



DementiaAbility Methods: The Montessori Way™ (DMMW)

DMMW™ focuses on creating environments that support the needs, interests, skills/strengths and abilities of individuals with dementia and other forms of cognitive impairment. A relationship/person-centred focus of care places emphasis on individuals and processes, rather than tasks, in an environment where organizations/staff/families/volunteers work as a team with the goal of enhancing function and enriching lives by engaging people in a world with meaning and purpose in a prepared environment. The prepared environment provides memory and cognitive supports for finding places and things and for completing tasks successfully, while also providing opportunities to do things independently, fulfill roles, employ a schedule with daily routines, connect socially with others and enjoy leisure pursuits that are made available and accessible according to interests and abilities. The whole person is the focus, where needs, interests and abilities are connected to body, mind and spirit (social, cultural and spiritual).

How is this accomplished?

The How is in the **WOW**. The **WOW** formula is used with your best detective skills.

- **Who** is this person (past and present)?
- **Observations** – What do you see? Why the behaviour? When is it happening & when is it not happening?
- **What** are you going to do? Consider finding locations, finding things, task breakdown, roles, routines (with an agenda), social connections & activities.



CREATE

Principles to consider when creating a prepared environment.

Create a prepared environment. Consider the needs, interests, skills and abilities (NISA) of the person, using the WOW model for creating and presenting supports, cues, roles, routines, social connections and activities.

- Organization/staff works together as a team. Information is collected from files, assessments, friends, staff and client for the purpose of supporting the person in a prepared environment.

Remove unnecessary markings and clutter. Ensure materials & cognitive supports are familiar, can be clearly seen and support NISA.

- Assess for font and cue size required, using Arial font for words. Make sure needs related to vision (including lighting and contrast of colours), touch and hearing are considered. Abilities take into account whether the person needs concrete and easy supports versus abstract and more difficult supports. These are adjusted as needed.

Error-free.

- Memory & cognitive supports and activities are set up for success. The objective is to focus on the process to enable and/or improve function and independence, while enhancing self-esteem and/or having a good time.

All materials required for the activity (including ADL's/IADL's & leisure) are provided and self-contained.

- Materials are familiar, attractive and real life.

Templates & manipulatives are provided as needed, based on ability.

- Provide manipulatives & templates (including sequencing) that support ability and afford sensory & cognitive stimulation according to the WOW model.

Environment is prepared. It looks and feels like home, enhances independence, affords opportunities to be engaged with meaning and purpose and overall, it generates feelings of well-being.

- Declarative memory supported with cueing for finding locations, things and task completion. The environment has activities that are available and accessible, with routines that include roles and social connection as needed.



PRESENT

Principles to consider when presenting activities & cognitive/memory supports.

Prepare the environment.

- Environment is connected to its purpose (e.g. - the dining room looks and feels like a place to enjoy meals & belonging; bathing room looks and feels like a place to bathe; activity room looks like a place to have activities). Cues are available as needed for finding things/places, tasks, roles (e.g. - agenda available) and activities. Staff/family initiates interactions and support.

Room is set up and staff works as a team to ensure quality outcomes.

- Themed areas are set up and ready. Activities are available and accessible (including the creative arts) and staff work as a team to ensure all are engaged according to the WOW model plans. Distractions such as noise are eliminated if possible.

Extend invitation.

- Ask the participant, “Would you like to help me with....?” or “Would you like to join me for....?” or “Would you like to go to..... (e.g. -the toilet) now?” Never ask “Could you....?”

Show what to do by demonstrating.

- Demonstrate what needs to be done, using as few words as possible, and then ask the person to try. Repeat as needed. Simplify or make more difficult according to ability. Helper works from the participant’s dominant side.

Extend a sincere “thank you” or “well done”, as appropriate.

- Thank the person for helping or extend a message such as “well done” as per the situation (such as toileting or finding his/her way). Check tasks off in the agenda after the “thank you” or “well done” message has been relayed.

Nneeds, Interests, Skills & Abilities have been taken into consideration, adjustments made as needed and outcomes are recorded in the WOW summary form.

- The whole person is considered (including body, mind and spirit/social needs). Modifications are made (simple to complex, easy to more difficult and concrete to abstract) as needed.

Therapeutic environment enables abilities and engages person socially, cognitively and physically with opportunities to give, do for self and live in a world with meaning and purpose. You have created a place where people want to live, work and visit.

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Overview

DMMW™ Principles: CREATE & PRESENT

The focus is on an enriched, prepared environment where individuals are engaged in life with meaning & purpose & function is enhanced.

Treat the Treatable
Prevent excess disability

Understand memory - support declarative loss & understand procedural memory.

Whole Person Focused (Body, Mind & Spirit*)

* Including social, cultural & spiritual

Needs

Interests

Skills

Abilities

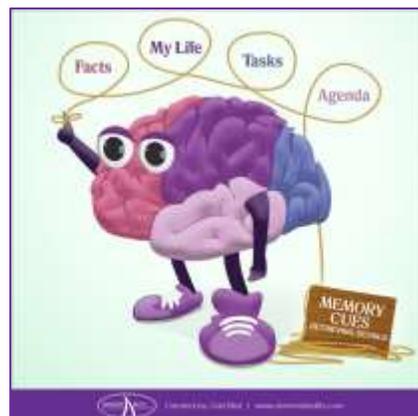
The How is in the WOW!

Be a detective!

Who?
(Past & present)

Observations.

What are you going to do?



Connect
W + O

- Memory aids (for finding locations, things & completing tasks)
- Roles
- Routines
- Social Connections
- Activities (of daily life & enjoyable leisure activities)