au/contact/#book-a-care>

