

## QUICK START GUIDE: SESSION THREE TOPICS

The third session should continue the focus on communication strategies. Try to use this session to get across these three points: avoid negativity, prepare ahead, and use reminders.

### Avoid Negativity

Explain that when one is having difficulty understanding a communication partner, one should avoid using negative words such as *can't*, *won't*, *never*, *don't*, etc. When you say something like "Meg, I never understand what you're saying", or "You talk too fast for me," it suggests that the partner is to blame.

Instead, use positive words such as *please*, *thank you*, *would you*, *could you*, *it would help me if I could watch your mouth*, *I need you to speak a bit clearer for me*, *thanks*, etc.

### Prepare Ahead

Convey to participants that they should employ anticipatory strategies whenever possible, to prevent communication difficulties from occurring in the first place.

Ask each participant to write down one or two upcoming events where they anticipate having communication difficulties. They should then write possible strategies to avoid as much difficulty as possible. Ask the group members to volunteer and share their anticipated difficulties and plans. Once a strategy is offered, also ask the other group members to provide other possible suggestions.

### Reminders

Persons with hearing loss can help their communication partners by offering reminders when needed. For example, rather than interrupting a friend or spouse to let them know that their voices are too soft and/or too fast, give them a signal code that reminds them to use clear speech. You can ask group participants to provide suggestions for such codes, such as lightly tapping your chin.