



## UNDERSTANDING CLINGING & SHADOWING

For caregivers of people with dementia, clinging and shadowing behaviors happen more often than they don't in the course of a day. Being followed everywhere and being repeatedly interrupted when trying to complete a task is a common source of frustration for many caregivers of loved ones with dementia.

### **Reasons Behind the Behaviors**

- **Out of sight out of mind** -People with dementia cannot remember that when you go to the bathroom, you will be returning when you're finished. Provide a timer which can be used to reassure them of when you'll return
- **Uncertainty** - Primary caregivers are a point of security for a person with dementia in an uncertain world. If possible provide a substitute. Pets provide a friendly distraction while being a source of and an object of affection
- **Overwhelming environment** – As their surroundings become more unfamiliar, individuals may become more uncertain and frightened. Keep noise, activity, and clutter to a minimum

### **Practice the Three R's to Ease the Worried Mind**

- Be **Reassuring** - reassure the person letting them know that you will return
- **Respond** – respond to the emotional content of their concerns. It is important to recognize and respect his/her feelings
- **Refocus** – rather than letting your loved one be anxious or stressed over your absence, redirect or distract with a simple task such as organizing the silverware, or sorting the laundry. It's not important if the task is done correctly, just that they have something to do.

**Lastly** – realize that you cannot control how they act only how you react!