

CAT Purrs Interpreted



CHANGING ANTIPSYCHOTIC THINKING

Check your mood at the door, and smile! You are being watched. Those around you whose words have lost their meaning are on high alert to your body language and emotions—they need to know they are safe and accepted. Calm reassurance and connection through gentle touch, music, smiles, hugs, and holding hands help people know that all is well.

Pay attention to each person's unique nonverbal messages. According to Naomi Feil, they are likely trying to tell you about "one of three human needs—love, usefulness (restoration of movements associated with work), or the need to express raw emotions."

Watch and listen creatively for the person's meaning in order to understand fragmented speech. A cry for "Mother" may express the need for care, home, and/or safety. Consider the situation and what the person's actions tell you. Create written messages to reassure those who can still read.

Action Steps:

1. **Post this flyer for all care providers to read!**
2. Keep a lighthearted tone with gentle humor to help the person feel safe.
3. Remain calm when a person becomes agitated. Breathe. Take time to center yourself.
4. Try to identify the source of agitation and remove the person from it.
5. Observe non-verbal cues such as eye contact, breathing, appetite, facial expression, gestures, tone of voice, and posture to try to discover the need.
6. Wait to speak until the person faces you. Speak clearly, in short sentences.
7. If you get angry, step away until you are calm. Without blaming or accusing, use "I" language such as, "I need to rest now."

Don't miss these training opportunities:

- Locate Missouri Coalition Celebrating Care Continuum Change (MC5) regional meetings and training opportunities at <https://www.momc5.com>
- Watch the inspiring five minute *Validation Breakthrough* video at <https://vfvalidation.org>, and find current Naomi Feil validation resources and training.
- Get a resident-eye-view of how NOT to create a feeling of safety and acceptance with the Module 1 video clip 1, "Understanding Their World" from the **Hand in Hand Toolkit**.
- Find *Hiding the Stranger in the Mirror/A Detective's Manual for Solving Problems Associated with Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders* by Cameron J. Camp, Ph.D and get answers to the unsolved cases in the book at www.Cen4ARD.com

For more information, contact a MO LANE Planning Committee Member:

Department of Health & Senior Services • Primaris • State LTC Ombudsman • MC5 • Missouri League for Nursing • Missouri Center for Patient Safety • QIPMO • Leading Age Missouri • Missouri Association of Nursing Home Administrators • Missouri Health Care Association • Missouri Board of Nursing Home Administrators • AMDA • National Association of Health Care Assistants • Missouri Veteran's Commission

- Missouri Pain Initiative • Heartland Kidney Network • Missouri Hospice and Palliative Care Association