

# Adapting to Behavior Changes



Questions? Contact: [CDDERTraining@umassmed.edu](mailto:CDDERTraining@umassmed.edu)

## Audience

**Staff and Paid Caregivers**

## Learning Objectives

- Understand that behavior and mood may change over time.
- Be aware of the ways that a person with ADRD might behave.
- Understand that behavior is a form of communication - verbal (or spoken) and non-verbal (non-spoken)
- Introduce ways to anticipate and respond to behavior of someone with ADRD.

## Action Strategies for the Trainer

### Introduce the course.

*We're going to watch a video that discusses how behavior might change in someone with IDD and dementia. As you watch, you may recognize some of these behaviors in people you care for. In addition to talking about what to expect, the training will also give you some strategies to help prevent and calm a person who becomes upset.*

*After each section, there are review questions, and we'll pause to discuss these and any questions you have so far.*

### Play Section 1. Pause after the self-checks.

*Are there any questions Do terms need to be clarified?*

*Does anyone recognize these behaviors in anyone you care for?*

If you have staff from different programs, remind them not to give names or details that would violate confidentiality.

### Introduce Section 2:

*This next section will talk about why these behaviors might occur. As you listen, you'll hear the message that someone's behavior is a way for them to communicate something to you.*

### **Play Section 2. Pause after the self-checks.**

*Are there any questions?*

*Does anyone want to share behaviors they may have seen. Follow up with:*

- *What might have caused the person's reaction?*
- *What was going on at the time – in the environment, with the person?*
- *What might the person have tried to communicate through their behavior?*

### **Introduce Section 3:**

*This next section will offer some strategies that you can try to prevent distressing behavior and ways to calm someone who becomes upset.*

### **Play Section 3.**

*Let's review some strategies that we've just heard about.*

- *Think about the residence/setting – where are some quiet spaces for a person to pace or sit to calm down?*
- *Think about all the distractions in your setting that could distract or confuse a person. What things can you reduce or eliminate? (Radio? TV? Clutter?)*
- *Think about the person with dementia - are there objects or activities that they find soothing or calming? (A favorite item of clothing? A pillow or stuffed animal? Music?)*

## **Discussion and Activities**

Activities for further discussion and understanding.

### **Activity One**

Discussion

You have a great idea for a craft activity. You work from noon to 8:00. Let's talk about how you plan to do it.

Think about

- When to schedule it
- How to set up the environment
- How to involve the person with dementia
- How to support and communicate with the person

### **Activity Two**

Discussion (or if people are comfortable, role play)

A person is agitated because their mother was supposed to take them out to lunch. You know their mother passed away a few years ago. The person insists that their mother is late, but is coming.

How might you handle this situation?

- What are some things you might say to the person?
- What tone of voice would you use?
- What are some things you can suggest doing?

### **Activity Three**

Discussion/Brainstorm

Brainstorm ways to involve peers in the person's life.

- Think about ways to explain the person's behavior.
- Think of ways you can support peers, who are concerned.

### **Wrap up**

Any other questions or comments

## **Resources**

- [NTG screening tool](#)
- [Dementia Screening and Diagnosis](#)
- [MassOptions](#)
- [After the Diagnosis](#)
- [Creating a Memory Café](#)
- [End of Life Planning](#)
- [MOLST training webinar](#)
- [Aging Information and Webinars](#)
- [Massachusetts Department of Developmental Service, Family Support Center](#)
- [Mass Council on Aging](#)
- [Alzheimer's Association](#)
- [Your local Aging and Disability Resource Consortia agency \(ADRC\)](#)

*NB: Web Links are current as of July 2023*