

Green Means Go!

*Getting Emeralds ready to go out in a positive way
by Amanda Bulgarelli, PAC Mentor*

8:30 AM – My alarm sounds and I get up and out of bed. I come downstairs to find my Care Partner already dressed with coffee brewing. This is what I am used to and I greet them with a hug and thanks.

“Hey Amanda, we are going out in 15 minutes, it is really cold, so make sure to get your coat!”

Here is the new coat that we just bought yesterday:



9:00 AM – I make my way back downstairs after struggling to find things that I can put on by myself, but I am now dressed. I even remembered to get my coat! I’m feeling pretty proud of myself for getting ready to go on my own.

Unfortunately, this is the coat I have put on for below freezing weather:



Stop and think – how do you *RESPOND* rather than *REACT* as a Care Partner?

Option A: “Amanda, you know that coat isn’t an outside coat, what are you thinking? Go get the one from the *coat closet*, we just bought it yesterday, don’t you remember?”

Option B: “Hey Amanda, thanks for getting ready so quickly, I’m wondering if that coat is warm enough for outside? I have this other coat here that may be a bit warmer, do you think we should try this one or keep that one on?”

Option C: “Sweetheart, you are going to freeze, take that off and let me put on the right coat.”

If you chose Option B, you were able to respond instead of simply reacting. Try to assess and help me problem solve rather than assuming I did this on purpose. By pointing out my flaws or taking over for me I lose the skills that I do have, no reason to take more from me than is necessary. Option B treats me with respect and lets me know that there is something I should check out before making a final decision about the coat.

Now, to think about the next time, maybe we could consider taking the decision around the coat out of the equation by either waiting to mention it until we are ready to head out, or go ahead and hand it to me when you tell me about it. This means that I can be successful and stay independent in this skill.

If I am struggling with the steps, think about using music to kick-start the process or keep me moving along the way. Check out this article on music connected to tasks:

[Music and Medicine: A New Year, A New Challenge](#) by Amy Clements-Cortes PhD MT-BC MT FAMI