

Using Visual and Audio for Dementia Communication

by Laurie Scherrer,
Blogger

For many of us living with dementia, conversations can be difficult. Reduced auditory processing functions and competing noises often cause a breakdown in information processing. As we regularly struggle with a delayed processing time, we rely on visual skills to assist in understanding. Eye contact and being able to see the speaker's lips moving are important tools for communicating. During telephone conversations words and meanings easily become misinterpreted or totally lost.

When our visual connection is absent we may “fill-in the gaps” with what we assumed was said or we may forget all, or part of the conversation. In our world of technology there are many resources available to replace an audio only telephone and improve communication.

Videotelephony is a two-way communication comprising both audio and visual (sight and sound) in real-time. Videophones and videoconferencing allow those living with dementia to stay connected and engage in conversations that would otherwise be prohibitive. This technology allows us to bridge much of our communication gap.

Many people find video communication as easy or easier than the telephone. Video-calling is made simple using [FaceTime](#) or [WhatsApp](#). When multiple people are involved, videoconferencing works well with [Zoom](#) or [Skype](#). We are fortunate to live in an age where this technology is available. It is time to bridge the communication gap for those living with dementia and assist them by providing a visual connection.

In August 2013 at the age of 55, Laurie was diagnosed with Dementia (Progressive Degenerative Impairment), believed to be Early Onset Alzheimer's and FTD. She shares her thoughts, challenges and emotions in hope that this will help others who are part of this Dementia Daze. You can read more from Laurie on her [Blog site](#).