

Communication: Make a Connection

Centering:

It is important before any session to center yourself. This helps to focus your attention and calm you before touching another. You are touching the person with your presence and energy just entering the room. Being centered affects the quality of your presence and makes the connection more authentic.

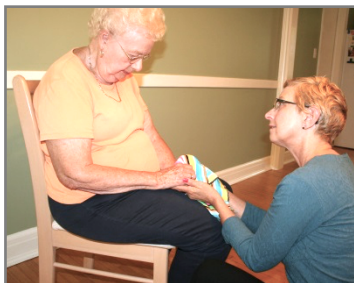
To connect, we must first engage the person's attention and get into their *bubble of awareness*.

Bubble of awareness is influenced by sensory and cognitive impairment. The "bubble" gets smaller as the disease progresses.

Connecting When the Bubble is:

Large

Ask, "Can I join you?" As you are saying this, hold out your hand in a welcoming gesture: palm up, soft fingers, at a height that she can reach out to take your hand. Then sit down with her and just be present for a moment before proceeding with offering touch technique.



Connecting When the Bubble is:

Small

Place yourself in the person's *bubble* within eye shot.

Present a bright cloth. Place it in her hands, saying "I brought something for you." If she handles the object it means she is now focusing her attention in the here and now and is more aware of the physical world.



Lift her hands up to encourage eye contact with you. The cloth or object becomes a link to encourage interaction.