🧠 Behavior Is Communication

Memory Care Focus:
Behavior is often an expression of unmet needs when verbal communication declines.

Why This Matters

The Alzheimer's Association explains that behavioral expressions are often caused by physical discomfort, environmental triggers, or emotional distress — not "defiance."

The National Institute on Aging states that agitation may stem from pain, boredom, fear, overstimulation, or changes in routine.
(Source: National Institute on Aging, nia.nih.gov)

Common Underlying Causes of Behaviors
• Pain or physical discomfort
• Hunger or thirst
• Fatigue
• Overstimulation (noise, crowding)
• Need for purpose or familiarity
• Anxiety about time/place

Memory Care Application
Before responding to behavior, ask:

1. What need might be unmet?
2. What changed in the environment?
3. Is this predictable based on time of day?

Instead of correcting, investigate.

Quick Practice
This week, document one behavior and identify the likely underlying need.

Reflection
What is this resident trying to communicate?