

Keys to Good Communication

1. Effective communication is helpful in all families.
2. Persons with serious psychiatric illnesses often have difficulty following conversations.
3. Improving communication can reduce stress for persons with serious psychiatric illnesses.
4. Effective communication takes time, practice, and cooperation.
5. Keep communications brief.
6. Use "I" statements and talk about one topic at a time.
7. Be specific.
8. Focus on behaviors rather than the personality, attitudes or feelings of the other person.
9. If someone's behavior affects you, tell them how you feel.
10. Let people know when they please you.
11. Make requests in a non-demanding, positive manner.
12. When expressing unpleasant feelings, focus on behavior and suggest how to improve the situation.
13. Let the person know you are listening.
14. Look at the person.
15. Use a calm, pleasant voice tone.
16. Use a facial expression that matches what you're saying.