A Journey of Discovery: For Families and Loved Ones

Part 1: An Introduction

…and the journey is always towards the other soul.

David Herbert Lawrence
Welcome

- This self-guided study was prepared to help caregivers understand their loved ones’ world with Alzheimer’s disease and to make communication more meaningful and joyful.

- The Journey of Discovery program builds on a body of work called Validation, developed by Naomi Feil, M.S., A.C.S.W.

- The Validation approach has been used successfully to build bridges to those with Alzheimer’s disease.
What is Validation?

Validation is an empathetic method of communicating and helping disoriented adults.

**Validation techniques can:**

- Help disoriented elderly to express what they wish to express whether it is verbal or nonverbal communication.
- Help the person express suppressed feelings.
- Often reduce the intensity of the feelings, making care easier.
- Help the person communicate more and be less likely to withdraw.
Dedication

Sunrise Senior Living would like to dedicate this Journey of Discovery self-guided study to Naomi Feil, M.S., A.C.S.W., the developer of Validation. This breakthrough in communication with disoriented elderly adults is the result of Naomi Feil’s lifelong work.

- Naomi Feil grew up in a Home for the Aged in Cleveland, Ohio that her parents managed.

- With this early experience, she graduated with a Masters degree in social work from Columbia University in New York.

- She developed Validation over a 20 year period as a response to her dissatisfaction with traditional methods of working with several disoriented elderly adults.

- Feil’s work has been used extensively in the U.S. and abroad. She is the author of several books and a well-known speaker. For more information, see references at the end of this segment.

Biographical information obtained from the Validation website. http://www.vfvalidation.org
The Validation method is a natural fit with the Sunrise Principles of Service.

- Preserving Dignity
- Nurturing the Spirit
- Celebrating Individuality
- Enabling Freedom of Choice
- Encouraging Independence
- Involving Family and Friends
How this program can help

The loss of communication experienced with loved ones with Alzheimer’s disease causes frustration and makes care more difficult.

This program can help you connect more with your loved one through enhanced understanding and communication.
Do you hear questions like?

- When are you going to take me home?
- Have you seen my mother, or my father?
- Who are you?
- Why did you leave me here?
Do you ever experience?

- **Frustration**: Would I be better off not visiting?
- **Sense of Loss**: That person isn’t my loved one anymore.
- **Doubt**: Is mom / dad still “in there”?
- **Embarrassment**: I can’t believe he / she did that!
- **Hopelessness**: I don’t know how to get through.
You are not alone.

- Nearly 10 million people are caring for a loved one with Alzheimer’s disease.

- There is hope in helping you and your loved one find meaning and purpose each day.

- You can find ways to improve communication and bring joyful moments to your loved one.
Think about a long trip or journey you’ve been on...

Taking care of a person with Alzheimer’s is often compared to a journey – one you didn’t choose that has few roadmaps and lots of unexpected turns. Recall a journey you have taken . . .

- How did you prepare?
- Did the journey go smoothly?
- If not, what could have been done to make it go more smoothly?

Learning new approaches to communication will help you to navigate the journey with Alzheimer’s.
Today you’ll embark on a Journey of Discovery that will:

- Teach you more about yourself, your needs, and emotions.
- Lead you into the world of your loved one with memory loss.
- Allow you to better serve your loved one and help to shape who you are as a caregiver.
- Guide you to reach new places.
Your Journey is more about looking forward than back

- It’s normal for you to look back and remember all that your loved one’s accomplished.
- It’s natural for you to want them to be who they always were.
- **This is a journey of joining them where they are now** to make the most of each minute that you have together.
- We believe that you can still have many treasured moments and times of great joy.
Preparing for your journey

- Before you begin, we’ll share tools and tips to help you prepare and take the journey.

- We’ve also provided a map that will help you chart your course. The Validation route covers four key lands as shown on the next slides:
  - Personhood
  - Language
  - Meaning and Purpose
  - Hope
Our Route

The Land of Personhood

The Land of Language

The Land of Meaning & Purpose

The Hope To Look Forward

Our Journey will begin by exploring personhood.
From there, we will learn to understand a different language.
Next, we will explore meaning and purpose.
Our Journey will end with the hope to look forward.
Take time to smell the roses...

- As you travel through your journey, make frequent stops to soak in the information. Try to find a time where you can quietly focus on the exercises and your reactions.

- Read only one or two segments at a time, as instructed at the end of each part.

- Apply techniques during visits with your loved one before moving on to the next segment.

- Journal your questions and experiences.

- Review prior sections as needed.
Your stops along the way...

Your journey is separated into nine segments:

1. **Introduction** – providing an overview of your journey
2. **Centering** – helping you prepare for and continue with the journey
3. **Personhood** – understanding that the person comes first
4. **Building bridges** from our reality to theirs
5. **Learning the language** – how to better communicate with your loved one
6. **Connecting behaviors with needs** – identifying the unmet need
7. **Meaning and purpose for your loved one**
8. **Meaning and purpose for you**
9. **The hope to look forward**
Navigating your stops

The mile markers at the end of each session will give you some suggestions such as to:

- Continue onto the next session.
- Pause and reflect on the information you have just learned.
- Resume your session when you have more time.
- Journal about your thoughts and feelings.
- Practice some of the new techniques you’ve learned when you spend time with your loved one.
What we hope you’ll discover...

- Additional **perspective** on your feelings and the questions your loved one is asking.

- A better **understanding** of yourself and all that you have in common with your loved one experiencing memory loss.

- Improved **communication** and a chance to “give back” to your loved one.

- More **joy** by being “in the moment” with your loved one during the special encounters yet to come.

- The **hope** to look forward.
What your journey will not do

- Take away all the pain.
- Remove all frustration.
- Completely stop the feelings of loss, sadness, or guilt.
Our hope for Sunrise families…

- When our trip is complete, we hope you can play an even more active role in partnering with us to serve your loved one’s needs, interests, and potential.

- We believe that involving family and friends makes a meaningful difference in improving your loved one’s quality of life.

- We’ll ask you to give us input and we’ll give you ideas for ways that you can engage in life enriching activities when you spend time with him or her.

- Your involvement will add to your loved one’s progressing life story, giving him or her opportunities to have meaning and purpose and a role in the community.
A Journey of Discovery:
for Families and Loved Ones

About the Author:

Rita is one of five Validation Masters worldwide, and studied under Naomi Feil, who developed the Validation Method. She has contributed to and published articles related to dementia and Validation in nursing and trade journals and has spoken on the topic of Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias both nationally and internationally. Rita also volunteers her time to educate and advocate for improved dementia care services and quality of life for those with Alzheimer’s disease and their family members.

One of her primary goals for the memory care services at Sunrise is to educate all caregivers, both staff and family members, in ways to more effectively communicate and engage in meaningful life enriching activities with residents to fulfill the Sunrise mission: “to champion quality of life for all seniors.”

Special thanks goes to all that made valuable contributions in collaborating and developing these training materials.
To learn more

This self study will give you a basic introduction to Validation. For a more in-depth understanding we recommend the following sources:


- Validation Training Institute website: www.vfvalidation.org
Let’s get going…

We recommend you continue to

*Part 2 “Centering”* at this time.
A Journey of Discovery:
For Families and Loved Ones
Part 2: Centering

At the center of your being you have the answer; you know who you are and you know what you want.

Lao Tzu
Preparing to embark…

Before beginning any journey, we have to get ready. That might include packing or getting supplies together.

We know that care giving can be stressful and it is very difficult for you to watch your loved one go through the process of memory loss.

That is why, when joining our loved ones’ journey, the first thing we must always do is CENTER. Centering is simply taking the time to breathe and focus your energy.
Centering helps us to:

- Open ourselves to others.
- Feel strong, capable, and fully present as we listen.
- Relieve our stress.
- Rid ourselves of all internal dialog, such as tasks, concerns and personal anxieties.
- Face the issue at hand with more confidence.

It’s very important to center before talking with your loved one, especially when he or she is angry, upset, or having a difficult moment.

Now let’s practice...

- First, stand with your feet shoulder width apart (this maintains balance and center of gravity).
- Close your eyes.
- Focus on a spot about two inches below the waist. This is your center. The center of your gravity.

(Exercise is continued on next slide)
Now let’s practice…

- Inhale deeply through the nose, filling your body with that breath. Exhale through the mouth. Stop all inner dialogue and pay attention to your breathing.

- Mentally follow your breath from your center up in an arc back to your nose. Take in the breath and fill your body with it. Wash the breath out at the center as you exhale. Do this at least 3 times.

- Now open your eyes.

Ready, Set... Center – regularly!

- Practice centering throughout the day to get into the habit.
- Know that caregiving will have its stressful moments.
- Practice centering each time that you feel stressed.
- Practice centering before you communicate, especially if your loved one is upset and you do not know how to respond.
Thoughts for your journal

- What was it like to center?
- Was it easy or difficult for you?
- Can you feel your stress level reduce?
- Did it get easier as you practiced more?
- Did you remember to center when visiting your loved one?
For more centering exercises...

Reference:

Mile Marker…

- We recommend practice centering for a week or so.

- While it may seem simple, centering effectively is critical to success on this journey.

- Remember to journal along the way.

- **Stop at this point.** After a week of practice, resume your journey with *Part 3: Personhood.*
A Journey of Discovery: For Families and Loved Ones

Part 3: Personhood

People do not consist of memory alone. They have feeling, will, sensibility, moral being. It is here that you may touch them, and see a profound change.

A.R. Luria
We’ll now explore the Land of Personhood.
Welcome back aboard

- Have you been centering and journaling?
- You’ll need it for the next phase of our journey . . . Personhood.
- In fact, before you go to the next page, take a moment to clear your mind by centering.
- Remember to close your eyes and take in at least three deep breaths.
Personhood Exercise

Think of your loved one who is experiencing memory loss.

- Are there days when it seems like your loved one is alert and open and very much like the person you once knew?
- Are there days when the person seems like a complete stranger?
- Are there days when you wonder if there is still a person in there anymore?
At Sunrise, we believe:

- The **Person** is not gone . . .

- **Together we can** find ways to connect and communicate with your loved one with dementia.

- Much of what makes us all human **stays intact**, even as dementia progresses.

- People with dementia **need** the same things we do.
Psychology of Human Needs

Abraham Maslow, the founder of humanistic psychology, developed a hierarchy of needs for understanding human behavior.

The Maslow hierarchy of needs represents the order of importance of human needs.

Our basic **physiological** and **safety needs** have to be met first.

Remember the Basic Human Needs

Alzheimer’s and related dementia DO NOT eliminate basic human needs.

Our loved ones have the same needs as we have but are facing them in their own unique way. Just as we feel anxious when our needs are unmet, so do our loved ones with dementia.

It is very easy to label words and actions which are uncomfortable or unusual for us as “difficult behaviors”. Instead, we must learn to see this as communication and try to identify any underlying unmet need.
If human needs are the same, what may make someone with Alzheimer’s disease different?

- Sensory differences (hearing & sight)
- Need for assistance in fulfilling basic human needs
- Primary method of communication may not be verbal
- Lack of inhibition due to dementia
- Different life stages
- Use of coping techniques
Why are these differences important?

- These differences mean they may need help to meet basic needs.
- It may hinder their ability to express themselves, to hear and to be heard.
- These differences can determine how we best approach and communicate with them.
- Because of these differences, our loved ones sometimes live in a different reality, place or time.
- These differences may mean different roles for our loved ones...and for us.
At Sunrise we have learned to meet residents where they are…

- We enter their world, versus trying to bring them to our reality.
- We can enter their world and talk with them about what they are feeling and seeing at that moment in time.
- If we understand our similarities and differences, we can better connect with our loved ones with memory loss. That’s why it’s so important to look at the whole person, not just their disease process and losses or weaknesses.
We must learn to connect in new ways . . .

- It’s natural for you as a friend or family member to want your loved one to be the person he or she always was.

- It’s difficult to accept that dementia has changed the person in ways that make communicating more challenging.

- Throughout this journey we’ll be learning communication techniques that might make it easier for you to enter your loved one’s reality by focusing on your similarities more than on the differences.
... and appreciate different things

**You will:**

- See the beauty of who your loved has been throughout life and is **right now**.
- Realize how you are helping meet your loved one’s current needs, and how he or she **still help meet yours**.
- Appreciate what is **still there** versus focus on what is gone.
- Know that a hug or a smile can be as **fulfilling** as any conversation.
- Realize your loved one still has **much in common** with you.
Appreciate the Wisdom that remains

There is much wisdom expressed by disoriented elderly.

Here are some real examples:

- “Good will is the path from me to you.”
- “This is the shadow of my life.”
- “I need my mother, and so she’s there for me.”
- “I forget things because I think so deeply.”

Appreciate the Wisdom that remains

An 89 year-old woman in a nursing home pointed to an empty door and said, “Oh look, there’s my mother, I have to go to her.” The nurse said, “Mrs. Smith, you are 89 years-old and your mother passed a while ago.” The woman said, “Well, I know that and you know that, but my mother doesn’t know that and that’s why I have to go to her!”

Naomi Feil, ACSW, Founder of the Validation Method

Sunrise’s Reminiscence Program

Serves Basic Human Needs

- Safe Environment
- Good Food
- Several Dessert Choices
- Water Pitchers on Dining Tables
- Individualized Service Plan

Promotes Personhood and Resident-centered Care

- Sunrise Principles of Service
- Designated Care Manager
- Homelike Environment
- Creating Pleasant Days
- Activities and Snoezelen
- Life Skills & Life Enrichment
Thoughts for your journal

- What specific challenges may your loved one face in communicating?

- As you look through Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, can you identify ways that your loved one has each basic need met?

- How does your loved one still meet some of your needs?
Mile Marker...

- We have now completed our session on personhood.
- Think about the specific challenges your loved one may face in communicating needs to others.
- What might you share about your loved one that will help other caregivers meet his or her needs?
- Remember to keep centering and journaling along the way.
- **Stop at this point.** After journaling, resume your journey with *Part 4: Building Bridges.*
A Journey of Discovery:
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Part 4: Building Bridges

The most basic and powerful way to connect to another person is to listen. Just listen.

Rachel Naomi Remen
Building Bridges

- In our last session, we focused on personhood and all we have in common with people with dementia.
- We also identified important differences and how they may shape the reality of our loved ones.
- This session will focus on ways we can build bridges from our reality to theirs.
- As usual, please take a moment to center before beginning this part of our journey.
Divides we may face

As you try to connect with your loved one, you may face the following roadblocks:

- Diminished ability to communicate verbally
- Sensory challenges (hearing, sight, etc.)
- Impaired memory or inability to recognize friends and loved ones
- Being in a different reality than a loved one with dementia
We can build bridges to cross these divides using:

- Reminiscence
- Empathy
- Validation

Note: As a result of it taking some time to build bridges, this session might seem longer than some. Please proceed at your own pace.
The Reminiscence Bridge

Let’s first explore how to use Reminiscence to connect with your loved one.
The Reminiscence Bridge…
The act or process of recalling the past

Reminiscing benefits your loved one in many ways:

- Sharing memories helps form social bonds.
- Allows the person to find identity by connecting him to the past.
- Helps the person to remember ways she coped with difficulties in the past which can enable coping in the present.
- Reminds the person of pleasant experiences in the past that can bring joy and comfort in the present.

The Reminiscence Bridge…

Tips & Techniques

- Your loved one **may need your help** in reminiscing.
- **DO NOT** ask “Do you remember?” This can be stressful.
- **Instead use** “Did you ever?” or “Tell me about a time when…”
- **Remember** that this is about **building connections**. It’s less about the actual words and more about your relationship.
The Reminiscence Bridge…

Tips & Techniques

- The story told may not be exactly “right” – that is okay, your loved one still enjoys sharing it.
- Sometimes hearing the same story over and over is frustrating - this is where centering can be very helpful.
- It’s not so much about the content of the story, but the meaning or emotions attached to the words.
- Know that you are meeting human needs for self expression, love, belonging, and self worth . . . just by listening.
The Reminiscence Bridge...

Trying it out

Take a moment to reflect on how you might begin reminiscing with your loved one. It might go something like this:

- You are visiting and walking past a garden. You say, “Tell me about your previous garden.”
The Empathy Bridge

Next, let’s review how to use empathy to build a more meaningful connection with your loved one.
The Empathy Bridge…
Putting yourself in another person’s shoes

When you use empathy, you:

- View your loved one’s world through her eyes.
- Enter the world of your loved one and feel the way he feels.
- Show respect, improve communication, and reduce frustration.
- Build rapport, trust and dignity.
The Empathy Bridge…
Means Avoiding Judging or Arguing

- Sometimes it may be tempting to remind a loved one of the current reality.
  - “Don’t your remember that dad died in 1987?”
  - “You don’t work anymore dad, you retired more than 20 years ago!”

- For the person with dementia, this is his reality. Try to connect to the person’s feelings, not the content of the words.
  - “You must miss all the people you knew at work.”
  - The empathetic response usually feels better because the person senses that you understand their feelings.
The Empathy Bridge… Trying it out

Instead of judging or trying to redirect the person, being empathetic means putting yourself in the person’s shoes and understanding what he or she is feeling.

- If your loved one says “I need to get to work”, the empathetic response would be:
  - “You need to get to work” or “You miss your work”

- Or, if he or she says “This is an awful day,” the empathetic response would be:
  - “You are really having a bad day”

Note: You’ll find more communication techniques in Part 5: Learning the Language.
The Validation Bridge

The third bridge is the Validation bridge. Let’s explore how you can use Validation to better understand and communicate with your loved one.
The Validation Bridge…
**Communicating what is in their heart and mind**

Validation was developed by Naomi Feil primarily for the very old population.

- “Look at the whole human being, not just the condition of the brain, to understand the reason behind the behavior.” - Naomi Feil

- We have not experienced all the things that people who are 80 years of age have, but we have felt all of the same emotions and by using empathy we can connect with them.

- Find empathy by thinking of your own experiences to help connect with your loved one.

The Validation Bridge…

Communicating what is in their heart and mind

Validation:

- Supports the reality of the person and finds meaning in his or her actions and emotions.
- Helps us to connect with our loved ones when they are anxious, upset or have trouble using words.
- Does not judge or try to change their reality.
- Recognizes individual personhood, needs, and wisdom.
The Validation Bridge…
Means Avoiding Fibbing

- While people with memory loss often forget things, they tend to remember what their family member told them about why they are living at Sunrise.

- A truthful approach lets them know that you hear them and will be their advocate.

- A more truthful approach lets them know they can trust you.
The Validation Bridge…

Means Avoiding Fibbing

- Sometimes it may be tempting to use a “fib” that may seem comforting.
  - “Dad will be here later.” When you know he has died.
  - “Your house is being remodeled and you need to stay here until the work is completed.”

- It is best to approach with honesty.
  - “We know that this move might be difficult for you, but let’s take it one day at a time and if this doesn’t work out we’ll look at other alternatives.”
The Validation Bridge…

Communicating what is in their heart and mind

- When you validate others, you focus on their past history, coping techniques, losses and remaining strengths and wisdom.

- In essence, you are matching their emotions and feelings. You are meeting them where they are.

The Validation Bridge: Finding Resolution

- Validation theory also tells us that some very old people have an important task which is to resolve their unfinished business from the past, a stage called resolution. This is not a conscious plan on their part but is an internal struggle to find resolution and peace.
- We can accompany people with memory loss in performing this final life task. They need us to be there for them and to have empathy and share their emotional feelings.
Families who learn to use Validation often:

- Experience less frustration.
- Are able to communicate more effectively with their loved one with memory loss.
- Tend to visit their loved one more often.
- Begin to understand themselves and their own children better.

An Example of the Validation Technique

- To see an example of the Validation approach in action, click on the link to watch a video clip of Naomi Feil sharing a breakthrough moment with Gladys Wilson.

Click here to watch “Gladys Wilson & Naomi Feil”

There is a Bridge. (2007). Memory Bridge. Chicago, IL. 
http://www.memorybridge.org
An Example of the Validation Technique

- Isn’t it amazing to see the connections that we can still make with persons who are even in the late stages of memory loss?
  - Gladys opened her eyes, she sang, she stopped tapping, pounding, she smiled and seemed more peaceful.
  - Her dignity and self-esteem were boosted.
  - She connected with another human being in a meaningful way.
- As Naomi Feil said, “results will not always be this dramatic, but when we take the time to enter the world of a loved one amazing things can happen!”

There is a Bridge. 2007. Memory Bridge. Chicago, IL. http://www.memorybridge.org
The Validation Bridge... Benefits

When you use Validation, you can expect:

- Your loved one may sit and stand more erectly.
- Increased social controls / less aggressive.
- Less crying, pacing, pounding.
- Improved balance.
- Reduced stress and use of drugs.
- Improved communication.
- A greater sense of self-worth.
- Resolution of unfinished life tasks.

Validation techniques – Trying it out

**First Center.**

- First center by breathing deeply and focusing your attention.
- Pay close attention to your loved one’s emotional state.
- Try to match his or her emotions.

**Note:** We will review specific communication techniques used in Validation during *Part 5: Learning the Language.*
Remember the Weather…

Emotions can have a big effect on the Journey

- Gauge your frame of mind as well as that of your friend or family member with memory loss. What emotions are being displayed?
  - Love/Pleasure/Joy
  - Hate/Rage/Anger
  - Fear/Guilt/Shame/Anxiety
  - Sadness/Misery/Grief

- Centering will help keep your emotions from interfering with the connection.

What were your feelings as you watched the clip with Naomi Feil as she Validated Gladys Wilson?

Write a little each time you visit your loved one and try these bridges – What was hard? Did you notice any differences?

Be fully present as you listen and try to match the emotions of your family member or friend with memory loss.

Write down at least one thing that you never knew about your friend or family member with memory loss.
Mile Marker . . .

- We have now completed our session on building bridges.

- **Stop at this point.** Try using empathy and reminiscing with your loved one, and journaling on your experience, then resume your journey with *Part 5: Learning the Language*.

- **Please note:** Future parts will provide more tips to help you prepare before trying Validation.
After all, when you come down to it, how many people speak the same language even when they speak the same language.

Russell Hoban
Let's now enter the Land of Language.
Learning the Language

You have reached another milestone on your journey.

- You know that the person comes first and demonstrate it in your actions.
- You’ve discovered new things about yourself and your loved one.
- You know how to communicate with empathy and remember to center before Validating your loved one’s emotions.
Learning the Language

- This segment of the Journey is long and provides detailed concepts and strategies.

- Please take it at your own pace and in smaller segments to make sure you are comfortable with the information.

- We have marked potential points to take a break with this symbol.
Learning the Language

As we enter this segment of the journey, imagine that we are entering a foreign land where we will need to learn the language before we can communicate with the people.

Have you ever been to a place where you did not speak the language? If so, how did you communicate to those around you who did not understand you?
Learning the Language

- Sometimes communicating with individuals with Alzheimer’s can be just like trying to speak a foreign language.

- We need to learn to speak their language which is both verbal and non-verbal. Those with memory loss have a high degree of awareness and sensitivity to our body language.
Center and Reflect

- Before we continue this Journey we will center first.
- Clear yourself of all of the inner noise.
- Put aside your own feelings.
- Find your inner strength.
We must find ways to speak our loved ones’ language

So they can express themselves and be heard.

“If you understand how to communicate with them and get through to them, they’re not all gone.”

Susan Anderson, Family member, “There is a Bridge”
Learning the Language

 Many individuals with memory loss can no longer express themselves very well verbally or do not interact much with others or within the environment.

 That does not mean, however, that they are no longer aware.
Learning the Language

- Often caregivers stop trying to communicate when they don’t get a response or when the response is negative such as, crying, hitting, or shutting down.

- This is often when physicians begin to prescribe psychotropic drugs that affect the mind, mood, or mental processes.

- Such medications can have devastating side effects for those who have dementia.

- Learning the language may help to reinterpret the situation and avoid medication.
Learning the Language

We believe:

- Communication is as important as ever at this time.
- Every person still has a sense of awareness, even when cognition declines.
- We can tap into that sense of awareness by meeting the person’s emotional state.
- It’s important to communicate by responding to the person’s cognitive and sensory level.
Learning the Language

At Sunrise we talk about “Nurturing the Spirit”. We continue to “get through” or connect with residents despite their degree of memory loss, confusion, or emotional state.

Throughout this segment, we’ll be exploring techniques that will help you and other caregivers communicate with your loved one.
The First 3 Keys to Communication:

- **Center**
- Observe
- Match

In preparing for an interaction, the first key is one you already know . . . centering. We need to center and take in those deep breaths and clear the mind to prepare to enter the person’s world.
The First 3 Keys to Communication:

- Center
- **Observe**
- Match

Then we **observe**, which means stop for a moment and really look at your loved one to determine the emotions that he or she may be feeling.
The First 3 Keys to Communication:

- Center
- Observe
- Match

Next, **match** the emotion you observe to get on the person’s wavelength.

- *If your loved one is happy, join in and feel happiness.*
- *If sad, then feel and show sadness.*

Remember, you are not mimicking, just mirroring the emotional state you observe.

The First 3 Keys to Communication:

Think of all the ways you can read or display emotions without ever hearing or saying a word.
Observe & Match Emotions Physically

- **Does the jaw** appear tensed or relaxed?

- **Is the mouth** smiling, frowning or is the person expressionless?

- **Is the chest** showing rapid or slow breathing, which also indicates emotional state.

Observe & Match Emotions Physically

- What is the body position? If slumped, it might mean the person is sad, withdrawn, sleepy, tired, or inattentive. Is it upright? If so, it might mean the person is attentive, open, ready for activity and interaction.

- Are the arms and hands tensed? If so, this might signify anxiousness. Or are the arms and hands relaxed? If so, it might mean a comfortableness with surroundings.

- If the movements are deliberate and focused, it usually indicates a more alert and sometimes upset or angry individual.

Need a break?
The Next 4 Keys to Communication

- Ask
- Listen
- Approach
- Empathize

These are key communication techniques to use when communicating with your loved one.

As you approach the person, ask open questions and listen with empathy.
Ask – Especially when your loved one seems angry or upset

**DO:**

- Use ‘open’ questions to show your interest in exploring what is important to the person in the moment - “Who, what, where, when, how?”
- Rephrase what they said – this helps them to know that you heard them.
- Ask the ‘extreme’ – “What is the most . . .”

**DON’T:**

- Use ‘closed’ questions - “Do you feel sad?”
- Use ‘why’ questions that puts persons with memory loss on the spot. They don’t know why.
Asking the extreme helps those who are both happy or sad to express their feelings more fully.

Here are some examples of using the "extreme":

"What’s the worst thing about not being at home?"

"What is the hardest thing that you’ve ever had to do, or go through?"

"What is the best thing about being a mother?"

Asking the extreme – Trying it out

You might want to practice asking the extreme by having someone make a statement and then responding with the extreme.

**Statement**

“I don’t like this ice cream.”

**Response with the Extreme**

“Is this the worst ice cream you ever ate?”
Listen for the need

- Persons with memory loss know when we are listening and really hearing what they are saying. They may be forgetful, but they still have the ability to tell if we are genuinely listening.

- Can you think of a basic human need that your loved one often seems to be expressing? Is there some recurrent theme or topic that he or she often talks about?

Listen for the need

- Is your loved one:
  - Expressing a need to have purpose?
  - Expressing a need to feel loved and secure?
  - Expressing a need to be heard or listened to?
  - Expressing a physical discomfort?

Remember Maslow’s hierarchy of human needs.

## Approach - General

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Angry Person:</td>
<td>An angry person needs <strong>more distance</strong>. Stand at least a few feet away.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confused Person:</td>
<td>A more confused person who has lost social controls needs <strong>less distance</strong>. Move in closer and use touch once you have established a connection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawn Person:</td>
<td>People who tend to be more inwardly withdrawn need us to <strong>get closer</strong> to them in order to connect with them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Approaching an angry person

- It is vital that you develop the trust of an angry person prior to moving close. Otherwise, you risk an injury.

- Be careful about approaching face-to-face with direct eye contact. This can be misconstrued as threatening and may cause the angry person to lash out.

- Remember the 5 foot rule when approaching a very angry or aggressive person, stay at least 5 feet away.
Approaching a confused person

- A person who is confused, but **not** angry or agitated, may pass by without noticing you.

- Stand near the person, or in front of them and make direct eye contact.

- A confused or disoriented person is usually quite open to you getting closer and touching an arm or hand when speaking.
Approaching a withdrawn person

- Try to duplicate the way that you have always greeted your loved one.
- Was it a smile? A hug? A kiss? A gentle touch?
- A familiar gesture lets the person know who you are.

Sometimes you may even need to introduce yourself. We realize that this can be quite painful for family members. Remember that even when your loved one cannot identify you, he or she still knows you on some deeply meaningful level.
Empathize: Using verbal and non-verbal techniques

- Match the emotion - show empathy while reflecting the same emotion.
- Use the same voice tone and facial expression.
- Matching the emotion helps us to move into the inner world of the person who tends to be less verbal.
- When we match emotion by taking on a similar voice tone or making a similar facial expression the person can see and feel that we are entering his or her world.

Empathize: Using verbal and non-verbal techniques

- Have you ever been upset by someone’s tone of voice? What made it upset you?
- Remember to keep empathy in mind when interacting with your loved one.
- Some individuals with memory loss resent that we are asking them to bathe, or brush their teeth. Remember to always use a respectful and warm tone of voice when assisting or encouraging them.
Empathize: Using verbal and non-verbal techniques

- Think about how you would feel if someone in your family told you that it’s time to take a bath or time to go to the bathroom. How are you asking or encouraging your loved one?

- Remember that people with memory loss are very sensitive to our nonverbal as well as verbal communication.

Need a break?
More Keys to Communication

- Deep Eye Contact
  - Touch
  - Connect
Genuine Deep Eye Contact

- This non-verbal form of communication will help you to connect with your loved one in a more meaningful way. Focus on your loved one when you visit. Try to put aside the tasks at first and just spend the initial time there fully present and listening.

- Eye contact helps to establish a trusting connection.
- Get on the person’s level.
- Get close.
- Observe the face and eyes.
- Make eye contact.
Tips on Using Touch

- When people are angry, do not touch them until they indicate that they really trust you.

- Persons who are more confused or in the more advanced stage of memory loss tend to respond very well to touch.

- Always be sensitive to them and be sure that you are not invading their personal space.

- Begin by saying hello and introducing yourself if they appear to be unsure of who you are.

- Begin by touching their hand or arm.
Tips on Using Touch

- If they recognize you and you always greeted with a hug or kiss be sure to do the same now.

- If they respond and appear to need more touch, a gentle touch to their cheek or a hug may be appropriate.

- Gauge the type of touch that you use based on your prior way of connecting with them as well as their present emotional state.

- Just as you need someone to read your body language before they reach out to touch you, a person with memory loss needs the same amount if not more sensitivity.
Tips on Using Touch

- Always read their body language before you reach out to touch.
- Always approach from the front and make eye contact first.
Use Music

Music can have a beneficial effect and can enhance the quality of life of a person with memory impairment.

Does your loved one have a special song that makes them calm and happy? If so, try singing or playing that song at times when they might need their spirits lifted.

“A friend knows the song in my heart and sings it with me when my memory fails” — Donne Reby
Connect the behavior to the need

- This technique works best with residents who are no longer able to communicate well verbally.

- Having listened for need (love, purpose, safety) try to connect with meaningful activity.
The 10 Keys to Communication

- Center
- Observe
- Match
- Approach
- Ask
- Listen
- Empathize
- Deep Eye Contact
- Touch
- Connect
Communication in action

- Before we journal, let’s view Eric Portnoff, Director of Memory Support at Sunrise, as he describes a Validation breakthrough that he experienced.

Click [here](#) to watch the clip of Eric telling “Roberta’s Story”

- You too can have these types of meaningful connections when you use some of the keys to communication.
Journal . . .

- Are you remembering to center?
- What emotional state did you observe? Did you tune in to the same emotional state before greeting your loved one?
- Were you able to try some of the Validation techniques?
- Did you use empathy to connect on a deeper or more meaningful level?
Mile Marker . . .

- We have now 10 keys to communicating with your loved one. Try using them with your loved one and see what works well.

- Begin to try Validating the feelings and continue to use empathy and Reminiscing.

- Stop at this point.
  After journaling, resume your journey with
  *Part 6: “Connecting Behaviors with Needs”.*
To be rooted is the most important and least recognized need of the human soul.

Simone Weil
Connect the behavior to the need

“There is a reason behind the behavior of very old people.” - Naomi Feil

- It is very easy to label words and actions which are uncomfortable as “difficult behaviors.”
- Instead, we must learn to see these as communication and try to identify any underlying unmet need.

What does a behavior really mean?

Story of Mr. J.

Mr. J walks throughout the dining room, stopping at each table and making a rubbing motion on the table with his hand. He appears to be very focused on the task. He repeats “Work, shine, work” over and over again.

We learn from his family that he was a master carpenter and made beautiful tables, chairs and cabinets.

Which basic human need is he expressing in this activity? The need for purpose, he still needs to work.
What does this behavior really mean?

Story of Mrs. S.

Mrs. S. sits quietly in a comfortable chair most of the time. She can only say a few words now and rarely engages in activities with other residents. She carries a handbag which is filled with tissues, wash cloths, and folded pieces of paper that she tends to pick up as she walks by tables or desks.

Sometimes you notice that she is sorting through all of these items. A few times you have even seen her lovingly folding one of the napkins and softly kiss it before she gently tucks it back into her purse with a warm smile.
What does this behavior really mean?

Story of Mrs. S. (continued)

You know that in her past she was a mother of six children and loved caring for them. She was also the bookkeeper for her family-run business. The napkins and papers might be symbols that remind her of the love and care that she gave to her children as well as the work that she did.
What does this behavior really mean?

Story of Mrs. S. (continued)

Together you fold the napkins and clothes as you talk about the beautiful clothing that she made for her children. You were able to find the meaning behind her behavior of hoarding napkins, tissues and papers.

What basic human need does she have?

You helped her to connect to a pleasant memory from the past. As a result she was able to work and have purpose. She also was able to relive the feeling of love and caring that she gave to her children.
Common statements we hear from people with dementia

- I want to go home right now.
- Where is my mother? Have you seen my mother?
- Why did he/she leave me here?
- I’m late for work and have to leave now.
- I need to go home to my children. No one is there to watch them.
Common statements we hear from people with dementia

- Do any of these questions or statements sound familiar?
- How can you best respond when your loved one asks you these questions or makes these types of statements?

There are strong alternatives to just using redirection or therapeutic fibs that focus on the underlying need.

Note to Sunrise families: Some example communication cards that address the above statements are kept in Sunrise’s Reminiscence Coordinator’s office and we can review them together whenever you are faced with these types of questions from your loved one.
Top causes for “behaviors"

- Communication: We aren't listening or understanding them
- Pain: physical or emotional (missing loved one)
- Fear / confusion
- Tired / not tired
- Overstimulated / under stimulated
- Too hot / cold
- Caregivers that are too task focused
- Hungry / not hungry
- Health issues: Illnesses / depression / disease progression
Tune in to the individual’s needs

**Behavior**

Does she seem insecure, sad, missing someone, repeatedly ask to go home?

Does he say that he feels useless, look for things to do, rummage, search, appear frustrated?

Does she cry often, act angry or upset with you and others, repeat the same story over again?

**Need**

*Needs love and security*

*Needs work or purpose*

*Needs to be listened to*
Connect the behavior to the need

- This technique works particularly well with persons who are no longer able to communicate well verbally.

- Observe and listen for need (love, purpose, safety) and try to connect with meaningful activity.

Use your communication keys

To help uncover and meet your loved one’s need during communication:

- Center and clear your mind
- Observe the person’s actions and body language
- Show empathy
- Listen
Use your communication keys

- Say “Tell me about it…”

- Ask the extreme, “What was the best, worst thing about…”

- Support the feeling or need for self-worth. “You were a wonderful mother.” “You worked very hard and made a difference.”

- Connect the person with another person, or an activity that brings a sense of purpose and has meaning and significance.
Our carpenter example

Mr. J. needs to feel useful. How can you Validate his need for usefulness? What could you say and do?

- Family member (F.M.): “Dad, you have a lot of work to do today.”
- Mr. J.: “Work, shine, work.”
- F.M.: “It’s important to you that they look good, that they shine.”
- Mr. J.: “Solid, shine.”
- F.M.: “You were a master carpenter, and made many beautiful, sturdy tables that families are still using today.”
- Mr. J.: “Shine, nice, today.” Mr. J. smiles and seems to stand a bit taller as he continues to rub the tables.
Our nurturing mother example:

Mrs. S. needed to feel useful and relive the feelings of love and caring that she provided to her family. What else could you say or do?

When you find her folding and tucking items away you join her. Bringing some napkins that need folding and a basket of baby clothes, you ask: “*Can you help me fold these baby clothes?*” She responds with a smile, “*Clothes for the children*”.

She engages in this activity with pleasure and when the last shirt is folded she looks at you and says, “*Children will look nice.*” She smiles and says, “*Thank you*”.

You respond, “*Thank you*”. You know that you helped to create a pleasant memory for your loved one by helping her to relive working, and the feelings of love for her children.

You or a caregiver extends this special moment by spending time looking at the photographs of Mrs. S. and her children.
Success will take time and patience

We don’t have a guaranteed solution, and many times it takes trial and error. When we really know the person with memory loss and try to connect in a deep and meaningful way, often we find that we do get through.

It’s so important that the person knows we are trying and that we care. What is most important is to let your loved one know you are on this journey together.

At Sunrise, we are here with you to support you and your loved one with memory loss.
Your next visit

Think about behaviors you have observed in your loved one.

What might the behaviors mean? How do he or she connect with the past?

On your next visit, apply the lessons of connecting behavior with needs.
How did your loved one look when you approached him/her?

How did you start the conversation?

What techniques did you use?

Did you center first?

Did you observe?

Did you show empathy and listen for the need?

Did you connect with him or her by: Asking open questions? Who, what, where, when, how?
Mile Marker

- We have reached another important milestone in this Journey of discovery.

- You realize that many of your loved one’s behaviors are really just a way of communicating the need for security, purpose, or self-expression.

- You now recognize that there is always meaning behind the behavior of your loved one.

- **Stop at this point.** Try to use some of the open and engaging forms of communication to connect in a more meaningful way with your loved one. After journaling, resume your journey with *Part 7: “Meaning and Purpose for your Loved One.”*
A Journey of Discovery:
For Families and Loved Ones
Part 7: Meaning & Purpose for Your Loved One

Many people have a wrong idea of what constitutes true happiness. It is not attained through self-gratification, but through fidelity to a worthy purpose.

Helen Keller
Now we enter the Land of Meaning and Purpose.
Reviewing our Journey

- We now travel to the Land of Meaning and Purpose. Here we will talk about ways to engage loved ones in life enriching, normalizing, success-focused routines of daily life.

- Our goal is to focus on giving each person opportunities to feel successful, bringing a sense of accomplishment and self-worth.

- We know that everyone has an increased sense of self-esteem and dignity when contributing to the community, regardless of their memory loss.

- This is why all of us need to champion life skills every day.
Meaning & Purpose

- During this part of the journey, we’ll explore the importance of your loved one having *meaning and purpose*.

- We’ll look at ways of engaging your loved one in meaningful activities and life skills that match his or her needs and preferences, talents and abilities.

- We’ll also talk about meaningful activities that you and your loved one can engage in when you visit.
Life Skills

What is a “Life Skill”?  
A Life Skill is a skill that someone has developed and used throughout life. Often these skills brought meaning and a sense of purpose to oneself.

For example:

- Gardening
- Baking
- Domestic chores
- Painting
- Mothering  
- Carpentry
- Accounting
- Singing
- Caring for pets
- Maintenance
Sometimes we miss being important – miss being needed.  

Cary Smith Henderson

Research indicates that individuals with dementia have preserved implicit memory which is the memory that is unconsciously processed and results from doing a task such as brushing hair or brushing teeth, dressing, or activities of daily living.

Life skills tap into your loved ones’ implicit memory. When we engage them in life skills we are tapping into that memory and giving them opportunities to maintain and maximize their functional abilities. Life skills give them a sense of accomplishment and success.

Life Skills

- Life skills help to move your loved one from a passive role to an active role where he or she can once again feel like a contributor. This gives each person a sense of ownership and responsibility and has a direct positive impact on self esteem.

- Identities and roles are established.

- Your loved one’s skills, strengths and interests are nurtured.

- Based on these skills, strengths, and interests, each person can reestablish roles to serve in the community.
Do you remember our carpenter?

Mr. J walks through the dining room, stopping at each table and making a rubbing motion on the table with his hand. We determined he was expressing the need for purpose, the need to still work.

We can translate his need to work to a life skill, such as sanding or painting wood for a birdhouse in the garden or to helping us dry and shine the tables.

Not only is his need being met, he is serving the community and fellow residents. We determined he was expressing the need for purpose, the need to still work.
Think about your loved one

- List some of the experiences your loved one has had – in a vocation, as a volunteer, as a member of your family, before developing dementia.

- Use the list to identify life skills.

- Remember, despite memory loss all persons still have skills and talents that we can tap into.
Tell us about your loved one

- Using what you have just reflected upon, think about how you can connect your loved one with meaningful activity. If you are a Sunrise family member, let us know your ideas.

- Bring in visual connections:
  - Items your loved one made,
  - Pictures of your loved one enjoying family or a leisure activity,
  - A trophy, plaque or other symbol of an important life skill.

- At Sunrise, these items will help our Life Enrichment Manager devise more life enriching activities for your loved one to enjoy.
Who is our guide at Sunrise?
The Life Enrichment Manager

The life enrichment manager is our life skills champion who develops meaningful, purposeful activities that are uniquely created for your loved one to do each day.

We believe that each resident can still benefit from engaging in a life skill or life enriching activity daily.

This is part of our effort to ‘create pleasant days’ for each and every resident in the Reminiscence neighborhood.
How can you help your loved one to engage in life skills?

- Share some more information about your loved one with the team members at Sunrise; reach out to our Life Enrichment Manager or Reminiscence Coordinator.

- If you are still at home with your loved one, please remember to reinforce as many life skills as possible. If she cannot cook a meal, perhaps she can set the table. If he can’t dress by himself, offer two shirts so he can make a selection.

- Help to personalize a life skill that brings meaning and purpose or life enrichment to your loved one.

- Continue to work on the keys to communication.
Meaning & purpose through you

- We have reviewed examples of life skills to continue to bring meaning and purpose to loved ones by serving the community.

- There is a very good chance, however, much of their meaning and purpose was and is derived through their interactions with you.
Meaning & purpose through you

- As your loved ones shares stories or holds your hand, they are trying to serve your needs for love and security just as they have done in the past.

- By listening and letting them know you have heard them, you are giving them the greatest opportunity to experience meaning and purpose.
Journal . . .

- Write about some of the life skills or routines that your loved one enjoyed doing in the past.
- Ask the Life Enrichment Manager (or someone else if not at Sunrise) to take a picture of you and your loved one engaging in this activity together. You might want to write about this in your journal.
- If you live out of town you can expect the Sunrise team to send you a picture of your loved one engaging in a life skill.
Mile marker

- We now have completed the session on Meaning and Purpose and you realize that your loved one can still feel meaning, purpose, and success.

- If your loved one is in a more advanced stage of memory loss, know that you can work with our life enrichment manager to adapt a life skill to their functional level.

  **Stop at this point.** Try engaging in a life skill or life enriching activity with your loved one. Journal about this experience.

- After journaling, resume your journey with *Part 8: “Meaning and Purpose for You.”*
We all need a purpose in life. One needs to feel that one's life has meaning, that one is needed in this world.

Hannah Sanesh
The road is not always easy…

“None of us is prepared for the role of caregiving.”
Gail Sheehy, author

“The caregiver’s knowledge and expectations can significantly affect the kind of care offered.”
National Alliance for Caregiving Advisory Group, 2009

“Sometimes, taking care of the person with Alzheimer’s Disease makes you feel good, because you are providing love and comfort. Other times, it can be overwhelming.”
Caring for a Person with Alzheimer’s Disease, National Institute on Aging
www.nia.nih.gov/Alzheimers/Publications/CaringAD
The road is not always easy…

As you have discovered, caregiving for someone with a memory disorder is quite stressful.

Most family and other unpaid caregivers are proud of the help they provide . . . Yet many caregivers experience high levels of stress and depression associated with caregiving.


Elderly spousal caregivers with a history of chronic illness themselves who are experiencing caregiving related stress have a 63% higher mortality rate than their non-caregiving peers.

The road is not always easy…

Making healthcare decisions for another person and helping with the physical tasks of daily living take a lot of time and energy.

Added to this is the emotional distress from watching a person you love gradually lose the ability to function.
Caregiver stress

- Alzheimer’s caregivers report higher incidences than non-caregivers of anxiety, depression, and have higher levels of stress hormones.

- These stress hormones may lead to hypertension, reduced immune function, new coronary heart disease, and other health problems.

- Nearly 70% of Alzheimer’s caregivers who work outside the home change schedules, reduce hours, work part-time, or quit work all together.

There are benefits of caregiving . . .

- Research has indicated that caregiving can have many positive outcomes.

- According to the National Institute on Aging they are:
  - A new sense of purpose or meaning in life
  - Fulfillment of a lifelong commitment to a spouse
  - An opportunity to give back to a parent some of what the parent has given to them
  - Renewal of religious faith
  - Closer ties with people through new relationships or stronger existing relationships

You do not have to take the road alone

Caregivers that have support usually handle the stresses of caregiving much better than those that attempt to do it on their own.

Being a healthy caregiver is important to the person with Alzheimer’s, and important to you.

Let’s explore the ways that you can become a healthy caregiver and the available resources.
The healthy caregiver

- **Become an educated caregiver.** Learn as much as you can about Alzheimer’s so that you are equipped to understand the stages of the disease. As the disease progresses, new caregiver skills are needed.

- **Take care of yourself.** As difficult as it is – find time to exercise, watch your diet, and rest. Schedule a break to see friends or participate in an activity you enjoy.

- **Manage your own stress level.** Stress can cause changes in your behavior and health. Use relaxing activities that work for you: walking, yoga, meditation, or visiting with friends. If high stress continues, consult with your healthcare provider.

Adapted from the Alzheimer Association website: [www.alz.org/living_with_Alzheimers](http://www.alz.org/living_with_Alzheimers)
The healthy caregiver

- **Accept changes as they occur.** People with Alzheimer’s will change, you will need to adapt your approaches as the disease progresses.

- **Be realistic.** Many of the changes that occur are beyond your control. Use the Validation techniques to help stay connected with your loved one.

- **Give yourself credit, not guilt.** Try not to feel guilty because you can’t do more. You are doing the best you can despite difficult circumstances. Be proud that you are there for a loved one who needs you.

Adapted from the Alzheimer Association website: [www.alz.org/living_with_Alzheimers](http://www.alz.org/living_with_Alzheimers)
National Resources for Caregivers

Explore these sites as they contain lots of useful information.

- [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org) - National Alzheimer’s Association
- [www.nia.nih.gov/alzheimers](http://www.nia.nih.gov/alzheimers) - National Institute on Aging
- [www.caregiving.org](http://www.caregiving.org) - National Alliance for Caregiving
- [www.nfcacares.org](http://www.nfcacares.org) - National Family Caregivers Assoc.
- [www.aarp.org/caregiving](http://www.aarp.org/caregiving) - American Assoc. of Retired Persons
- [www.caps4caregivers.org](http://www.caps4caregivers.org) - Children of Aging Parents
- [www.caregiver.com](http://www.caregiver.com) - Caregiver Magazine
- [www.aoa.gov](http://www.aoa.gov) - Administration on Aging
- [www.elderweb.com](http://www.elderweb.com) - Online community of older adult computer users
- Alzheimer's Association 24-hr helpline 800-272-3900
Family Services Sunrise Provides

- Monthly letters home
- Family support groups
- Resource library
- Family socials - quarterly
- Family buddies
- Education opportunities
- Listening
- Participation in Individualized Service Plans
- Monthly Service & Health Updates
- Volunteer opportunities
Sometimes we find treasures as we journey

“My advice to you is to treasure each day and live it to the fullest.”

Coach Frank Broyles, University of Arkansas, Razorback Athletic Director


Life-long learning

Giving to your loved one in such a meaningful way may not only bring you a sense of purpose, it provides you with a unique learning opportunity.

We learn to use valuable communication techniques that create deeper connections with others and allow us to experience more joy.
Caregivers can still feel joy

“Sometimes the caregiver’s joy is elicited by the joy in the person with dementia. If we set aside the distorted position that a person’s worth, dignity, and status as a human being are dependent entirely on cognitive capacity and independence, we may discover that they can teach us something about the warmth and love that is the essence of humanity”.

Stephen G. Post, PhD, Director of the Center for Medical Humanities, School of Medicine, Stone Brook University
Journal...

- How have you been caring for yourself?
- What resources have you identified?
- What assistance from others have you sought or accepted?
- How are you coping with the challenges of caregiving? Take the caregivers stress quiz at [www.alz.org/stresscheck](http://www.alz.org/stresscheck).

Stress Quiz
Mile marker

- We have completed the session on caregiving and you know the importance of becoming a resilient caregiver.

- You have found strategies that help you to cope.

- **Stop at this point** and think of ways that others can help to support you in your caregiving efforts.

- After journaling, resume your journey with *Part 9: “The Hope to Look Forward.”* when you are ready.
A Journey of Discovery:
For Families and Loved Ones
Part 9: The Hope to Look Forward

Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow.

Albert Einstein
Now we can have the Hope to Look Forward.
“To travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive.” Robert Louis Stevenson

In this section we’ll be talking about adding quality to the progressing life story of your loved ones.

We do this by giving them opportunities to have a role in the community and a reason to look forward.
The Hope to Look Forward

- We don’t want to give any false perceptions that there is necessarily much hope for reversing or even holding the disease process of dementia at bay.

- However, at Sunrise we do believe that we can still have hope for each resident’s continuing life story.

Click here to watch “Interview with Lisa Snyder.”
The Hope to Look Forward

We believe that each person’s life story continues. Our goal is to enrich it in every way that we possibly can.

We value, respect, and uphold each resident’s dignity regardless of cognitive losses as we strive to ‘create pleasant days’ for every resident.
The Hope to Look Forward for Residents at Sunrise

- Think about some things that your loved one enjoys doing. This information is available to Sunrise team members in the resident profile, demographic profile and in the Individualized Service Plan (ISP).

- We encourage family members to engage in meaningful activities with their loved one to help maintain individual identity, sense of self worth, and meet the basic human need to have purpose.

- By enabling choice, celebrating individuality, and engaging in life skills, we are creating pleasant days for your loved one.
The Hope to Look Forward for Residents at Sunrise

- A vibrant and active memory care neighborhood has residents who are still engaged in meaningful activities.

- Residents continue to have roles in the community. Residents can move from passive roles to more active roles.
Tune in to the individual’s needs

- Loves animals → *Neighborhood animal expert*
- Loves children → *Teacher*
- Enjoys cooking → *Neighborhood chef*
- Likes to keep things in order → *Community organizer*
- Enjoys sports → *Coach*
More characteristics and roles

- Loves to tell stories → **Storyteller**
- Enjoys gardening → **Gardening club**
- Enjoys singing → **Song leader**
- Philosopher → **Neighborhood advisor**
- Likes to pray → **Prayer leader**
Ways Residents care for others

- Helping other residents with puzzles, crafts
- Reading to other residents
- Praying with other residents
- Feeding and caring for pets
- Welcoming new residents, Goodwill Ambassadors
Residents have their own clubs or groups

Clubs can include: entertaining, playing musical instruments, singing to residents, playing piano before lunch and dinner, choirs, theatre groups, gardening club, men’s groups, military clubs.

Belonging to activities and neighborhood committees: Giving us ideas for activities, a community newsletter, leading or participating in monthly Reminiscence neighborhood meetings.
What will it take to make this happen consistently?

- Believe that the person is still there.
- Know that we can still communicate and connect with our loved one regardless of the degree of memory loss.
- Remember that everyone needs to have purpose and be acknowledged and have their feelings Validated.
- Your encouragement, assistance, and positive feedback.
- From Sunrise: Strong leadership and team members.
Reviewing our Journey

Throughout this Journey of Discovery you have learned about ways to connect and communicate with your loved ones on a deeper level.

We’ve focused on their personhood and know that we share similar emotions, desires, and needs.
Reviewing our Journey

Personhood does not diminish because a person has dementia. There is still a person inside.

We've focused on learning their language so we can communicate in a deeper and more meaningful way.

We've come up with life skills that have brought your loved ones more meaning and purpose.
Reviewing our Journey

- In this final part of the journey we are hoping to give the residents and you, their family members, hope for tomorrow and hope for the future.

- It takes the commitment, talents, and energy of the Sunrise team working together and along side of you to transform a community and help your loved ones, our residents, to take the community back.

- It also takes you, the family member, who has unique insight and knowledge about them because you know them so well.
When we take the time to feel the joy:

- We remain engaged (attentively present).
- We accept our loved one for who he or she is now, not who he or she used to be.
- We focus on the present and stop dwelling in the past.
- We can all have the hope to look forward.
Reminiscence - A Journey of Discovery

We know that as this Journey continues we still face uncharted waters, and on some days stormy seas, but we are now better equipped to face them.

While we have reached the end of this training, we have not reached our destination.

This Journey is far from over. Each resident’s life story continues to be written each day.
Reminiscence - A Journey of Discovery

Each of you has a very important and significant role in “Creating Pleasant Days” and meaningful moments for your loved ones. By joining this Journey of Discovery, you are a part of making this happen.

Thank you for joining this Journey of Discovery.
A Journey of Discovery

“Focus on the journey not the destination. Joy is found not in finishing an activity but in doing it.”

Greg Anderson, Author and founder of the American Wellness Project
References


- There is a Bridge. Memory Bridge. (2007). Chicago, IL. www.memorybridge.org

- www.vfvalidation.org