

Dementia On the Road June 2024

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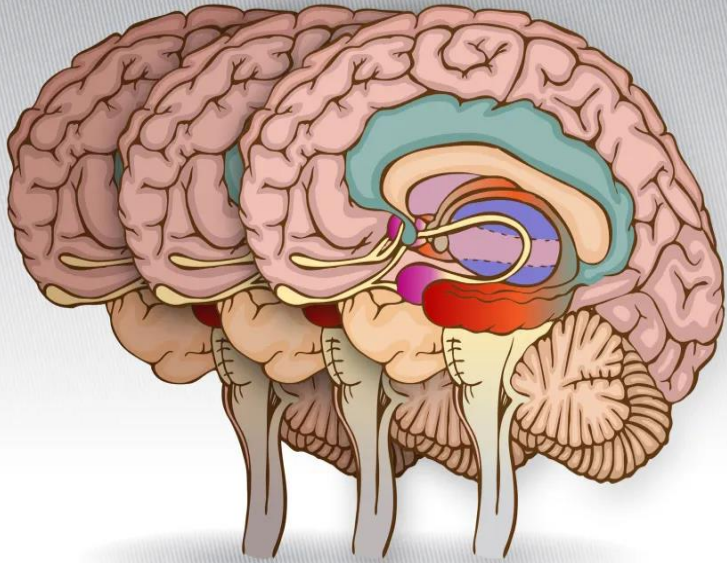
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Understanding Dementia and Change in Dementia

Dementia On the Road 2024

What We'll Talk About Today

1. Cognitive changes that occur with dementia
1. Behavioral and emotional changes that can occur with dementia
1. Describing and investigating when someone is distressed.



Dementia Review

When the Change is More Than Expected

Typical Brain Aging



Perceived Changes



Mild Cognitive Impairment



“Dementia”



Neurocognitive Disorder

What Does Dementia Mean?

Decline in one or
more cognitive
abilities

Decline in
functional living
abilities

There Are Many Causes of Dementia



Alzheimer's disease

Lewy Bodies

Vascular

Frontotemporal

Korsakoff

Huntington's

.....and many more!

Word Confusion

Dementia ≠

Alzheimer's disease

Memory

Growing older



**What Behavior
Changes Could
Happen?**

We May Act Differently

Most individuals living with a dementia will experience some kind of change to their behavior.

This looks very different for each person. There is not a “textbook” version.

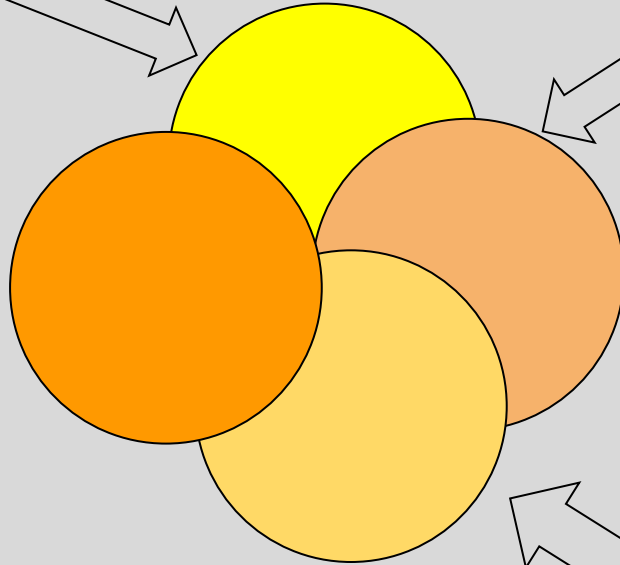
Many Factors to Consider

Environmental
Stressors

Declines in
Cognition

Medical and
Physical
Functioning

Personality and
Coping



What is Dementia Behavior?

Anxiety

Love

Frustration

Worry

Overwhelmed

Engagement

Fear

Boredom

Thirst / Hunger

A Way to Categorize Behaviors / Changes

**Verbal
Behaviors**

**Physical
Behaviors**

**Emotional /
Psychiatric
Changes**

Various Dementia Behaviors

Verbal / Nonverbal	Physical	Physical
Complaining	Hitting	Pacing / Wandering
Constant request for help	Kicking	Shadowing
Screaming / Yelling	Pushing	Hoarding / Hiding things
Cursing	Spitting	Restlessness
Repeating Questions	Throwing objects	Taking clothes off
Sexual Comments	Scratching	Touching everything

Psychiatric / Emotional Changes

Many persons with a dementia experience emotional and psychiatric changes.

These changes may be as a result of their awareness of their decline and/ or a direct result of the physical and chemical changes in the brain.

	Depression, Sadness	
	Anxiousness, Worry	
	Hallucinations	
	False Beliefs	
	Lack of Interest	
	Personality Changes	

Early Behaviors / Psychiatric Changes

Alzheimer's Disease

Largely absent early on

Suspiciousness

Beliefs about infidelity

Vascular dementia

Low level of motivation

Hard to start and continue activity

Lewy bodies dementia

Visual hallucinations

Changes in sleep behavior



Responding to Distress in Dementia: Learning Core Interaction Skills

Communication

Be mindful of tone

Face the person directly

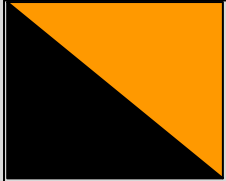
Allow time to respond – several seconds!

Reduce the number of options

Use shorter sentences

Allow about 10
seconds for
someone to
understand

Communication Changes



As the dementia makes it more difficult to communicate:

Shorten your questions / requests

Simplify your word use

Ask fewer open-ended “big” questions

Start incorporating more non verbal means

Communication Changes

Towards the later stages of dementia:

Make a request using 2 or 3 words

Allow longer pauses when switching topics

Use even more non verbal ways of communicating

Continue with conversations / interactions

Less Helpful Communication

**Statements
that add
pressure**



**“You remember,
don’t you?”**

**“You knew this
yesterday.”**

Approach

When possible, approach from the front

Break the task down into smaller steps

Go slower

Don't rush in too early

Be aware of body language

Needs

Are they expressing a need?

-Basic needs such as thirst, hunger, warmth, cooling, toileting

Are they bored or need social interaction?

-We always feel a need to be useful and productive

Distractions

Look for a way to get their attention

Offer a response aimed at emotion

Begin to discuss a related topic

Use objects and pictures to move away

Leave for Later

If there is resistance, consider it may be ok to leave that task for later.

Give it some time and try again later if it is not a urgent issue or a safety concern

Rethink your approach and communication used

Environment

**How can we make the
environment more
pleasing?**

Look around, could something else
be contributing to distress?

Too much / not enough noise

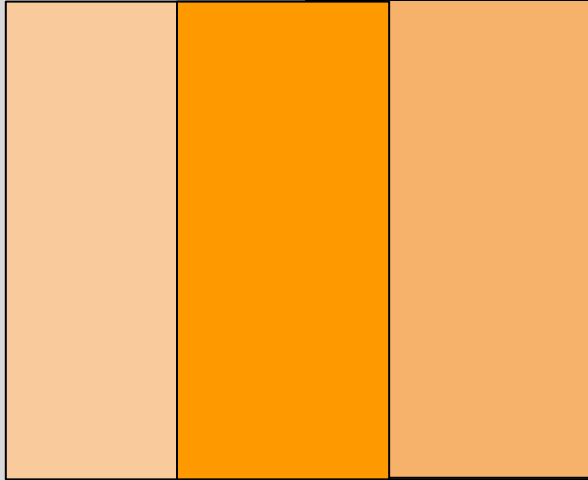
Too much / not enough light

Too warm or too cold

A new situation, setting, or people

A change in routine

Senses



Is there anything we can do to help sense?

- Is there enough light?
- Wearing hearing aids?
- Wearing glasses?

Questions?

