

Quick Tips:

Lets Have Fun!

A well-rounded caregiver provides quality of life care along with daily living care. This means incorporating activities into all daily living tasks, and throughout the day in your contact with the people you care for. Here are some ideas for daily living tasks you can include in your work with the people to whom you provide care. Some are appropriate for all clients; others work best with individuals with memory loss or dementia. All of us need to use our minds and our bodies to stay as healthy and independent as possible. Remember to use the ideas that feel comfortable and fun to you. You won't be helping people have fun if you're not having fun!

In the morning:

- Sing a wake-up song with the person. A song like "It's time to get up, it's time to get up, it's time to get up in the morning!" or "You are my Sunshine," may be familiar to the person, and may help him/her wake up in a happy mood. If you don't sing, you may wish to use a tape of bird sounds that you can carry into the room to help the person wake up peacefully.
- Use dressing or bathing as a time to do exercises, also. Try stretching arms way overhead before putting a top on, moving feet, legs and ankles while dressing lower body.
- Talk about old times while doing morning care. Ask, "Do you remember your first fancy dress?" "Do you remember your first suit?"
- Try rhyming games: Say, "Here's your top – what rhymes with top? Bop, hop, what else?"
- Take the long way when walking to the dining area, detouring outside or through other living spaces. If you don't have time for a walk, look around you and point out things of interest to the person while you are on your walk.
- Offer a morning newspaper to your loved one. Even if they are just pretending to read, it is a familiar morning activity that helps some people feel more "normal" in the morning.
- Serve morning mid-meal snacks in a "tea party" atmosphere. Make it fun and playful, and watch the person enjoy it more. Join in with a cup of coffee, cookie or fruit, and talk about the news or the day's events, too.

In the afternoon:

- Take a walk "just for fun."
- Put on music from the Big Band era and just dance or move.
- Have your loved one help you pour and mix pre-measured ingredients for cookies or muffins.
- Give the person a basket of towels to fold, or a broom to sweep the room with.