

# Challenges in Caring

- **Hearing and sight deficit** can make it difficult to communicate with family members, especially with elders.

My grandfather keeps going outside walking and then can't find his way. Neighbours bring him home? How can I help grandpa to only go outside with a family member

- **Anger** from family members with intellectual disability.

My son gets angry and frustrated when he doesn't get his food quickly or when it takes a long time helping him get dressed. What are some ways he could become more patient?

- **Refusal** by an unwell family member to take baths or care for their personal hygiene

How can my sister with a severe mental disorder wash herself and her clothes by herself? She used to be quite able to do this?!

- **Difficult and violent behaviour** by a family member with intellectual disability impacts everyone around.

She doesn't play nice with other kids and frequently hits other kids. Then no one wants to be friends with her.



## About Us

Burans is the name of the rhododendron flower which spreads color and hope around the hillsides of Uttarakhand each spring.

## Contact us

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Project Burans is a partnership project with Emmanuel Hospital Association (EHA) ([www.eha-health.org](http://www.eha-health.org)) and the Uttarakhand CHGN Cluster. We are a partnership project led by Emmanuel Hospital Association, working with HOPE, SNEHA and OPEN.

Strong and positive family interactions  
a brochure to build positive behaviour and actions



This brochure introduces three strategies for behaviour management with family members who have mental distress. These are positive reinforcement, shaping and modelling.



**Project Burans**  
working with communities for mental health in Uttarakhand







## Positive reinforcement

**Positive reinforcement** - is a strategy to guide behaviour where we offer desirable effects or consequences for a behaviour with the intention of increasing the chance of that behaviour being repeated in the future. Whenever a desirable actions is performed, they can be rewarded. This makes that family member wish to repeat the desirable action as opposed to a negative one.

My 15 year daughter who has been worried about her weight and getting fat recently does not want to eat meals regularly and only likes to eat Maggi or snack foods.

### **Desired behaviour**

My daughter eats three healthy meals per day

### **Positive reinforcement**

I explain to my daughter that we need to eat meals regularly to be healthy and that I want her to eat three simple meals a day. I tell her that each time she eats a meal properly I will add Rs10 to her mobile phone balance and pay it at the end of the week. Once she is eating regularly I won't continue this but I also take opportunity to praise her when she eats healthy food to encourage this behaviour.



## Modelling

**Modelling** - is a process we use when the desired behaviour is deliberately displayed by a role model to a learner or observer who then may learn that behaviour and carry it on. Through showing and demonstrating the ideal behavior for situations or general tasks, the family member with the disorder can learn through observing.

My older sister is 18 years and has an intellectual disability. She angers easily and often throws her food when she is not given attention.

### **Desired behaviour**

That my sister will sit and eat food and say what she needs without throwing food.

### **Actions I take**

When we are sitting together eating food I deliberately speak to our mother about what I need. "Mother there is no roti on the table. Please can you bring me some more." Or "I don't want to eat this kheer. Can you take it away please". My mother asks me to spend more time with her and simply show her how I calmly solve tasks.



## Shaping

**Shaping** - is a process where we work towards a desired way of behaving with our family member but recognizing we have to get there taking multiple small steps. We reward each small step which is going in the right direction, for the desired actions in order to encourage family member to repeat that particular behaviour.

Shaping is helpful to achieve a difficult task or increase the competency of a skill. By rewarding each step or a fraction of a desired action, the family member will be more willing to continue to develop a skill or work towards the desired action.

My daughter has trouble sitting still and paying attention. This makes it very difficult for her to sit in classrooms or even listen to me.

### **Desired behaviour**

That she will sit still, not touch or talk to other children and pay attention for longer periods of time.

### **Action I take to help shape her behaviour**

There are several things she needs to do to behave well in class. I talk to the class teacher about choosing one at a time and we use positive reinforcement (see next panel) as well as shaping.

At the start I encourage her to not talk to others even though she is still moving and active. Then as she gets better at not talking we talk about how she needs to stay still and not touch other children. Then after she is improving at that we discuss with her teacher how to encourage her to engage in class discussions and focus.