



Pioneer Network™

SHARING RESOURCES

A Fun Activity During Social Distancing

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Simultaneous Presence Therapy Simultaneous Presence Therapy (SPT) originated as a non-pharmacologic means of decreasing, and possibly serving as an antidote to, a resident's negative experiences/feelings. SPT has science behind it, but no one person or group has incorporated it into the mainstream of senior care. Broadly speaking, SPT is simply recording (audio or video) a family member/support partner "talking" to the resident. The family member might record themselves saying, "Hi Mom! How are you doing? I'm coming to visit tomorrow. It's really snowing here. Here's our dog, Larry...." etc, etc. Then LTC staff play this recording on a phone, tablet or TV, for a resident when the resident is feeling lonely, restless, etc.

This is certainly a diversion and may not address the REAL needs of the resident, but it can make residents feel better for a time.

SPT need not be seen as "therapy" or as a "non-pharmacologic response to agitation." It is also just a fun, personalized, meaningful experience. The family member can add substance and progression to the recording by sharing an age/dementia-friendly book with the resident during the recording. (Like Reading2Connect, there are organizations that produce dementia friendly books.)

We have found that reading, discussing, and showing the illustrations of a book during the recording holds the resident's interest and attention longer than just casual chitchat.

Keep in mind that for some people, showing them a video of a family/friend can be upsetting. It's not unlike Virtual Reality. SPT should be presented mindfully and carefully.

To help determine if SPT will be positively received, you may want to first see how the resident reacts:

1. when you talk about the loved one to the resident.
2. when you show a picture of the loved one to the resident.
3. when you show a brief video of the loved one.

Here are some dementia-friendly filming tips:

- fill up the screen
- simplify the background
- limit background noise
- consider lighting: no shadows, no glare
- don't talk fast
- silent pauses are good

Free Visual Patient-Provider Communication Aids

The Patient-Provider Communication Forum, with the support of the United States Society of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (USSAAC), are providing a [FREE bank of augmentative and alternative communication \(AAC\) tools](#) to support patients' abilities to communicate with their providers, and vice versa, during this unprecedented time of need. An EXCELLENT resource!