**Activity Title: Enhancing Dementia-Friendly Communication**

**Objective:**
To help library staff reflect on their current communication practices, identify areas for improvement, and discuss strategies to avoid potential pitfalls, particularly ageism, in interactions with patrons with dementia.

**Duration:** 20 minutes

\*\*1. **Introduction (2 minutes)**

* Briefly introduce the importance of dementia-friendly communication in libraries.
* Explain that the goal of this activity is to help staff reflect on their practices and consider ways to improve communication with patrons who may have dementia.

\*\*2. **Self-Assessment Survey (5 minutes)**

* Distribute the self-assessment survey with the communication tips.
* Instruct participants to rate themselves on a scale of 1 (Always do this) to 5 (Need to work on this) for each tip.
* Encourage participants to reflect honestly on their current practices.

\*\*3. **Pair & Share Discussion (6 minutes)**

* Ask participants to pair up with someone nearby and share:
	+ One tip they’re already practicing well.
	+ One area they’d like to improve.
	+ One tip they believe should be shared with all staff at their library.
* Encourage brief, focused conversations to ensure everyone has a chance to share.

\*\*4. **Group Discussion (5 minutes)**

* Facilitate a group discussion on potential pitfalls in dementia-friendly communication.
* Use prompts like:
	+ "How can we avoid unintentionally offending patrons by speaking too slowly or loudly?"
	+ "What are some ways we can respect patron autonomy while still offering assistance?"
* Discuss strategies to avoid ageism and ensure communication is both supportive and respectful.
* Discuss other ideas our participants have for dementia friendly with communication or beyond.

\*\*5. **Wrap-Up and Takeaways (2 minutes)**

* Summarize key points from the discussions.
* Reinforce the importance of balancing empathy and respect in all interactions.
* Encourage participants to continue reflecting on their communication practices and to share the insights they’ve gained with their colleagues.

**Dementia-Friendly Communication Self-Assessment**

**Instructions:**
Rate yourself on the following communication tips using the scale below.
**1** = Always do this | **2** = Often do this | **3** = Sometimes do this
**4** = Rarely do this | **5** = Need to work on this

1. **Approach patrons in a friendly manner if they seem confused or lost.**
[ ] 1 [ ] 2 [ ] 3 [ ] 4 [ ] 5
2. **Maintain eye contact and face the person when speaking.**
[ ] 1 [ ] 2 [ ] 3 [ ] 4 [ ] 5
3. **Accompany patrons to find items instead of just giving directions.**
[ ] 1 [ ] 2 [ ] 3 [ ] 4 [ ] 5
4. **Speak clearly and at a slower pace, allowing ample time for replies.**
[ ] 1 [ ] 2 [ ] 3 [ ] 4 [ ] 5
5. **Use simple, direct language and avoid jargon or slang.**
[ ] 1 [ ] 2 [ ] 3 [ ] 4 [ ] 5
6. **Supplement verbal communication with cues and body language.**
[ ] 1 [ ] 2 [ ] 3 [ ] 4 [ ] 5
7. **Respect a patron's reality, even if it seems incorrect, and focus on their feelings.**
[ ] 1 [ ] 2 [ ] 3 [ ] 4 [ ] 5
8. **Wear a visible name tag to help patrons identify you easily.**
[ ] 1 [ ] 2 [ ] 3 [ ] 4 [ ] 5
9. **Offer assistance with transactions or handling money patiently.**
[ ] 1 [ ] 2 [ ] 3 [ ] 4 [ ] 5
10. **Provide help filling out forms by reading questions aloud and indicating where responses are needed.**
[ ] 1 [ ] 2 [ ] 3 [ ] 4 [ ] 5

**Reflection Questions:**

* **Which tip are you already doing well?**
\_Write the number: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* **Which tip would you like to improve?**
\_Write the number: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* **Which tip would you recommend sharing with all staff at your library?**
\_Write the number: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_