ST. FRANCIS 24/7 CALL CENTER: (321) 269-4240

St. Francis REFLECTIONS® Hospice
Established 1977 • Licensed 1990

Communication

Some of the most meaningful conversations can be difficult, when saying goodbye a loved one or communicating bad news. Understanding how to listen and be present when needed can help facilitate effective communication. It's important to be sensitive and honest and understand the participant's comfortability with the topic(s). Honest communication can help reduce miscommunication and open the door for future conversations.

Tips for Effective Communication:

- **Communication Techniques**: Speak slowly and clearly. Use simple language and repeat information if necessary. Be aware of non-verbal cues, such as body language and facial expressions. Eye contact, when appropriate, can convey empathy and understanding. Keep an open mind and let the conversation develop naturally, avoid having a preconceived outcome. Try to acknowledge all points of view, even if they differ from what you feel. Allow space for silence, don't worry if you don't know what to say, your presence and non-verbal expressions can be just as important.
    - **Try using open-ended questions:**
        - What are you thinking?
        - Who do you want to be here?
        - What are you feeling?
        - What concerns do you have?
        - What do you think happens when you die?
        - What is most important to you right now?

- **Providing Information**: Keeping the patient informed about their care plan and any changes is important. Involve them in decision-making when possible. Be honest but compassionate. This helps them feel involved and respected. Use simple terms and avoid medical jargon. Reassure them that their comfort and preferences are a priority.

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- **Difficult Conversations**: Be honest yet compassionate when discussing prognosis or end-of-life wishes. Acknowledge their fears and concerns and provide emotional support. Share memories and acknowledge the patient's accomplishments. Do not avoid conversations in the hopes of "perfect" timing, because it may not come. Avoid pushing someone to talk or forcing conversations the patient is not comfortable with. Welcome emotions, even difficult ones. Sadness and anger are a natural part of the process, allow the patient to express themselves rather than push the emotions down.

St. Francis Reflections is always available to assist with any questions or concerns 24/7

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