

## A Positive Approach

- ❑ **Come from the FRONT** – let them know you are coming
- ❑ **STOP at 6 feet out** – get permission to enter personal space
- ❑ **Give ‘HI’ sign & say “Hi!”** – get visual & listening connection
- ❑ **Offer HANDSHAKE** – let them know what you want – get permission to come in
- ❑ **Use their NAME** – the name that person PREFERS – make a personal connection!
- ❑ **Go SLOW** – reaction times slow as we age – it takes longer for info to get in
- ❑ **Get to the SIDE** – be supportive NOT confrontational
- ❑ **Get LOW** – don’t use your height to intimidate – kneel or sit
- ❑ **BE friendly** – say something nice – greet & compliment – intro yourself by name
- ❑ **THEN wait.....**
  
- ❑ **Start Message**
  - **Give basic information**  
“It’s time to...”
  - **Give simple choices**  
this or that (orange juice or milk) (eat or go to the bathroom first)
  - **Give single step directions**  
break down the task (to go to eat.... lean forward..., pull your feet in...)
  - **Ask the person to HELP you**  
it feels better to give than to receive!
  - **Ask the person if they will at least TRY???????**  
sometimes you’ll try even if you don’t think you can!
  - **DON’T Ask “Are you ready?...???” or “Do you WANT to...?”**
  - **DON’T have verbal diarrhea**
  
- ❑ **WAIT for a response (silently count to 10)**  
**IF No response ... ask again**
  
- IF Responding ....**
  - ❑ **Give positive visual, verbal, & tactile ‘STROKES’ - Feedback**
    - “Good job!”
    - “ Yes!”
    - “That’s it”
    - smile, nod
    - hug
    - stroke or rub

**REMEMBER – You HAVE THE POWER!**  
**Keep it Calm... Keep it Adult...Keep it Positive...Keep it Simple!**  
**AVOID Flight, Fright, or Fight!**

## A Positive Physical Approach for Someone with Dementia

1. **Knock** on door or table - to get attention - signal your approach
2. **Stop moving** at the boundary between public & personal space – **6 ft out** - get permission to enter or approach
3. **Open hand motion near face and smile** – look friendly and give the person a visual cue – make eye contact – open hand near face – cues eyes to look there
4. Call the person by preferred **name** OR at least say **“Hi!”** – avoid endearments
5. Move your hand out from near your face to a greeting **handshake** position – make sure they notice you hand out to shake – then stand tall and move forward **SLOWLY**
6. Approach the person from the **front** – come in within 45 degrees of center - visual
7. **Move slowly** – one step/second, stand tall, don’t crouch down or lean in as you move toward the person
8. Move toward the right **side of the person** and offer your hand - give the person time to look at your hand and reach for it, if s/he is doing something else – offer, don’t force
9. Stand to the side of the person at arm’s length – respect intimate space & be supportive not confrontational – but don’t go too far back’ – stay to the front - visual
10. **Shake hands** with the person – make eye contact while shaking
11. Slide your hand from a ‘shake’ position to **hand-under-hand** position – for safety, connection, and function
12. Give your name & greet – “I’m (name). It’s good to see you!”
13. **Get to the person’s level** to talk – sit, squat, or kneel if the person is seated and stand beside the person if s/he is standing
14. NOW, deliver your message...

### Approaching When the Person is DISTRESSED! -Some CHANGES –

1. *Look concerned* not too happy, if the person is upset
2. *Let the person move toward you, keeping your body turned to the side* (supportive – not confrontational) –
3. *If the person is seated & you DON’T get permission to enter personal space – turn sideways & kneel at 6’ out – offer greeting & handshake again – look for an OK to come into their personal space – it will usually come at this time (submissive posture)*
4. After greeting... try one of two options...
  - a. “Sounds like you are (give an emotion or feeling that seems to be true)???”
  - b. Repeat the person’s words to you... If s/he said, “Where’s my mom?” you would say “You’re looking for your mom (pause)... tell me about your mom...” If the person said “I want to go home!”, you would say “You want to go home (pause)... Tell me about your home...”.