

A Steady Presence

How your tone and pace can support the next step.

A person's presence can either add to an intense moment or help lower its load. You cannot make someone calm on command, but you can control your voice, pace, posture, and the number of demands you place on them.

FOUR MOVES TO TRY

01 Notice yourself

Check your breathing, expression, posture, and speed.

02 Signal safety

Be predictable, respectful, and attentive to personal space.

03 Make the step smaller

Use fewer words and one achievable request.

04 Hold steady

Keep the limit clear; revisit reasoning and repair when possible.

TWO WAYS TO APPLY IT

YOUNGER CHILD

A child becomes loud at cleanup. Speak softly, offer one choice, and allow time to begin.

TEENAGER

A teen asks for space. Agree on a reasonable return time rather than following with more questions.

COACH THE CAREGIVER

Explain the one cue you changed and invite the caregiver to try it in a low-stress moment.

TRY IT THIS WEEK

Choose one cue you control - voice, pace, posture, or number of words - and deliberately change it.

REFLECTION

What does my body communicate before I say anything?

SAFETY AND PRACTICE

Maintain professional boundaries and leave unsafe situations. A steady presence is not a substitute for a safety plan.

AUTHORSHIP AND CONTEXT

Dr. Charles Pemberton, Ed.D., developed the original Clinical Perspectives materials for the FITT team while serving as Clinical Program Director at Omni Family of Services. This website adaptation is for general education; it does not state current Omni or FITT policy. Publication rights review is pending.