

## **Coping strategies for PDA (Pathological Demand Avoidance)**

- 1) Demands – ask can the same result be gained by a different route? A longer route can be slower but calmer but does it matter if the end result is the same. Sometimes dealing with the behaviour will take longer, be more stressful than taking the long route.
- 2) Allow time to process – processing is like searching filing cabinets in the brain to find the meaning behind the sentence – it takes time.
- 3) Use a favourite toy to make the demand or to get an answer i.e. what would doggy like to eat?
- 4) Talking in a rhythm can be easier to process and seems less demanding.
- 5) Be confident but not demanding – if you look scared they will feel scared. If we want them to cope we have to show them we are coping.
- 6) Use a fun approach to make a demand i.e. bet you can't... can you do this by the time I count to...
- 7) Acting 'thick' and in need of help may bring out a new solution.
- 8) Flexibility does not show weakness but creativity and love.
- 9) I anxiety is high aim low with demands.
- 10) Ignore the behaviour but not the child and use distractions to entice the child to you. Find something so interesting the child loses interest in the behaviour.
- 11) Being over anxious may mean they can't get their body to work like it normally does; the child may need a physical prompt like loading up a spoon or a gesture.
- 12) It isn't a battle of who can win or have control but who sharing the path to the end result.
- 13) Don't forget to consider what sensory issues the child has and if they have had a good sensory diet?
- 14) You can't see the true picture by looking at a snap shot you have to see the whole picture - looking at the child, its personality, the family values, the sensory issues, factors which may affect the child in home, at school, changes, interaction styles and see the child before the behaviour
- 15) Look after yourself and do at least one thing a week that is for you and makes you smile. You more are vital than you think if you go under where does that leave your child. If the child goes under you can help.
- 16) Don't panic, stay calm if something didn't go well today don't dwell there's always tomorrow.

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