

Cognitive Impairment Intervention Protocol (CIIP) for Caregiver Interactions with a Person with Cognitive Impairment: X. PREVENTION

Look for ways to:

- Prevent distress, confusion, or anger, rather than simply respond to them when they occur

A. Am I nipping distress or confusion in the bud, rather than letting it escalate?

1. Watch this person at all times so you can see immediately when she/he is beginning to get confused or upset.
2. Watch all parts of this person's body, especially her/his face and hands to see evidence of beginning distress or confusion.
3. Respond immediately to any distress or confusion, before it gets worse. For example, remove the cause of the distress or confusion, or get her/his attention and offer appropriate reassurance, pain relief, or distraction.
4. Monitor the emotional tenor of the environment. Keep it upbeat and relaxed. For example, make light conversation, smile frequently, sing, or joke in a relaxed way.
5. Anticipate and prevent situations where tension, confusion, or distress might occur. For example, avoid contact between this person and another person that might be distressing to her/him.
6. Prevent confusion and anxiety by creating a supportive, informative environment and by giving this person the emotional support and information she/he needs or wants.
7. Be visible to this person at all times, so she/he can feel more secure and less alone, or see you when she/he needs help.

B. Do I apologize or reassure immediately when I see this person getting angry or anxious?

1. Reassure or apologize as appropriate when this person becomes irritated or anxious.
2. Avoid asking this person why she/he is upset.
3. Avoid drawing this person's attention to her/his behavior, or dwelling more than briefly on her/his feelings, until she/he is relaxed and can think more clearly again.
4. Remove the source of the anger, whether it is in the environment, such as an annoying sound, or an internal condition, such as pain or discomfort.
5. Stay with this person until she/he is relaxed and comfortable again.

C. Do I notice subtle hesitations and try to gently coax or encourage this person when she/he is performing a task?

1. Watch this person closely while she/he is engaged in a task.
2. When you see her/him hesitate or appear confused, respond immediately with encouragement, information, reassurance, or praise.
3. Be visible to this person at all times, so she/he can feel more secure and less alone, or see you when she/he needs help.