

*Power of Connection: 40th Annual Wisconsin State Conference
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Workshop: Matching Experiences: Understanding How Our Brain's Prediction Process Can Help Us Provide Quality Care

Presenter: Kathryn Fassbender of the Dementia Letters Project

Contact: kate@dementialettersproject.com | 920-740-3973

What is Engagement:

Engagement is a way to frame that even during the midst of a care task, we are still engaging with a resident. It is not only for the Life Engagement/Life Enrichment team to become relational with those we support and care for, but also the job of everyone in elder care.

What is Predictive Processing:

Predictive Processing is when the brain works to minimize surprise by pairing current sensory experiences with what the brain already knows.

Key Takeaways:

1. Think of the 3 Rs when approaching engagement.
 - Receptivity – We must first be receptive to the person before us.
 - Relational – We need to be relational with the person we are supporting.
 - Reliability – We are to share that we are there for them in all times.
2. Because the stress threshold is lower for those living with dementia, we need to work with them to help keep their stress low and this can be done using prediction.
3. What our brain is scanning to find “matches.”
 - Environment – What is surrounding this moment via our sensory experience?
 - Routine – What is the pattern of engagement or movement taking place?
 - Social/Cultural Cues – How do we act in any give situation given our culture and social setting?

Putting Knowledge into Practice

Activities for Self and Team

1. Sit down and have your team create a list of everything they do in the first few hours of the day. Think about what it would be like for that routine to change or for something to be out of place.
2. Go through this process with the people you care for each day. Does everyone on the care team know and understand the person's preferences. How can you write a care plan with this information?
3. How will you communicate each residents/clients day to a new caregiver? How will you update this information as you learn more about the person?
4. What is the plan for when the person cannot/does not predict what is going to take place? How will you reassure that person to help lower their stress level? How might you better communicate what you need to take place? How will you check in with that needs of that person?