



# EFFECTIVELY COMMUNICATING WITH OLDER ADULTS

Rethinking the intake process for older adult clients.

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# Who is your client?



# Understanding starts before the meeting





# Touch Taste Smell Hearing Vision



# Loss of Hearing

- How common is it and what can you do to prepare and understand how your client might feel.

## Challenges to hearing well

- Background noise
- Distractions
- Stress and fatigue
- Poor lighting
  - *Too bright*
  - *Too much glare*

## Understanding body language

- Tipping their head or changing position to facilitate hearing
- Asking to have something repeated
- Blank looks, disorientation, inappropriate responses- “yes” or nods when they don’t really understand. “Deer in the headlights”

# Good communication practices

- Have the person's attention before speaking and be sure you are facing them.
- Speak clearly and slowly – remember you are not speaking with a peer, you are speaking with someone who might be compromised by hearing loss and is hearing information for the first time.
- Ask if they can hear you – It's ok to begin and then stop and check in with them.
- Allow them time to respond.

# Williams Sound Pocket Talker





# Loss of Vision

- How do changes in vision affect daily life for older adults?
- What about loss of independence?

# Normal Vision



# The Big Three

## Cataracts, Glaucoma & Macular Degeneration

- Very sensitive to glare and bright light
- Difficulty reading, detecting stairs and low objects
- Orientation problems in unfamiliar places

# Cataracts



# Glaucoma





# Glaucoma

The slide features a diagram illustrating the structure of W3C's accessibility work. At the top, a box labeled 'W3C' contains the text 'Education and outreach' and 'Working with research and development community'. Below this, a box labeled 'W3C Accessibility' is connected to the 'W3C' box by a dashed line. This box contains the heading 'W3C Accessibility is Organized' followed by a dashed line and the text 'divided into four Domains within the W3C, with two Active Domains'. Below this, a box labeled 'Technical Activity' is connected to the 'W3C Accessibility' box by a dashed line. This box lists four domains: 'Protocols and Formats Working Group (PFWG)', 'Web Content Accessibility Guidelines Working Group', 'Authoring Tool Accessibility Guidelines Working Group', and 'User Agent Accessibility Guidelines Working Group'. A final box labeled 'Tools and Repair Tools Working Group' is connected to the 'Technical Activity' box by a dashed line.

W3C

Education and outreach

Working with research and development community

W3C Accessibility

W3C Accessibility is Organized

divided into four Domains within the W3C, with two Active Domains

Technical Activity

- Protocols and Formats Working Group (PFWG)
- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines Working Group
- Authoring Tool Accessibility Guidelines Working Group
- User Agent Accessibility Guidelines Working Group

Tools and Repair Tools Working Group

# Macular Degeneration



# Macular Degeneration

- facilitating development of evaluation and repair tools for a
- conducting education and outreach
- coordinating with research and development that can affect

## How WAI is Organized

WAI is one of four working activities [Working Activities](#) and

1. [WAI Technical Activities](#)
  - [Program Development Working Group \(PDWG\)](#)
  - [Visual Assessment and Repair Working Group \(VARWG\)](#)
  - [Assessment and Repair Working Group \(ARWG\)](#)
  - [User Interface Working Group \(UIWG\)](#)
  - [Evaluation and Repair Tools Working Group \(ERT WG\)](#)
2. [WAI International Program Office](#)
  - [Education and Outreach Working Group \(EOWG\)](#)

# How does it feel?



**SEE HEAR LISTEN**

- Put pieces of cotton balls in your ears.
- Wrap the rubber bands around your fingers.
- Write down –
  - *3 cherished freedoms*
  - *3 favorite possessions*
  - *3 loved ones*

Walk in their shoes...

Popcorn or small beans in  
your shoes.

Treat your older adult client as you  
would want your family to be treated.