INDEPENDENCE

Help me to do it myself

Promoting independence involves creating opportunities for people to do as much for themselves as possible, with support where needed.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

1. Never help a person with a task they are able to complete themselves
2. Use techniques to support memory and independence
3. Prevent excess disability by not 'doing' for the person but rather supporting them to 'do' themselves

MONTESSORI FOR DEMENTIA, DISABILITY AND AGEING

Supporting well-being through four Key Principles:
Self-Esteem, Independence, Choice, Meaningful Engagement.

The four principles of Montessori for Dementia, Disability and Ageing support a person's self-esteem and independence, and their ability to make choices and meaningful contributions to their community. It is life changing for older people, especially those living with dementia or other disabilities, as well as their families, carer partners and communities.

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PRINCIPLES IN PRACTICE

1

Prepared Environment

Adapt the environment to minimise barriers and enhance accessibility independence, making everyday tasks achievable and more enjoyable. Use clear signage, labels and task breakdown, prioritise aesthetics, reduce clutter, and maintain visual consistency throughout.

2

Task Breakdown

Break activities into smaller, sequential steps, using visual aids or simple instructions to support independent completion.

3

Practical Life Activities

Offer adapted practical life activities that engage fine motor skills and attention to support independence with activities of daily living. Pouring, scooping and squeezing activities restore, maintain and enhance movement and coordination, supporting a person's independence in personal care, eating and undertaking meaningful roles.

4

Visual Schedules

Utilise pictorial schedules to outline daily activities, fostering understanding, minimising responsive behaviours, and promoting a sense of independence and control throughout the day.

5

Accessible Routines

Establish predictable routines for daily tasks like meals, exercise and rest, fostering independence through consistency.

6

Minimal Assistance

Provide only the necessary level of support, allowing people to complete as much of the task as they can independently.

7

Engage Memory Through Repetition

Use repetitive, familiar activities to reinforce memory and independence, such as folding towels, pairing socks or sorting objects.

8

Environmental Cues

Use Montessori-based signage and visual cues to guide independent way finding in the environment, like labelled or colour-coded doors or paths.

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