

Connect When Stress Rises

Make room for thinking before asking for a change.

When stress rises, the ability to listen, plan, and use a practiced skill may narrow. A brief connecting response can lower pressure enough to return to the conversation and the expectation.

FOUR MOVES TO TRY

01 Pause yourself

Avoid matching the person's intensity.

02 Notice what is happening

Describe what you see without deciding the person's motive.

03 Make the request smaller

Offer one clear, manageable next step.

04 Return for repair

Once the person can participate, revisit the limit and practice a better response.

TWO WAYS TO APPLY IT

YOUNGER CHILD

A child becomes overwhelmed by several directions. Give one short step and stay nearby.

TEENAGER

A teen shuts down during a correction. Pause, acknowledge the difficulty, and agree on when to resume.

COACH THE CAREGIVER

Practice a calm opening sentence and a clear time to return to the original expectation.

TRY IT THIS WEEK

During one tense moment, reduce your words, name what you notice, and offer one next step.

REFLECTION

Can this person hear and use what I am asking right now?

SAFETY AND PRACTICE

Follow safety procedures promptly when needed; connection supports accountability after capacity returns.

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.