



Dementia Toolkit – Stay connected

Strategies for having a conversation (for people with dementia)



Dementia Toolkit
Living your life with hope



Stay connected

Strategies for having a conversation (for people with dementia)

Having a conversation offers you lots of things:

- a sense of connection
- something interesting or new to think about
- a chance to keep up your conversational skills

Having a chat does you more good than you might think!

In this booklet you will:

- read about Keith and Chris (who both live with dementia) and their strategies for conversations
- get some top tips to help you feel confident



What I miss most is a proper conversation.

A person with dementia reflecting on the COVID-19 pandemic



Chris and Keith on conversations

We spoke to Chris and Keith, who both live with dementia, about their thoughts on having conversations. You can watch the full video online. Here are some of their reflections:

- the surrounding environment is important. Background noise can be very distracting. It can affect your thinking processes
- use questions to keep a dialogue (between two people) rather than a monologue. Bounce the conversation between each other
- the importance of respect and relationships to conversations
- group conversations can be difficult. Think about ways to encourage turn-taking
- writing little notes can help you remember what you want to say
- prepare what you want to talk about, if you are worried you will forget

The 'I want to speak please' cards produced by DEEP can be very helpful. You can make your own by printing it out from this link:

<https://bit.ly/IWantToSpeakCard>



Chris, a person with dementia, says
"I use humour to keep the conversation going. It's great for filling gaps."





Keith, a person with dementia, says

"Sometimes it's good to have your conversation nurtured. It can be hurtful to be shut down. There needs to be respect."



Top tips for having conversations

Jackie Pool is QCS Dementia Care Champion and an experienced Occupational Therapist. Here are her top tips to help you with your conversations.

- If a name of a person or an object escapes you, substitute the name with a description.
- If you are anxious about having a conversation, take some slow and deep breaths before you start or during the conversation.
- Help yourself to focus on the topic of conversation by repeating a few of the words that the other person has just said, before adding to them with your own words.

The Dementia Tip-Share website is full of tips from people with dementia for people with dementia. They have a section all about connecting and communicating.

Visit <https://dementiatip-share.org.uk/our-tips/connecting-and-communicating/>



This resource is on the internet. Scan the QR code below to visit the webpage.



Contact us

We would love to know what you think of the toolkit. We want to improve it based on your feedback.

Please get in touch with us by emailing
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