



At Arbor Springs, we are dedicated to helping families manage the realities of dementia with as much love, dignity and knowledge as possible. This monthly newsletter is our way of offering helpful tips and insights that will hopefully make your days with your loved one suffering from dementia a little easier, happier and calm.

Despite our best efforts, there will be times when someone with dementia will demonstrate difficult behaviors. In the moment, it's difficult to remember that most behaviors are actually an attempt to express an unmet need or want. Your loved one is using the only means they have to communicate, even if it's inappropriate or frustrating to you.

It's helpful to try to find the meaning behind the behavior. Determining the meaning of the behavior will allow you to try to meet the need or at the very least, intervene or re-direct the behavior to something more suitable.

For example, one of the most common behaviors we see in people with dementia is rummaging. When a person with dementia rummages, it usually means that they're looking for something such as a misplaced item or food. While this seems like a harmless behavior, it can pose a safety hazard if the person gets into things that are harmful like cleaning supplies or sharp objects. And if they don't find what they're looking for, it can escalate into a very frustrating situation for them.

Intervention: You might find it helpful to provide safe areas within an environment for your loved one with dementia to rummage. For example, a chest that is full of odds and ends provides a safe area for rummaging. Many families keep a laundry basket filled with towels, socks and other soft items for their family member to dig through, sort or re-arrange.

If you have specific questions that you'd like answered in an upcoming issue of this newsletter - please reach out to Monica Kuehl, RN, BSN (m.kuehl@arborsprings.org or 515-223-1135) and we'll do our best to get to them all.

We look forward to continuing to share dementia care tips with you.

Sincerely,

Monica Kuehl, RN, BSN
Director of Marketing

www.arborsprings.org
515-223-1135