



Welcome to the Positive Approach to Care ® Dementia ECHO

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Geriatric Center of Excellence

Disclosure

This program is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under grant number U1QHP53034, Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program, for \$2,000,993 (to date) with 100 percent funded by HRSA. The content is that of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement by HRSA, HHS or the U.S. Government.

Learning Objectives



- Describe at least one of the sensory changes that can occur with dementia.
- Discuss at least one example of brain function that may be retained in individuals living with brain change.
- Identify a technique or tool which may be useful when interacting with individuals living with brain change.

Core Panel

- Catherine Amarante, BSN, RN, GERO-BC
- Joanna Fix, PhD – Positive Approach to Care®
- Martha Ilsley, LPN – Licensed Nursing Home Administrator
- Sally Matless, ThD – Family Member of Long-Term Care Resident
- Br. John-Richard Pagan, MA-MFT, CG, Positive Approach to Care®
- Daniel Stadler MD, CMD – Geriatrician, SNF Medical Director

The Utility of *Reflect*

Reflect

Beth A. D. Nolan, Ph.D. - Chief Public Health Officer

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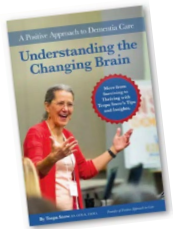
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Summary of Learnings

Themes and Key Takeaways

Annaliese Volckaert, Program Specialist

DH Geriatric Center of Excellence

Summary of Key Takeaways

- “Positive Personal Connection (PPC)”
- Reflection isn’t just about dementia, it’s about human connection
- Heard, seen, validated
- Slowing it down, we are giving the person an opportunity to get it

Wrap-Up

ECHO Program Meeting Evaluation Survey

https://dartmouth.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0PROT8HlorYu1gO



ECHO Report

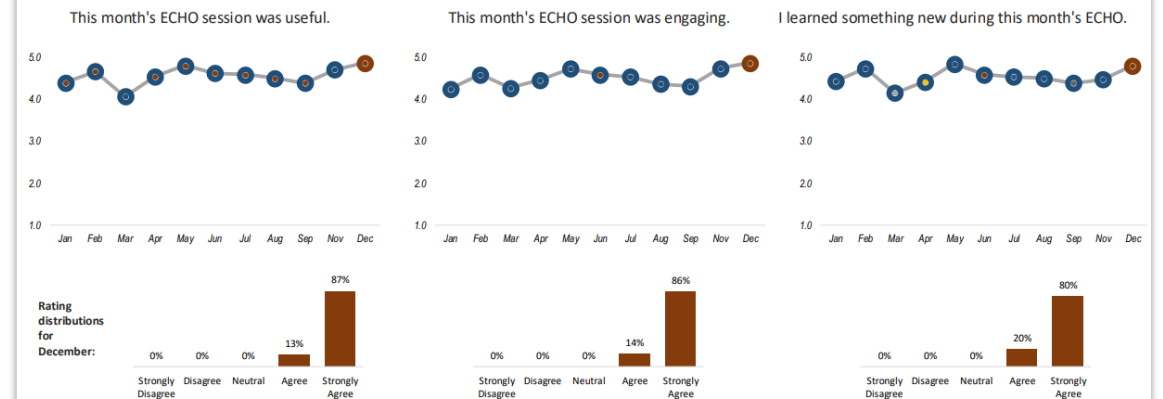
Respondents

46 individuals attended the December session, of whom **15 responded** to the evaluation survey.
A **response rate of 33%** indicates a similar level of survey participation compared to previous months.

Evaluation

Respondents were asked three questions about how useful and engaging the ECHO session was that month, as well as a question about whether the attendee learned something new during that month's session. Questions were asked on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) scale.

In December, the average ratings on the usefulness of the session was higher compared to the previous month (from 4.7 to 4.9). Ratings also slightly increased for session engagement (from 4.7 to 4.9) and for whether participants learned something new (from 4.5 to 4.8).





Up Next

- Next session: Wednesday **February 18, 2026** 2:00-3:00 p.m. (EST)
- Please submit your cases/questions and view course resources at the: [DH iECHO site](#)
- Recordings will be posted on the D-H ECHO website <https://www.dartmouth-hitchcock.org/project-echo/enduring-echo-materials>



Welcome to the Positive Approach to Dementia Care ECHO

Session 2: Visual Cueing to Enhance Communication

Wednesday February 18, 2026 2:00-3:00 p.m. (EST)

Visual Cues

Beth A. D. Nolan, Ph.D. - Chief Public Health Officer

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Discussion Prompt 1

What sensory changes have you seen in your residents or loved ones living with brain change?

What can we do to communicate differently given these sensory changes?



Discussion Prompt 2



Based on your own experience...

What adjustments can we make in our communication style when interacting with a person living with brain change?

What can we avoid doing to communicate as effectively as possible?

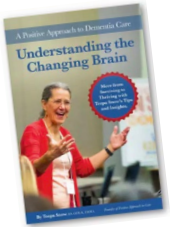
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Summary of Learnings

Themes and Key Takeaways

Jen Raymond, Project Manager

DH Geriatric Center of Excellence

Summary of Key Takeaways

- Noticing sensory changes
- Adapt and customize our response to sensory challenges
- Give time to process
 - Verbal
 - Visual
 - Physical
- Listening on purpose
- Our body language – facial expression – stillness
- Sequencing

Wrap-Up

ECHO Program Meeting Evaluation Survey

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ECHO Report | January 2026

Respondents

41 individuals attended the December session, of whom **15 responded** to the evaluation survey. A **response rate of 37%** indicates a similar level of survey participation compared to previous months.

Evaluation

Respondents were asked three questions about how useful and engaging the ECHO session was that month, as well as a question about whether the attendee learned something new during that month's session. Questions were asked on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) scale.

In January, average ratings on the usefulness of the session were lower compared to the previous month (from 4.9 to 4.5). Ratings also slightly declined for session engagement (from 4.9 to 4.5) and for whether participants learned something new (from 4.8 to 4.4). However, ratings were similar to those in January 2025.

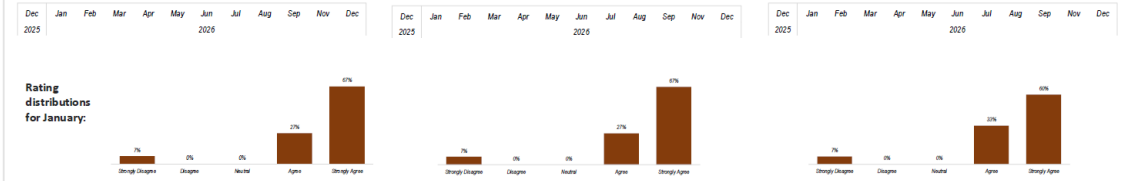
This month's ECHO session was useful.



This month's ECHO session was engaging.



I learned something new during this month's ECHO.





Up Next

- Next session: Wednesday **March 18, 2026** 2:00-3:00 p.m. (EST)
- Please submit your cases/questions and view course resources at the: [DH iECHO site](#)
- Recordings will be posted on the D-H ECHO website <https://www.dartmouth-hitchcock.org/project-echo/enduring-echo-materials>



Welcome to the Positive Approach to Dementia Care ECHO

Session 3: Personal Space: Zones of Human Awareness

Wednesday March 18, 2026 2:00-3:00 p.m. (EST)

Personal Space Zones of Human Awareness

Beth A. D. Nolan, Ph.D. - Chief Public Health Officer

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Care Challenge

Persons living with dementia coming into acute care setting for diagnostic care.

Things can be chaotic and move quickly in clinical and diagnostic settings.

How can we best support persons living with dementia (PLwD) when they come to us for care?

What are some tips for guiding them through all the steps involved in their appointment while keeping them safe and comfortable?



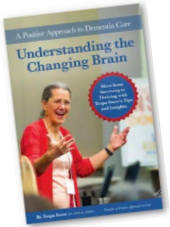
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Summary of Learnings

Themes and Key Takeaways

Annaliese Volckaert, Program Specialist

DH Geriatric Center of Excellence

Summary of Key Takeaways

- 3 zones of human awareness
- We unintentionally put PLWD invade their space or over stimulating situations when trying to help
- Sequence tasks into small manageable steps

Wrap-Up

ECHO Program Meeting Evaluation Survey

https://dartmouth.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0PROT8HlorYu1gO



ECHO Report | February 2026

Respondents

62 individuals attended the February session, of whom **13 responded** to the evaluation survey. A **response rate of 21%** indicates a lower level of survey participation compared to the previous month.

Evaluation

Respondents were asked three questions about how useful and engaging the ECHO session was that month, as well as a question about whether the attendee learned something new during that month's session. Questions were asked on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) scale.

In February, the average ratings on the usefulness of the session were lower compared to the previous month (from 4.5 to 4.4). Ratings also slightly declined for session engagement (from 4.5 to 4.4) and for whether participants learned something new (from 4.4 to 4.2).

This month's ECHO session was useful.



This month's ECHO session was engaging.

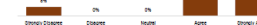


I learned something new during this month's ECHO.



Dec 2025 Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Nov Dec 2026

Rating distributions for February:



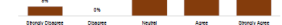
Dec 2025 Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Nov Dec 2026

Rating distributions for February:



Dec 2025 Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Nov Dec 2026

Rating distributions for February:





Up Next

- Next session: Wednesday **April 15, 2026** 2:00-3:00 p.m. (EST)
- Please submit your cases/questions and view course resources at the: [DH iECHO site](#)
- Recordings will be posted on the D-H ECHO website <https://www.dartmouth-hitchcock.org/project-echo/enduring-echo-materials>



Welcome to the Positive Approach to Dementia Care ECHO

Session 4: Body & Physical Space:
How does a resident's environment affect challenging care situations?

Wednesday April 15, 2026 2:00-3:00 p.m. (EST)

Body & Physical Space

How does a resident's environment affect challenging care situations?

Teepa Snow, MS, OTR/L, FAOTA

Founder and CEO, Positive Approach to Care®

Co-Founder, Snow Approach Foundation, Inc.

The Environment: Four Fs and Four Ss

Four Fs

Friendly
Familiar
Functional
Forgiving

Four Ss

Sensory match
Space match
Social match
Surface-to-surface contact match

Supportive Environments: The 5 Ps

Place

People

Props

Programming

Possibilities



Teepa Snow's *Snow Approach*: **PIPES**

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Step 1: Prepare – Anticipate and Prepare

- Decide what will be done
- Consider who is involved
- Set up the room or space
- Determine the schedule or agenda
- Gather needed supplies

Step 2: Initiate – Approach and Gain Permission

- Positive Physical Approach (PPA)
- Positive Personal Connector (PPC)
- Positive Action Starter (PAS)

Step 3: Participate – Involve the Other Person/People

- Collaboration
- Hand under Hand® (HuH)
- Partnered
- Visual, Verbal, Touch
- Parallel

Step 4: Evaluate – Determine what You Notice.

What is working and what do you want to celebrate, modify, or change?
Use Coaching or Consulting Cycle.

Step 5: Sustain or Switch – Sustain to reinforce the value of what is being done, or **Switch** to something that might work differently.



Teepa Snow's **Snow Approach:** **5Ps**

1. Place - What is the physical space involved?

- What in the setting or environment needs to change?
- What is missing?
- What is working well?
- What is not working well?

2. People - Who are the people involved?

- What do we know about them?
- What do they need to be aware of?
- What do they need to know how to do?
- Have they ever seen better interactions or outcomes?

3. Props - What are the physical and visual objects involved?

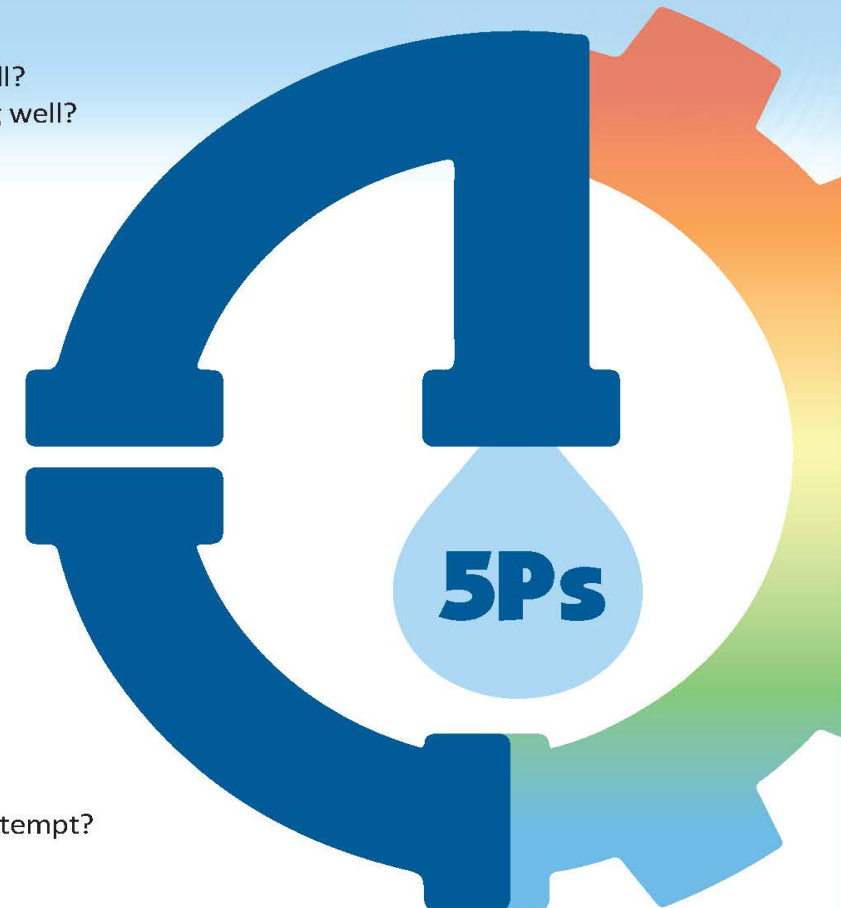
- What are the objects and items around, and do they meet expectations?
- Are there substitutions or alternatives available to better match interests and abilities?

4. Programming - What is the planned use of time involved?

- How is time being used and how long do people have to wait for support?
- How much time does staff have to offer support for each person?
- What do the rhythms of each day look like for the various people involved?
- Is there balance for all involved of:
 - Purposeful engagement
 - Pleasurable enjoyment
 - Personal care completion
 - Rest and restoration periods

5. Possibilities - What are the possible changes involved?

- What could we try, or what is a new pathway or synaptic pattern we want to attempt?
- How will we know if we are making any meaningful progress?
- Which of the other Ps could/should we vary?



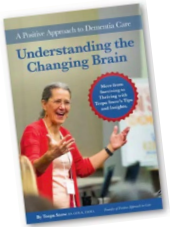
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Summary of Learnings

Themes and Key Takeaways

Annaliese Volckaert, Program Specialist

DH Geriatric Center of Excellence

Summary of Key Takeaways

Think about the environment in terms of Four Fs, Four Ss, and Pipes

- Four Fs: Friendly, Familiar, Functional, Forgiving
- Four Ss: Sensory, Space, Social, Surface-to-Surface Contact (how does the environment “match” with the S’s)
- Five Ps
 - Place
 - People
 - Props
 - Programming
 - Possibilities
- Pipes
 - Prepare
 - Initiate
 - Participate
 - Evaluate
 - Sustain or Switch

- Enhancement Considerations for Exercise Programs
 - Request residents help set up i.e. pushing chairs into exercise space, then return when done: brings people together, builds relationships, and gets some exercise even if not participating in the class.
 - Record participants’ starting/midpoint pulse on large post-it board: encourages engagement, shows result/benefit of moving your body.
 - Find creative ways to engage spectators in smaller ways. Bring spectator a weight and ask how many they can do. Or encourage passive participation while watching e.g. bicep curls w/beverage container while seated – how many can you do?
 - Pro tip for expressing “good job”: when thanking individuals for their participation, tip your chin down to avoid voice becoming “pitchy”; your tone will sound more genuine. Gesture and show a visual of what they did well.

Wrap-Up

ECHO Program Meeting Evaluation Survey

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ECHO Report | March 2026

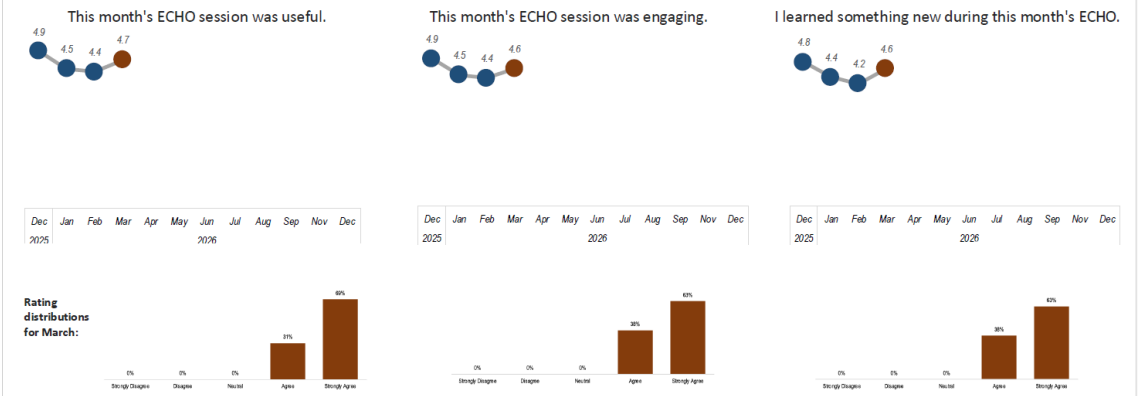
Respondents

40 individuals attended the March session, of whom **16 responded** to the evaluation survey.
A **response rate of 40%** indicates a higher level of survey participation compared to the previous month.

Evaluation

Respondents were asked three questions about how useful and engaging the ECHO session was that month, as well as a question about whether the attendee learned something new during that month's session. Questions were asked on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) scale.

In March, the average ratings on the usefulness of the session were higher compared to the previous month (from 4.4 to 4.7). Ratings also slightly increased for session engagement (from 4.4 to 4.6) and for whether participants learned something new (from 4.2 to 4.6).





Up Next

- Next session: Wednesday **May 20, 2026** 2:00-3:00 p.m. (EST)
- Please submit your cases/questions and view course resources at the: [DH iECHO site](#)
- Recordings will be posted on the D-H ECHO website <https://www.dartmouth-hitchcock.org/project-echo/enduring-echo-materials>



Welcome to the Positive Approach to Dementia Care ECHO

Session 5: Environmental Changes

Wednesday May 20, 2026 2:00-3:00 p.m. (EST)

Environmental Changes – What Could We Notice, and What Could We Try?

Beth A. D. Nolan, Ph.D. - Chief Public Health Officer

Teepa Snow's Positive Approach to Care ®

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Six Pieces of the Puzzle

When considering what we can change in Environment for our selves and for our person, we first look at what THEY might be experiencing.

Vision Changes and Environment

With each new level of vision change, there is a decrease in safety awareness.



BIG VISION CHANGES

1. Loss of Peripheral Awareness
2. Tunnel Vision
3. Binocular Vision
4. Binocular + Object Confusion
5. Monocular Vision
6. Loss of Visual Regard

Considering what we know about vision alone, much less any of the other senses, try moving through your space with your hands in 2 “O’s” around your eyes like goggles. What do you notice?

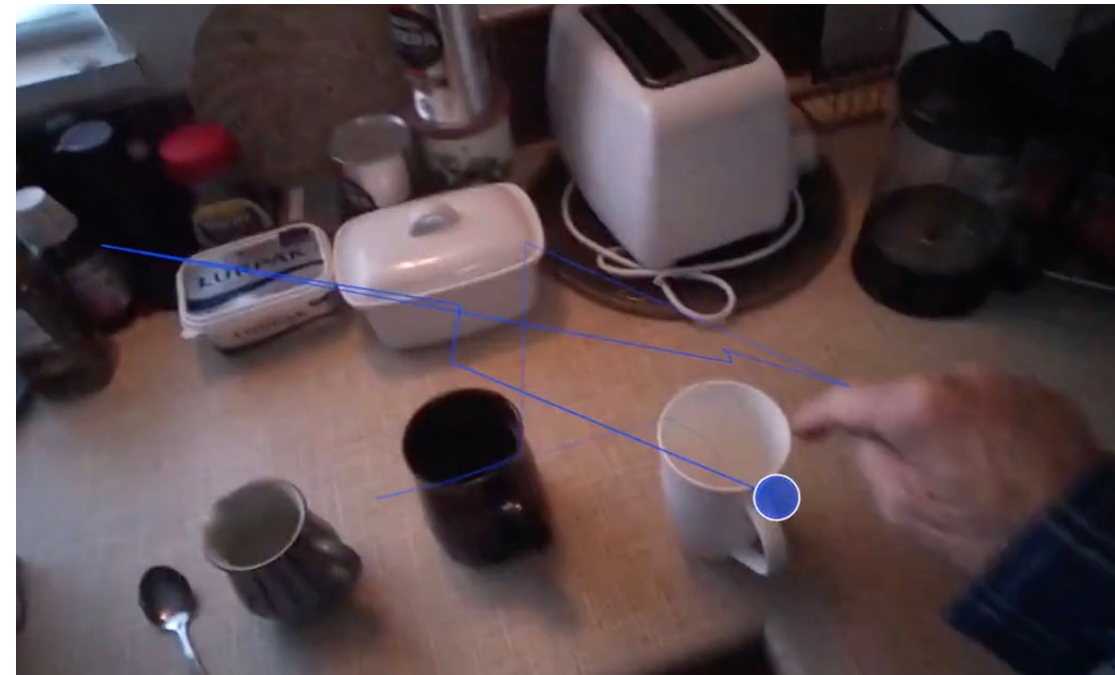
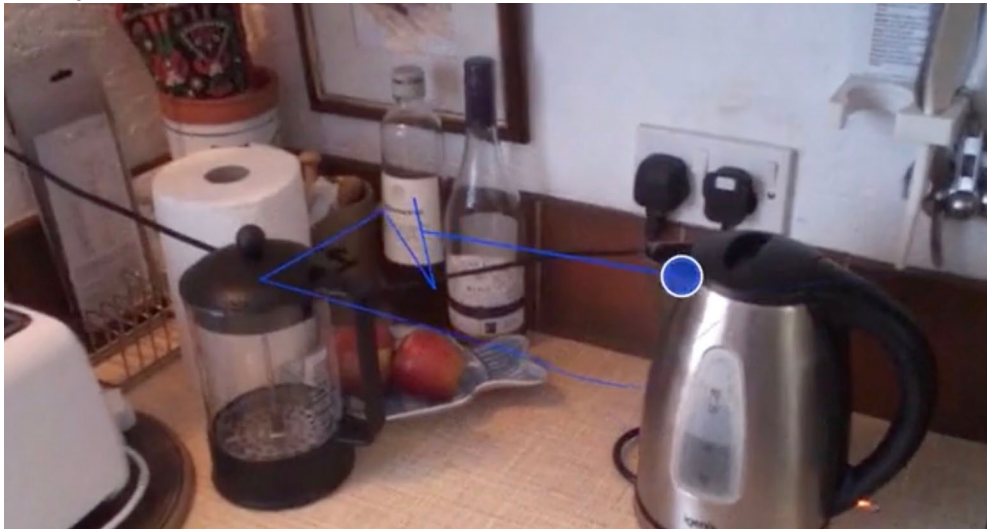


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With changing abilities of vision and attention, environments that were once functional may no longer be. How might you support independence in your environment?



Special thanks to:
Clive Jenkins
Pocket Medic

Assistive Technologies Innovation Center

This content and more is available at

<https://shop.teepasnow.com/product/living-well-with-dementia-streaming/>

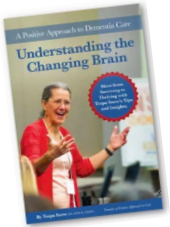
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Summary of Learnings

Themes and Key Takeaways

Annaliese Volckaert, Program Specialist

DH Geriatric Center of Excellence



Welcome to the Positive Approach to Dementia Care ECHO

Session 6

"Get your hands off me!": Asking for Permission

Wednesday June 17, 2026 2:00-3:00 p.m. (EST)

“Get your hands off me!”: How you get permission

Beth A. D. Nolan, Ph.D. - Chief Public Health Officer
Teepa Snow’s Positive Approach to Care ®

3 Ways We Take In Data

3 Zones of Human Awareness

Public Space

- 6 ft or more away
 - for awareness



Visual

What we see

Personal Space

- 6 ft to arm's length
 - for conversation

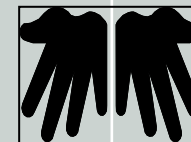


Verbal

What we hear

Intimate Space

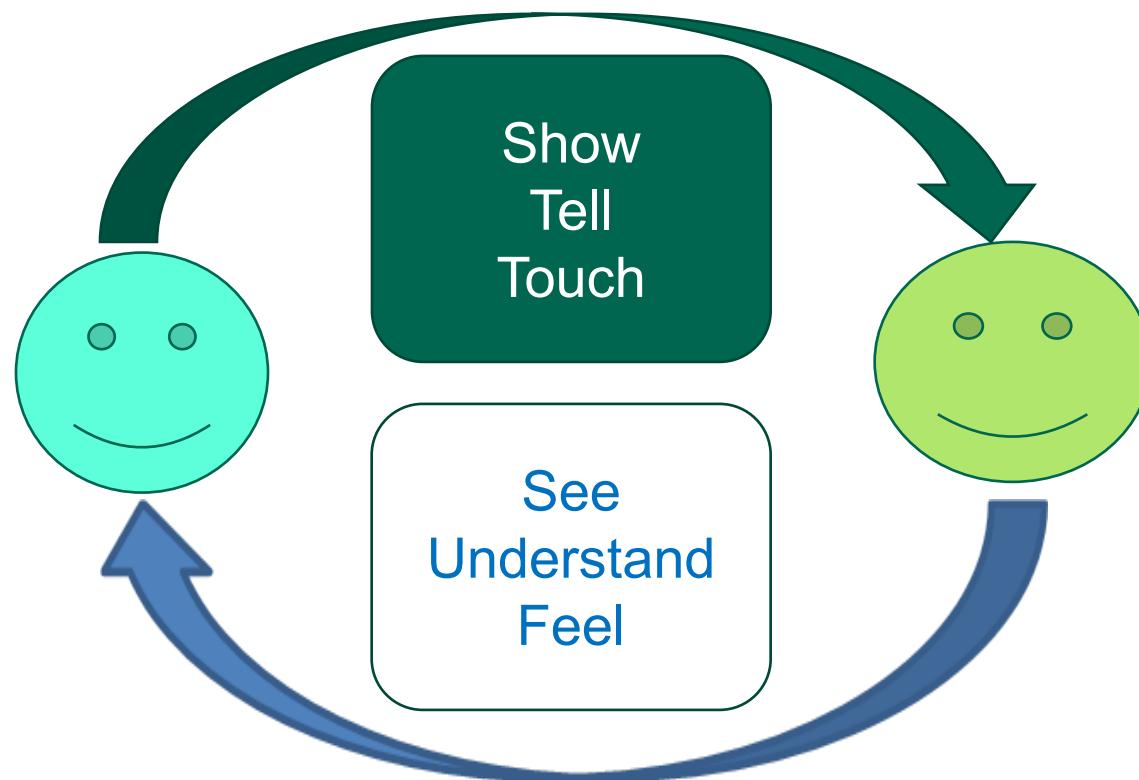
- Arm's length or closer
 - for intense closeness



Touch

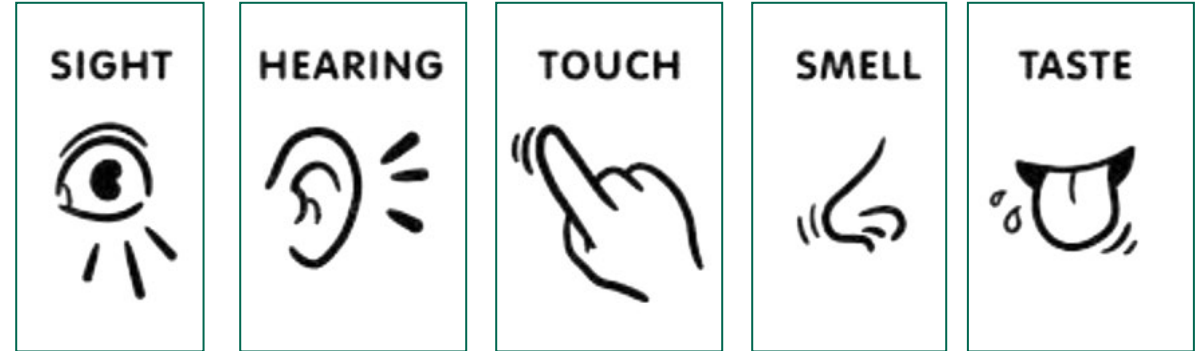
What we touch & feel





What if There are No Words?

- **Observe their cues to you:**
 - Visual
 - Auditory
 - Touch and movement or lack of it
 - Olfactory: any unusual smells or odors
 - Taste: changes in eating/drinking/preferences
- **Use your other cueing systems**
- **Make your cues bigger and simpler**



Sometimes we mess up.

So, we pause to consider, and acknowledge dissatisfaction.

And sometimes, it's not it's not even something we did, but we can truly be sorry it happened...

Five Ways to Acknowledge Dissatisfaction

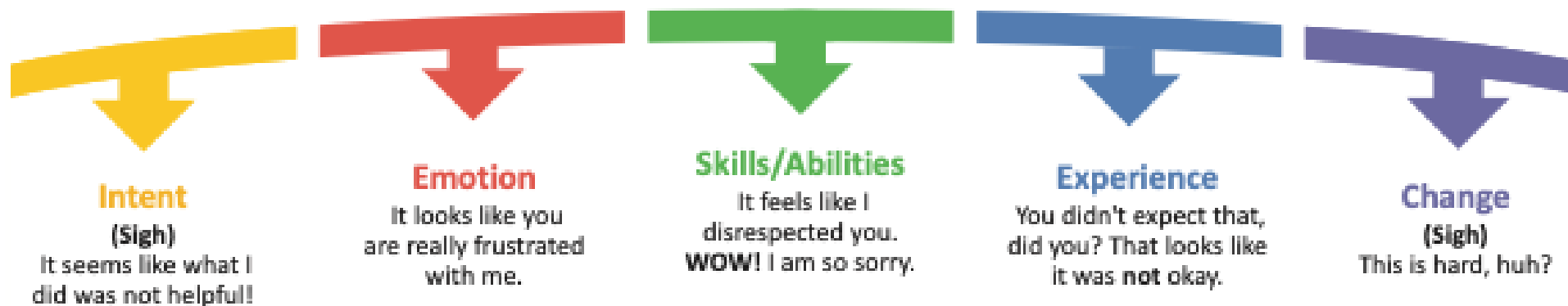
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Acknowledge Dissatisfaction

To connect with someone, acknowledge what you are seeing with matching facial expressions and tone. This is a seek and should invite a response versus being an assumption statement.

It seems like I made you angry = *seek*
I made you angry = *assumption*



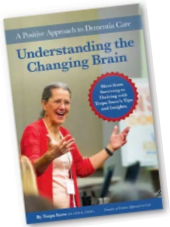
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Summary of Learnings

Themes and Key Takeaways

Annaliese Volckaert, MPH - Program Specialist

DH Geriatric Center of Excellence

Summary of Key Takeaways

- Summary:
- Visual → Verbal → Touch
 - Importance of non-verbal communication
- What we noticed with Teepa in the video:
 - Calm voice, giving time to respond, repeating, patience, going slow
 - Use your other cueing systems
 - Make your cues bigger and simpler
- How did Alice know Teepa had permission to keep trying?
 - She was calm, pausing to process, she did not grimace, did not recoil and is actively trying
 - Observe their cues: Visual, auditory, touch and movement or lack thereof, olfactory (unusual smells or odors), taste (changes in eating/drinking/preferences)
- The use of space- distance between you and the person you are caring for
- Acknowledge dissatisfaction
- Human connection needs to be the core of these skill sets
 - Intention
 - Relationship-based care
 - Doing care with rather than doing it to them
 - Coregulation- checking in with your own nervous system
 - The act of asking
 - Being recipient vs. being the giver (ex. Teepa asking for a hug)- shifting the dynamics

Wrap-Up

ECHO Program Meeting Evaluation Survey

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ECHO Report | May 2026

Respondents

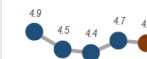
30 individuals attended the May session, of whom **8 responded** to the evaluation survey. A **response rate of 27%** indicates a lower level of survey participation compared to March. In this report, since no responses were collected in April, all comparisons to "the previous month" refer to March.

Evaluation

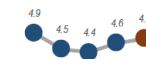
Respondents were asked three questions about how useful and engaging the ECHO session was that month, as well as a question about whether the attendee learned something new during that month's session. Questions were asked on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) scale.

In May, the average ratings on the usefulness of the session were slightly lower compared to the previous month (from 4.7 to 4.6). However, ratings slightly increased for session engagement (from 4.6 to 4.8) and for whether participants learned something new (from 4.6 to 4.8).

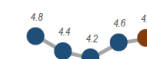
This month's ECHO session was useful.



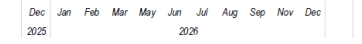
This month's ECHO session was engaging.



I learned something new during this month's ECHO.



Rating distributions for May:





Up Next

- NEW SERIES BEGINS JULY 15th
- Please submit your cases/questions and view course resources at the: [DH iECHO site](#)
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