**Caregiver Approaches to Decrease Resistive Behaviors in Residents**

***They won’t care what you know until they know that you care.”***

* **Create and build a relationship with your residents. They need to see you as more than someone who provides care or who, in their mind, tells them what to do.**
* **Sit and read short stories to them from the newspaper or *Readers Digest.* (Horoscopes, Rant and Rave, Ask Amy).**
* **Sit and listen to or sing a song or two together.**
* **Take a deep breath before approaching them.**
* **Approach slowly and in a relaxed manner.**
* **Squat or sit next to them to meet their eyes at their level.**
* **Monitor your body language: arms should be relaxed and hands should not be on your hips.**
* **Speak first and then offer your hand.**
* **Speak slowly and clearly, then wait for a response. Be sure they have heard you.**
* **Use gestures for “Come with me” or “Eat”.**
* **Give simple, one-step instructions or cues. “Stand”, “Big steps”.**
* **If you need to get the resident up to take her to the bathroom or bed, just ask them to go on a walk with you. Then you can use the toilet or the bed as a visual cue to guide them.**
* **Do not smile too much.**
* **If she declines to follow your cues or requests, leave and approach five or ten minutes later with a different approach in mind. Try sending another caregiver. Don’t force the issue; let your manager know if you need help.**
* **Avoid saying, “I’m going to help you.” Instead say, “Can we try this? May I do that?”**
* **Ask her to help you with a task.**
* **If you find an approach that is successful, tell other caregivers and ask the manager or provider to put the successful approach on the care plan for significant behaviors. For instance, a resident might take her pills if you give them a cup with just two or three pills at once, whereas if you give them all at once, she thinks that’s just too many pills and won’t take any.**
* **Continue to explain the care you are about to give the resident and talk to them as you are giving care even if the resident is advanced in her dementia and cannot understand. Residents may respond to your talking by feeling relaxed, reassured and cared for, even if they cannot give you a response.**

**Adapted from Liz Kaufman, OTR/L, Evergreen Healthcare**