

Understanding Therapeutic Reasoning™

Therapeutic: Something that is *therapeutic* is beneficial.

Reasoning: The ability of the mind to think and understand things in a logical way.

Therapeutic Reasoning™: An effective strategy used in dementia care which provides “reasoning” that is logical to the person and helps to reassure and calm.

Therapeutic Reasoning involves using reasoning which is logical to the person with dementia (but not necessarily logical in reality), which creates a reassuring, calm feeling. As a result, it is beneficial to both the person with dementia and to the caregiver.

Caregivers need to go into the reality of the person they’re caring for, and do or say anything that will help the person to feel reassured. Therapeutic Reasoning comes from a place of caring; we are aiming to help, not hurt. When normal reasoning becomes difficult, the goal now becomes less about who is right or wrong. **Instead the goal is to ensure everyone is happy and at peace.**

Examples of Implementing Therapeutic Reasoning:

- ✿ Agree with them to keep the peace
- ✿ Apologise to them to keep the peace
- ✿ Say something nice to flatter them
- ✿ Show them you care about their concern
- ✿ Tell them you will look into it
- ✿ Tell or provide visuals to reassure their concerns are solved

Do or say whatever works!

**Would you rather be right...
or at peace?**

Important Dementia Care Reminders:

- ✿ You can't change someone else; you can only change how **YOU** respond to the situation
- ✿ Know the person you are caring for so you can properly personalize
- ✿ Know their triggers and do all you can to avoid potential triggers for conflicts

For example: A person in the middle stages of Alzheimer’s disease may firmly believe they need to “get home to milk the cows”. Stating facts such as “You don’t have the farm anymore, you sold it 15 years ago,” can cause feelings of upset, sadness, mistrust and/or additional challenging behaviours. Instead, one can use Therapeutic Reasoning: “Milk the cows? Well... lucky us! They’ve already been milked today! Isn’t that great news?! How about joining me for a cup of coffee/tea to celebrate... treat’s on me!”

Please use this approach wisely. Practice will help you to feel more comfortable.