

There Is A Bridge DVD By Memory Bridge

A review by Shannon Nosbisch, co-founder of Effingham Area Alzheimer's Awareness

Communication is one of the most important, if not THE most important part of being human. While communicating effectively can be challenging in our everyday world, for a person living with Alzheimer's disease or related dementia, it is more often that not challenging and frustrating. In this DVD, Memory Bridge has brought together people living with Alzheimer's, their family members, and experts to help us understand how to best break down barriers to communicating with people living with dementia.

Unfortunately, sometimes when someone is living with dementia, especially if they are living in a long-term care community, they don't get enough opportunities for communication and attention. Even in the later stages of the disease, when most people are not able to communicate verbally, there can be positive and meaningful non-verbal communication. A person living with Alzheimer's may not remember what the communication was, but they will remember the way it made them feel.

Memory Bridge has designed programs for pre-teens and teenagers to "buddy" with a person living with Alzheimer's disease in a long-term care community. The results are truly amazing. The kids are taught the best ways to communicate, get a background of their "buddy" and then meet with them one-on-one for conversations. They are encouraged to ask questions about

their life and their feelings. Sometimes communication is not verbal, but emotional. Being present in the world of the person living with Alzheimer's is what is important.

This documentary originally aired on PBS, and is about an hour long. Additional content includes interviews with some of the experts featured in the documentary. They explain why good communication is so important and give tips that can help everyone that wants to communicate with their loved one.

By watching this DVD, you can see how being present in the world of dementia can make a visit with your loved one more meaningful for everyone.

This resource is available at the Effingham Public Library, Flora Public Library, Evans Public Library, Newton Public Library, Greenup Township Public Library, Shelbyville Public Library and the Mattoon Public Library in the Forget-Me-Not Resource Center. If you do not have a library card, ask at the main desk how you can check it out.