

New learning is difficult for people living with brain failure because the disease or injury damages parts of the brain responsible for encoding new memories and processing complex information.

To promote a sense of worth, improve quality of life / independence, and make life easier for the Care partner and for the person living with brain failure, choose to perform activities of daily living the way he/she has always done them. Instead of bathing the way you would do it, prepare the bath the way he/she would do it. Hand him/her the washcloth or soap; allow him/her to wash the way they have always done it. Help him/her initiate, sequence, or switch gears; provide support for him/her to be successful doing it THEIR WAY.

Establish his/her GEM® state & use the strategies for that state:

☐ Sapphire ☐ Diamond ☐ Emerald ☐ Amber ☐ Ruby ☐ Pearl

Risk Factors: ☐ Dehydration ☐ Malnutrition ☐ Social Isolation ☐ Falls

Techniques required: Hand-under-hand Visual/Verbal/Touch Positive Physical Approach

Cues needed: ☐ Initiation ☐ Sequencing ☐ Switching Gears ☐ Memory Book ☐ Music

Determine his/her preferences for:

Eating & Drinking

Sleep & Rest

Bathing

Toileting

Exercise

Self-Care

Dressing



ideas for assessment are listed on page 2 of 2

Doing things THEIR WAY taps into familiar routines, life-long habits, long-term memories that still exist, and by-passes the part of the brain (the hippocampus) that is responsible for new learning.

If you must teach a new skill:

- **teach through repetition rather than recalling new facts.**
- **utilize “errorless learning” with cues/prompts to prevent errors.**
- **create visual cues, bright objects, sticky notes, or signs.**
- **eliminate distractions; keep the environment quiet.**
- **choose a time when he/she is alert.**
- **leverage existing knowledge; connect to what he/she knows.**
- **if he/she becomes stressed, back off & try again later.**