

Cheat sheet for caregivers and health workers.

You are often the first and last face a person sees on their worst day. Small things land hard there.

Not every hardship is a test, and nothing here is graded.

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Say your name and look at theirs.

Before anything else, tell them who you are and what you do, then use their name, not the room number or the diagnosis.

SAY "Hi, I'm Dana, I'm your nurse today. What would you like me to call you?"

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Sit down for one minute.

If you can, take a chair and be at their eye level, even for a short talk. It costs almost nothing, and the person feels heard, not processed.

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Visit the one nobody visits.

Every unit has a patient with no family and no calls. Stop in for a minute without a task.

SAY "I don't need anything, I just wanted to say hello."

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Say what you are about to do, and ask first.

Touching, turning, drawing blood, moving a bed: a sentence first gives the person back some control. Then wait for the answer.

SAY "I'm going to roll you toward me. Is that all right?"



Speak up for the patient, through the safe channel.

If something seems wrong or someone is being dismissed, use your chain of command, a charge nurse, a patient advocate or a safety report. You do not have to do it alone, and never put your safety or livelihood on the line to do it.



Care for the caregiver, starting with you.

Eat, drink water, take the break you are owed, and ask for help before you are underwater. After a hard shift, take a breath before the next room or the drive home, so it doesn't land on the next person.

SAY "I can't do all of this. Can you take Thursday?"



Stay with a family in the worst hour.

You cannot fix it, and you do not need the right words. Sit, lower the noise you can, and say their person's name.

SAY "I'm here. Take as long as you need."

IF YOU ONLY DO ONE THING THIS WEEK

One name, one chair, one honest "I'm here."

Caregivers also need care. If you are worn down, please talk to someone you trust. In the US you can call or text 988. Elsewhere, findahelp.com lists services by country. Nothing here is medical advice or a standard of care; follow your training, your workplace's policies and the law, and never put yourself at risk.

This is practical, not religious. I think what you show with your choices is what counts. Share it freely.



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