

HINTS FOR HELPING A PERSON WITH A VISION DISABILITY

1. Talk to the person with a vision disability in a normal tone of voice. The fact that he cannot see is no indication that he cannot hear well.
2. Be natural when talking with a person with a vision disability. Think of him as a person who, happens to have a vision disability.
3. Accept the normal things which a person with a vision disability might do, such as consulting his watch for correct time, dialing a telephone, or writing his name in longhand without calling attention to them.
4. When you offer assistance to a person with a vision disability, do so directly. Just ask, "May I be of help?" Speak in a normal, friendly tone.
5. In guiding the person with a vision disability, permit him to take your arm. Never grab the person's arm for he cannot anticipate your movements.
6. In walking with a person with a vision disability, proceed at a normal pace. Hesitate slightly before stepping up or down.
7. Be explicit in giving verbal directions to a person with a vision disability. Pointing is of no help. Use "right" and "left" according to the way he is facing, or use compass directions. Avoid all unnecessary touching and handling.
8. There is no need to avoid the word "so" when talking with a person with a vision disability.
9. When assisting a person with a vision disability to a chair, simply place his hand on the back or arm of the chair. This is enough to give him his location.
10. When leaving a person with a vision disability abruptly after conversing with him in a crowd or where there is a noise that may' obstruct his hearing, quietly advise him that you are leaving so that he will not be embarrassed by talking when no-one-is listening.
11. Never leave a person with a vision disability in an open area. Instead, lead him to the side of a room or to a chair or some landmark from which he can obtain his direction.
12. Identify yourself to a person with a vision disability so he knows of your presence. Do not ask the person to guess who you are by your voice or touch.
13. When serving food to a person with a vision disability who is eating without a sighted companion, offer to read the menu including the price of each item. As you place each item on the table, call his attention to it. If he wants you to cut up his food, he will tell you.
14. Be sure to tell a person with a vision disability who the guests are so that he may know of their presence.
15. Don't fail to shake hands when meeting or leaving a person with a vision disability. A cordial handshake substitutes for a friendly smile.

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