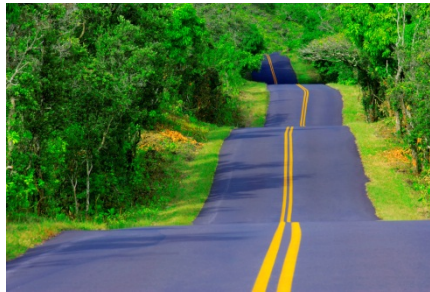


ANXIETY AND INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES BUMPS IN THE ROAD

Often, caregivers are left feeling “we’ve tried everything”. It may be necessary to review past efforts to match the strategy and need. Here are some common bumps in the road.



When our instinct to support or reassure is ineffective, reasons could include:

- We’ve accidentally focussed on another behaviour or symptom of anxiety rather than addressing the root of anxiety
- We’ve tried to talk the person out of their worries, which are not based in logic
- We’ve used preventative strategies such as information sharing when the person is too overwhelmed to hear the information
- We’ve responded to verbal comments that are said while the person is overwhelmed, scared, or not thinking clearly
- We’ve missed acknowledging the worry and teaming up against the worry and instead remained focused on the person
- We’ve used our own ranking for determining how strong the worry is, and how it can be overcome
- We’ve pushed people to ‘get used to’ their distress
- We’ve argued with the person’s anxiety – and become upset ourselves
- We’ve forgotten anxiety is stressful precisely because it doesn’t make sense

Hurtful Comments

It is very hard to ignore hurtful words. In fact, it is the best way to make a caregiver re-enter an argument! We need to think of these comments as symptoms. If a person kicked a shoe across the room in an outburst, you wouldn’t kick it back at them. It is a non-related burst of energy. Consider these hurtful words in the same manner. See the comment as a symptom, and don’t take it personally.