

JFS Volunteer Connections- “COMMUNICATION TIPS”

- **Verbal Communication Tips:**

Verbal communication can be hard for many, especially those who feel isolated. How can we help our clients feel more comfortable with talking to us?

- ✓ Choose the right environment- Avoid having in-depth or important conversations in settings where there is lots of competing noise or distracting activities. (e.g. TV, radio)
- ✓ Speak distinctly and louder, if necessary- Some elders do not like to admit that they are hard of hearing. Do this without being condescending.
- ✓ Laugh when you can! Laughter really is the best medicine. Humorous moments often arise, even in the most difficult and stressful caregiving situations. Be open to the opportunity to lighten things up and take things a little less seriously.

(Source: <https://www.agingcare.com/articles/communication-techniques-to-deal-with-elderly-parents-138454.htm> 2019)

- **Non-Verbal Communication and ‘Active Listening’ Tips:**

- ✓ Smile- a SMILE goes a long way!
- ✓ Posture- sit toward them, upright, limit fidgeting, etc.
- ✓ Eye contact- Try to avoid looking down or above them.
(Make sure this is culturally acceptable to the client.)
- ✓ Mirroring- Reflecting/responding/paraphrasing to show understanding. (Don’t simply *repeat* what was said!)
- ✓ Listen without interrupting!
- ✓ Be patient!
- ✓ End the visit on a positive note.

Remember, YOU are the eyes and ears for Jewish Family Services!

Make sure you COMMUNICATE with the JFS Staff about any concerns you have about JFS clients as this is how we know if/when our community needs help!