DEMENTIA BEHAVIORS: GENERAL MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

The following interventional approach will guide your design of a treatment plan for a particular patient who engages in disruptive behaviors.

1. Identify the behavior and its context.
   - Explicitly describe the behavior.
   - At what time of day is the behavior exhibited?
   - What is happening before and after the behavior occurs?
   - What happens as a result of the behavior?
   - Is there an environmental trigger?
   - Does the resident have a new medical or psychiatric illness?

2. Does the resident have an unmet need?
   - Address pain, hunger, elimination.
   - Does the behavior represent a functional act to relieve anxiety? e.g. pacing.

3. Minimize Environmental Change –
   - Stability is essential.
   - Limit the number of caregivers and reward caregivers that work well with a resident.
   - Minimize room and roommate changes.

4. Control the amount of stimulation-too little or too much can precipitate behaviors.

5. Enhance communication
   - Get down to their level- for residents in wheelchairs kneel down to eye level
   - Provide visual cues for those with difficulty understanding or hearing
   - Approach from the front
   - Announce your name each time- especially for visually impaired residents
   - Tell them what you plan to do before you do it.
   - Don’t hurry the resident—give 5 seconds to respond to each request.
   - Break tasks down into simple commands. Instead of saying “go to the bathroom”, say: “stand up, step forward, turn, sit down”, etc.