

## CONVERSATIONS IN LONG TERM CARE

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### *Nourishing the Whole Person*

**In many families and cultures, food is an important way we show our love and care for one another. Meal times for many people are not only about nourishing our bodies but our relationships. When a loved one begins to have difficulty eating or drinking, this can cause feelings of distress or concern.**

There are other ways to show you care for your loved one. It is important to remember that simply being present can offer comfort and this is what matters most. The following is a list of ideas for visiting your loved one that will nourish their body mind and spirit.

#### **Nourishing the Body:**

- Touch: hugs, holding hands, cuddling, gentle massage.
- Brushing hair, applying body lotion, face cream, make up or lipstick.
- Movement, including gentle stretches and exercise.
- Taking walks together, enjoying nature, fresh air, sunshine.
- Holding pets, stuffed animals or dolls.

#### **Nourishing the Mind:**

- Watching family videos or looking at photo albums together.
- Reading with or to the person (e.g. books, poetry).
- Talking about life's highlights, sharing life stories and memories.
- Creating a scrapbook or collage.
- Speaking to the person in their first language.

#### **Nourishing the Heart:**

- Family visits with loved ones, friends, babies and young children.
- Expressing emotions and important messages (e.g. I love you, forgive me, you were the best parent/cook/gardener etc.).
- Playing favourite music CD's or instruments.
- Singing or humming familiar tunes, seasonal songs.
- Dancing, holding hands or swaying to music together.

### **Nourishing Soul and Spirit:**

- Praying together.
- Meditating together or listening to meditation tapes.
- Reading from scripture, Psalms, religious texts, inspirational books.
- Singing familiar hymns.
- Sharing spiritual conversations, speaking about God, heaven or angels.
- Breathing exercises.
- Silence - simply sitting together quietly, holding hands, can be a powerful experience and can create a sense of peace.
- Connecting with a faith leader or Elder to provide rituals of your faith such as prayers, blessings, a smudge etc.

If you have questions about any of these ideas please speak with a member of the health-care team (e.g. Social Worker, Spiritual Health Practitioner, Recreation Facilitator or Nurse).