IDEA! Strategy

An approach to help you figure out **why** a behavior is happening and **what** you can do about it.

IDentify the behavior

- What is the behavior that is difficult for you to deal with? Be specific.
- Can you see it? Does it bother others? When does it happen? Who's around when it occurs?

Explore what may be causing the behavior

Understand the cause of the behavior

- **HEALTH:** Is the person taking a new medication, getting sick, or in pain?
- **ENVIRONMENT:** Is it too noisy? Is it too hot? Is the place unfamiliar?
- **TASK:** Is the activity too hard for them now? Are there too many steps? Is it something new?
- **COMMUNICATION:** Is it hard for the person to understand what you are saying?

Understand the meaning of the behavior to the person

- Does the person feel confused, scared, nervous, unhappy, or bored?
- Does the person feel like they are being treated like a child?
- Are there things that remind the person of something that they used to do when they were younger like go to work or pick up the children from school?

Adjust what can be done

You are the one who will need to change, the person cannot. Try different things. Pay attention to the person's feelings. Practice being calm, gentle, and reassuring.

- address what is causing the behavior
  - keep tasks and activities simple
  - keep the home as calm as possible
  - speak slowly and gently — try not to say too much at once
  - do not argue — agree and comfort the person whether they are right or wrong
  - find meaningful, simple activities so the person isn't bored
- distract or redirect by:
  - offering something they like to eat
  - watching a TV show or listening to music
  - asking for their help with a simple activity
  - leading them to a different room
- accept the behavior
  - some behaviors you may need to accept rather than change
  - if there are no safety concerns and it doesn't bother the person, you may need to find ways to live with it

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