

Adaptive Interaction and Dementia - *Dr Maggie Ellis and Professor Arlene Astell*

Communicating with those around us is a vital part of human existence and most of us are reliant on the spoken word to develop and maintain these connections with others. As dementia progresses some people experience the breakdown of their verbal communication skills and this can lead to social isolation. To re-connect with these individuals will require imaginative and creative interventions and the authors, Ellis and Astell, outline their approach to these situations.

Adaptive Interaction, a concept that the authors have been working on for close to 20 years, uses non-verbal techniques to communicate with people with dementia. Based on the fundamentals of communication including eye contact, sounds, shared attention and imitation, Adaptive Interaction builds a profile of a person's communication abilities and uses it to help the person with dementia remain connected to the 'social world'.

Adaptive Interaction and Dementia uses fictional case studies, that are based on their experiences with multiple individuals, to illustrate this particular approach to communication. These composite case studies have been developed specifically to highlight the "huge variability between people who are living with dementia and who can no longer use words".

The book is clearly structured and provides valuable insights into how those living and working with people with dementia can maintain levels of communication throughout the course of the disease. Ellis and Astell are following in the footsteps of Naomi Feil in helping to socially reconnect those whom are often marginalised and forgotten.