

Coping with Challenging Behaviors

Description: This session is designed to help care partners and care givers better understand why the person they are trying to help frequently exhibits difficult or challenging behaviors that make care assistance problematic or even impossible to deliver. The first part of the session will help caregivers more accurately understand many of the commonly occurring 'behaviors' they are experiencing with the person they are trying to help. The next part of session will focus on looking beyond the disease to look for other possible factors that may be causing or contributing to the challenging behavior. Key factors such as: life-long personality traits and life experiences and preferences, environmental conditions and cues, other medical, sensory, or psychological conditions, the structure and flow of the day, and caregiver skills and approaches will be discussed with some selected examples demonstrated and provided. Finally a problem-solving approach will be presented to help learners reduce the intensity, frequency, or occurrence of challenging behaviors as well as guidance in determining "Is it Worth It?" and "Letting It Go!" for healthier relationships and better outcomes.

Objectives:

By the end of this session, learners will be able to:

1. Discuss typical 'challenging behaviors' that occur during disease progression
2. Recognize the major components that must be considered in investigating and trying to help with challenging behaviors.
3. Demonstrate the use of a problem solving strategy to assess and intervene when challenging behavior is identified.

Outline:

- Review typical progression of dementia and common symptoms and behaviors seen in each stage
- Discuss the role of the environment in behaviors or people with dementia
- Discuss the role of other medical, sensory, and psychiatric conditions on behaviors
- Review the role of scheduling and daily routines and activity patterns on client behavior
- Describe the importance of knowing the person's history and preferences in trying to help with challenging behaviors
- Describe the role of the caregiver and caregiver's approach and interaction in client response and behavior
- Discuss a problem-solving strategy that uses all of these factors to help caregivers come up with a plan that can be used to cope with challenging behaviors
- Review the value of determining "Is it worth it?" and "So What!" combined with the importance of learning how to "Let It GO!" as considerations to a less stressful caregiving situation
- Question and Answer

All segments will involve a combination of lecture, discussion, role play, group work, and case review.