

# Dementia De-Escalation Techniques

**Diana Sturdevant Ph.D., GCNS-BC, APRN, NEA-BC**

**Research, Assistant Professor**

**Program Director, Nursing Home Quality Improvement Projects**

Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing

The University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center

1100 N. Stonewall | Oklahoma City, OK 73117

405-271-1491, Ext. 49201 | [diana-sturdevant@ouhsc.edu](mailto:diana-sturdevant@ouhsc.edu)

Prevention is best!



Be proactive rather than reactive!

# Most Common Types of Behavioral Triggers in Dementia

- Confusion
- Pain/discomfort
- Basic needs not met
- Changing or overwhelming environment





- Remove the threat
- Create space
- Take his/her side

- Crouch down to get at or below the person's eye level
- Calm your voice
- Relax your body
- Communicate openly
- Be willing to go where she/he is at the moment



# De-briefing



- What was the behavior?
- Was it harmful?
- Did something trigger it?
- What happened immediately after?
- Could something be causing the person pain?
- Could this be related to medication or illness?
- What can we put in place to prevent reoccurrence?

# Common problem—Wanting to go home...

- Don't tell them “you are home”
- Investigate
  - Unmet needs (hunger, thirst, toilet, tired)
  - Environment (noisy, people leaving)
- Responses to try
  - “Oh, you have to get home. Is there something you need there, or do you just want to be there?”
  - “Let's head on out...,”

# Self-awareness is imperative!

- Be aware of how our words and actions affect those living with dementia!
- Foster a positive, welcoming environment
  - Polite—Respectful—Compassionate—Courteous
- Prioritize training for staff in communication, understanding behavior as communication of underlying needs, recognition of behaviors/attitudes that can trigger responses from PLWD





# Resources

Alzheimer's Association: Educational Programs and Dementia Care Resources

<https://www.alz.org/help-support/resources/care-education-resources>

Alzheimers.gov: Tips for Caregivers and Families of People with Dementia

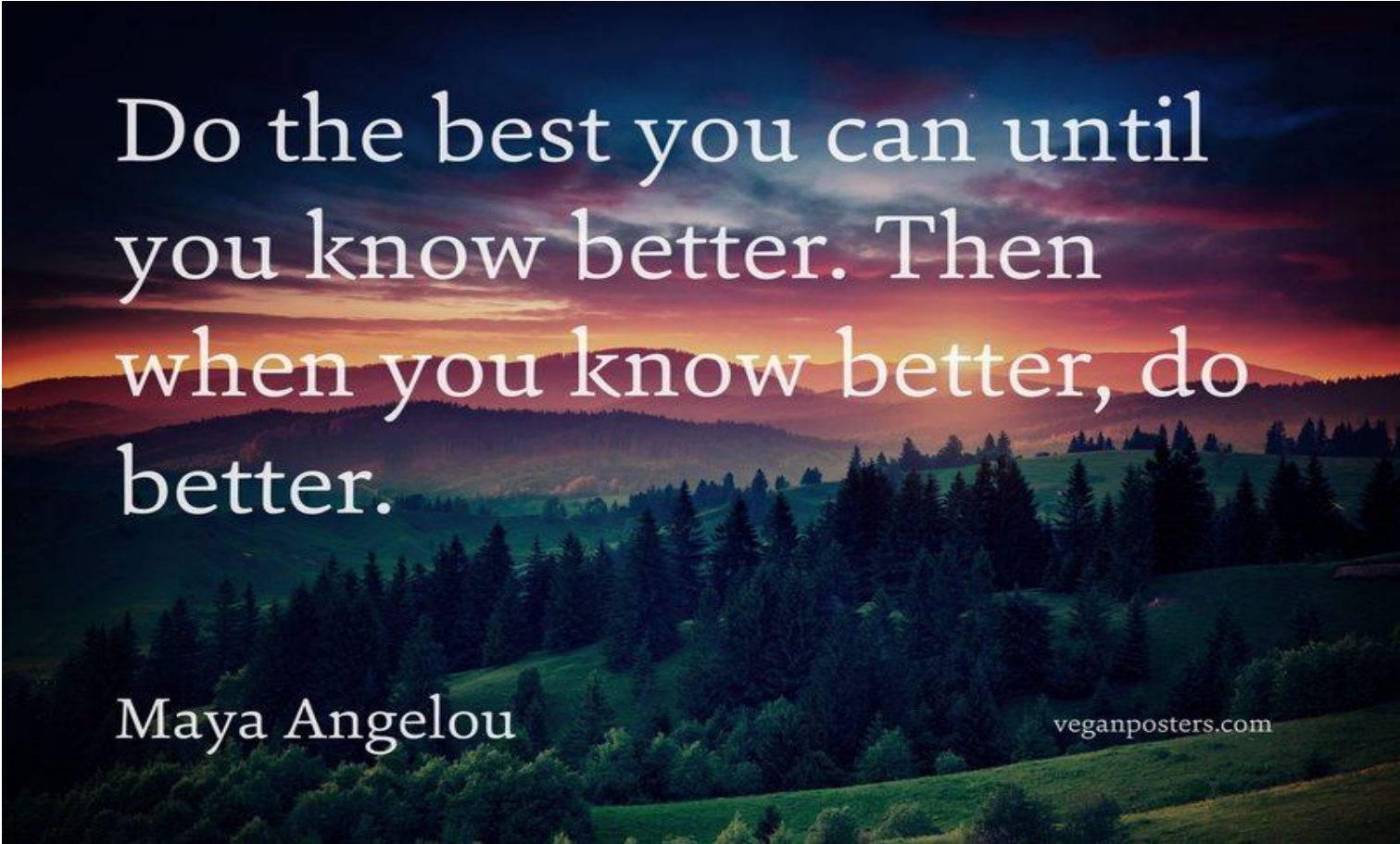
<https://www.alzheimers.gov/life-with-dementia/tips-caregivers>

# Thank You!

Diana Sturdevant   [diana-sturdevant@ouhsc.edu](mailto:diana-sturdevant@ouhsc.edu)

# Questions?





Do the best you can until  
you know better. Then  
when you know better, do  
better.

Maya Angelou

[veganposters.com](http://veganposters.com)