

Coronavirus – Tips for Managing Challenging Behaviour

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Tips for managing challenging behaviour

Coronavirus has meant that all of our normal activities and routines have stopped and we have to stay at home. Lots of us are also feeling worried about the virus and that we or our family will get the virus.

It is therefore understandable that during this time there may be an increase in challenging behaviors for the people we support. Here are some tips that may help:

1. Try to understand the cause of the behavior or the trigger of the behavior, e.g. the environment is too noisy/busy, being asked to do something, wanting to get something, being bored, being anxious, being physically unwell.
2. Watch out for the early warning signs - what can you do to help at this point? What has worked before? Can you distract or divert to something else?
3. Find ways to help the person express themselves. Such as using pictures, photos, objects or Makaton signs.
4. Try to keep to as usual a routine as possible, if the person is used to getting up, meals, going to bed at certain times try to keep to these.

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5. Make a plan/timetable for each day, include things to help the person to feel happy, do activities they enjoy.
6. Make sure that the person can make some choices about activities/food each day. Offer 2 or 3 choices, too much can be overwhelming.
7. Prepare them for finishing an activity they enjoy with countdowns, either verbal or visual.
8. Where you can, get outside for some exercise and fresh air, even a twenty minute walk can be helpful!
9. Develop simple coping strategies, such as breathing exercises or switching to an activity they enjoy.
10. The person you care for might need extra reassurance during this unusual time. Remind them that they are safe at home.
11. Make a time for yourself to do something you enjoy too. We need to look after ourselves to be able to look after others.
12. Keep in touch with family, friends and professionals – reach out for help and advice!

