

# ***BEHAVIORAL MANAGEMENT SKILLS: The Five "R"s***

*By Nancy Mace*

**Reassess** - when a new behavior occurs. The new behavior could indicate an infection, a response to pain, a side effect of medication, or a worsening of the dementia condition. Is the environment uncomfortable or disturbing due to noise, too many people, or unfamiliarity?

**Reconsider**- some behaviors. Is the behavior dangerous to that person and others, or should we as caregivers change our own attitudes so that the behavior can continue in a controlled environment?

**Rechannel**- the behavior rather than try to stop it. Find a way for the behavior to continue in a less disruptive way. Allow the person their own drawer to rummage in, space to do their walking in a safe setting, tasks to do such activities as folding towels or sorting coins.

**Redirect or distract**- from impending catastrophic reactions. Change the environment and remove the person from the situation before an angry outburst occurs.

**Reassure** - and stay with the person, reminding them that you are there and the person is safe. The person with dementia cannot remember when s(he) is nor what is happening. Use gentle touch when appropriate and calming activities. Remember that the person is sensitive to picking up on your emotions and reactions. S(he) will often mirror your responses.