

# DECISION-MAKING: Using the F.A.C.T.S. Approach to Reality Testing



When you deliver home-based palliative care, you often encounter high-stress situations and must deal with strong emotional responses. Using emotional intelligence (EI) in your decisions can enhance patient care, boost self-esteem, and provide a holistic approach to care.

## F.A.C.T.S. Approach to Reality Testing

Reality testing is essential for decision-making, problem-solving, and maintaining relationships. It allows you to differentiate between what you think is true and what is verifiably true. Reality testing is the practice of remaining objective by seeing things as they really are. It involves recognizing when emotions or personal biases can get in the way of objectivity. The F.A.C.T.S approach offers a straightforward framework to enhance your reality testing skills.

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| <b>F</b> | <b>Face your assumptions</b>           | Acknowledge and become aware of your own beliefs and biases.<br><b>Reminder:</b> What assumptions am I making about this situation?                                       |
| <b>A</b> | <b>Assess the evidence</b>             | Evaluate the facts and look for objective information to verify or challenge your biases.<br><b>Reminder:</b> What evidence supports or contradicts my assumptions?       |
| <b>C</b> | <b>Consider different perspectives</b> | Explore different points of view and think about how they shape your understanding of the situation.<br><b>Reminder:</b> How might others see this situation differently? |
| <b>T</b> | <b>Test your assumptions</b>           | Put your beliefs or biases to the test by asking for feedback.<br><b>Reminder:</b> What feedback can I seek to challenge my perspective?                                  |
| <b>S</b> | <b>Stay open-minded</b>                | Be open to new information and be willing to adjust your views.<br><b>Reminder:</b> Am I open to changing my view based on new evidence?                                  |

Using the F.A.C.T.S approach can help ensure your decisions are grounded in objective information and a clear understanding of the situation, ultimately supporting the patient's comfort and quality of life.

### When Making Shared Decisions, You Should:

**Be Mindful and Emotionally Self-Aware:** Make a conscious effort to engage with the present moment. Acknowledge your thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations, as well as your surroundings, without hastily reacting.

**Use Active Listening:** Pay attention to both verbal and non-verbal cues from patients and their families.

**Reassure Patients and Caregivers:** There is no "best" choice—instead, the choice is the one that is right for them.



Established in 1990, the Canadian Home Care Association (CHCA) is a national non-profit membership association dedicated to advancing excellence in home and community care. Our eiCOMPASS Project aims to empower home care providers to deliver emotionally intuitive, competency-based palliative care. We are enhancing the skills of frontline providers and improving team-based care that is compassionate, responsive, and person- and family-centred. [CHCA Website](#) / [X](#) / [LinkedIn](#)

