Overhead/Handout 4.3. Ways to Help Reduce Stress

Reduce the number of things going on around the person or take the person to a quieter place.

Simplify the task. Compensate for lost abilities.

Don’t rush the person.

Ask yourself whether you are understanding what the person is trying to tell you; don’t ignore objections.

Give simple explanations more often.

Have the person rest a while before she overtires.

Ask the person if she needs to toilet, wants a snack, hurts.

Don’t talk down to people.

Reassure people often.

Build a trusting relationship with the person.

Plan the day so that stress does not build up; do things at the person’s best times.

Make the environment easier to understand.

Fill in when the person is groping for a word.

Take things one step at a time.

Maintain familiar routines but adapt if the person becomes upset.

Try things a different way when something upsets the person.

Accept odd behavior.

Tailor your strategy to the individual:

Know the person’s limits and do not push beyond them.

Know what triggers outbursts.

If a necessary task like bathing usually upsets the person, consider each small step of the task: What can be left out? What can be simplified? What can be done differently? If you upset the person, can someone else try?

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