

THE “PREDICTABLES”

People may say or do things that are not what they appear to be. For the person with a disability it is important to identify what those scenarios might be and what they likely mean. This will help ensure that support providers and others will know how to react to certain situations and make communication more effective.

Dennis is often intimidated with person-to-person interactions, particularly in social situations. When asked a question, he will usually respond, “I don’t know.” In order to engage him in conversation, it is important to continue chatting about the topic at hand, rather than asking Dennis direct questions. Often he will begin to engage in the conversation.

To help you record the “predictables”, use the framework on the next page. Here are several examples to illustrate the process.

For the situation mentioned above:

*If Dennis says, “I don’t know” in a situation that he does have knowledge of, **then it means** he is uncomfortable in the situation. **Under these circumstances**, continue the conversation and do not ask Dennis direct questions. In all likelihood, he will begin to engage in the conversation.*

For the situation involving Jane (scenario on page 91):

*If Jane states she is “too busy” to engage in a new activity that you know she has time for, **then it means** she doesn’t understand, is afraid to fail, or doesn’t want to change her routine. **Under these circumstances**, ask Jane to think about it for a while or to go and see what it is like and then decide.*

The following tool may help you plan. Provide as much detail as you can. Add extra pages if you need to.

Tool

The Predictables Chart

The Predictables

IF

THEN IT MEANS

UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES

IF

THEN IT MEANS

UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES

IF

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