

OVERVIEW

COMMUNICATION



Communication with others is a vital part of our humanness. It is how we relate to others, express our needs, and share our feelings. Elders who have difficulty with communication easily become isolated and depressed which make them more vulnerable to becoming ill. Even though walking and bathing may be easier to see, trouble with communication may be one of the most serious problems an elder can experience. Finding strategies to help them “stay in the game” is a vital part of assuring their long-term well-being.

III. Communication Ability



Communication is the way we interact with others. It involves speaking, understanding, and hearing. Our communication skills are Important in working with elders. We also need to know how to understand and work with any communication problems elders may be experiencing. We evaluate their communication ability based on the following scale:

COMMUNICATION ABILITY

1. Normal Ability to Speak and Hear - Elder has no difficulty interacting and communicating with others in any environment.

2. Slight Problems in Communicating - May have some difficulty in noisy settings or where there is a lot of confusion going on. Has trouble 10% of the time or less.

3. Mild Difficulty in Communicating – Misses some interaction, being unable to hear or follow what is being said or is unable to consistently think of what

they want to say, resulting in occasional word finding problems or difficulty expressing themselves. Has trouble as much as 25% of the time.

4. Moderate Difficulty in Communicating - Has some significant problems in interacting with others either due hearing difficulty or, inability to express what they want to say. May use written communication or gestures some of the time. Unable to communicate effectively about 50% of the time.

5. Serious Difficulty in Communicating - Has poor communication ability either due to the inability to hear, understand, speak, or formulate thoughts to communicate needs. Has trouble with communicating about 75% of the time.

6. Profound Difficulty in Communicating - Unable to use normal means of interacting. Responds to gestures or non-verbal methods to a limited extent. Extremely poor communication functioning.

7. Unable to Communicate With Others - Not able to communicate with others.

