

## **You are So Much More**

For those of us who work in long term care, no matter our position, it is so easy to get caught up in the job responsibilities, the regulations, the policies and procedures, and the many expectations coming at us from all directions, that we forget what is important. We forget the impact we have in the lives of those we serve. We forget how much joy, peace and security we bring to them. Something as simple as a touch or a smile can mean so much more to those we care for.

I want to challenge you to stop each day, through all the busyness and look at the positive change you are making. When you are frustrated trying to make sure you're following every regulation and policy, remember the resident who said, "You're worth your weight in gold." When you feel like you are at the end of your rope and can't complete another task, remember the resident who told you, "Thank you." When you feel like there are not enough hours in the day to get it all done, remember the look on the resident's face as they viewed the eclipse with your help. When you think you can't go through yet another survey, remember the resident who said, "This is my home, you couldn't pay me to leave." And when you're working at home or overtime and feel like you're neglecting your own family, remember you are doing it for your extended family, as well as the one who says, "Have I told you lately that I love you?" And know that one day, should you need their care, someone will be there to do the same for you.

Outside of our immediate family, most of us spend more quantity time with those we serve. We become their family and they ours. We laugh with them, celebrate with them, cry with them and we grieve their loss, all the while continuing to do our jobs because we still have others depending on us to be there for them. Our responsibilities never end, because we always care.

To say we have a stressful job is an understatement. But through all the challenges and the negatives thrown at us, we must remember the bigger picture. While many of those we serve cannot express their gratitude for our being there, I feel sure if they could, they would. I know this because if I were in their shoes, I would be grateful for the person who keeps me clean and dry, the person who prepares my food, the person who keeps my room clean, the person who keeps me busy and gives me a purpose, the person who communicates with my family and all of the others who keep the home in which I now reside, running smoothly.

So, I challenge you, when the going gets tough, remember why you are doing what you do. You have a bigger purpose than to just "do the job or meet the regulation." It's an old cliché, but you DO make a difference and I hope you never forget that.

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