

## Having Constructive Conversations About Dementia Supportive Communities

Talking about Dementia Supportive Communities can feel uncomfortable at first, but simple strategies can help you feel prepared and confident.

**1. Imagine a Dementia Supportive Community in your mind and describe it in your own words:** It's easier to get people excited about a future they can imagine clearly.

Example: *When I imagine a Dementia Supportive Community, I see people who always feel comfortable doing what they need to do and going where they want to go.*"

**2. Share stories or lived experience to help people connect emotionally and remember the message.** It's okay if the story isn't "perfect" but be mindful of privacy and consent and consider the dignity of the people involved.

Example: *"The customer shared how much easier they found doing their shopping during the early quiet time. They now shop at that time every week!"*

**3. Share your own meaningful experiences and impacts:** The most effective conversations are grounded in your own experience.

Example: *"Thinking about dementia in terms of the different thinking 'lines' really helped me to focus on feelings when I talk with someone living with dementia".*

### 4. Match the Message to the Audience

Different audiences care about different things.

- **With colleagues or managers,** focus on practical benefits and alignment with values
- **With customers, clients, or community members,** focus on stories, resources and support
- **With friends, neighbours, or family,** focus on empathy and everyday understanding, and opportunities for involvement

**5. Make Support Visible and Invite Curiosity.** Sharing the message isn't about telling people what to do, it's about opening the door and creating opportunities for people to learn and do more.

Examples:

*"If you ever need it, the Alzheimer Society has really helpful resources – here is a link to their webpage"  
"I'm happy to share more if you're interested."*