

SAY THIS, NOT THAT

10 personal care hacks for showering, dressing and bathroom care

I know personal care can be the hardest part of your day. Your person with dementia isn't being stubborn. **Sometimes getting through personal care is less about convincing them to do it and more about changing how the entire experience feels.** Here's what has worked for me.

1 SHOWERING

1. Music before AND during

NOT THAT

"It's time for your shower."

SAY THIS

"Come on, let's dance!" Turn on their song before you ever mention the bathroom.

♥ My number one shower tip. Sing with them. Dance with them. Keep the music going the whole time.

2. The warmer they are, the better they'll shower

TRY THIS

Warm the room, warm the towel, warm the clothes. Then try the exact same shower again.

♥ Your person with dementia might not hate showers. They might hate being freezing.

3. Keep them covered and hand them the washcloth

NOT THAT

Washing them while they sit there uncovered.

SAY THIS

"Wash this arm for me." Put the washcloth in their hand.

♥ Keep them warm, keep them covered, and wash underneath the towel one section at a time.

4. Make it spa day, not shower day

NOT THAT

"You need a shower."

SAY THIS

"Welcome to the spa!" Warm foot soak, music, a warm towel on their shoulders.

♥ Clean is the goal. A full shower is not. Underarms today. Feet tomorrow. Hair another day.

MY METHOD, EVERY TIME

DON'T ARGUE. DON'T REASON. VALIDATE. EMPATHIZE. REDIRECT.

Flip over for dressing and bathroom care ♥

Meet them where they are ♥ Their reality is real to them

2 DRESSING

5. The shopping bag trick

NOT THAT

~~"You need to change your clothes."~~

SAY THIS

"Look what I got you! I thought this would look SO cute on you. Will you try it on for me?"

♥ Pull one of their own shirts out of a store bag. Same clothes, different approach.

6. Have a fashion show

NOT THAT

~~"Go get dressed."~~

SAY THIS

"Let's have a fashion show!" Put on music and get dressed with them.

7. When they absolutely refuse

NOT THAT

~~Telling them again and again they need to change.~~

SAY THIS

"Okay!" Then later: "Oh shoot! I got something on your shirt. Let's grab you a clean one."

♥ This isn't where I start. But when nothing else works, give them a reason that makes sense to them.

3 BATHROOM CARE

8. Change a brief without undressing them

TRY THIS

Tear the sides, slide it out from underneath, slide the clean one in and fasten. Pants and shoes stay on.

9. Help them find the toilet

TRY THIS

A red or dark toilet seat. No dark rugs. Grab bars, a clear path and good lighting, day and night.

♥ Change the room before you change your expectations of them.

10. Bring the toilet to them at night

TRY THIS

A bedside commode right next to the bed. They sit up, stand, pivot, sit. That's it.

♥ The easiest bathroom routine at 2 a.m. is the shortest one.

WANT ME TO WALK YOU THROUGH IT?

In my training **Creative Personal Care Techniques**, I show you how I handle bathing, dressing and bathroom care, start to finish.

courses.joannadementiaexpert.com/p/creative-personal-care-techniques



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Sudden refusal or agitation? Check the physical first. Pain, a UTI or constipation can show up this way. Check in with their doctor.