

Tips for Communicating with Individuals Affected by Chronic Disorganization

Living with or working with a person affected by chronic disorganization (CD) can be extremely challenging for someone who is not disorganized. Among the strategies used to help the person with CD, effective communication is at the top!

Be aware of and acknowledge your own feelings and recognize that you will probably go through various stages of dealing with the other person's disorganization.

- Offering encouragement
- Being disappointed by failures and backsliding
- Irritation with the rate of progress
- Withdrawing to avoid expressing anger

Avoid what does not work

- Don't say: *Just do it!*
- Avoid nagging
- Don't act like a watchdog
- Resist criticizing
- Never ridicule
- Don't exaggerate consequences
- Eliminate phrases such as:
I told you so.

Practice what does work

- Listen from an accepting point of view
- Listen without judgment
- Give your full attention to the person when he or she is speaking
- Think highly of the person so that this will come through in your manner and tone of voice
- Focus your attention on his or her good qualities
- Draw out his or her best instead of finding fault
- Recognize and acknowledge incremental progress

If you get angry:

- *Tell the individual directly.*
- *Let the person know that he or she is more important to you than his or her disorganization.*
- *Know what your own bottom line is and be clear about it.*