

# 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," or "I'm happy to share more if you're interested."