

**Coping with Challenging
Behaviors–
It's How You Do What You
Do that Makes a Difference!**

What behaviors are we talking about?

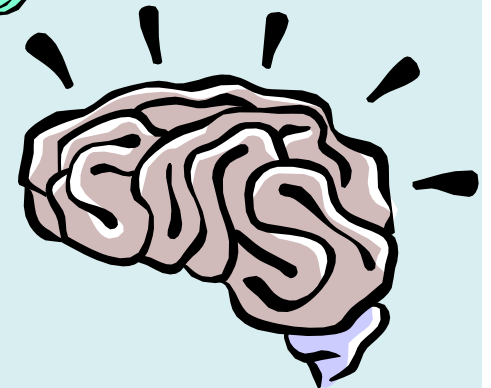
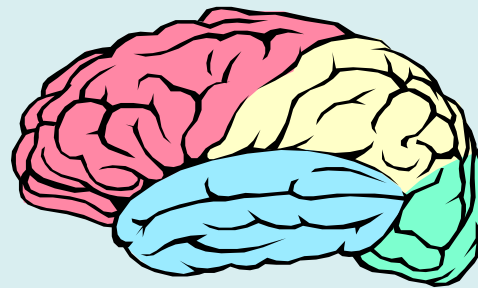
- Examples...

What Are the Most Common Issues That Come Up???

- Not going to the MD
- 'Losing' Important Things
- Getting Lost
- Unsafe task performance
- Repeated calls & contacts
- Refusing
- 'Bad mouthing' you to others
- Making up stories
- Resisting care
- Swearing & cursing
- Making 911 calls
- Mixing day & night
- Shadowing
- Eloping or Wandering
- No solid sleep time
- Getting 'into' things
- Threatening caregivers
- Undressing
- Being rude
- Feeling 'sick'
- Striking out at others
- Falls & injuries
- Infections & pneumonias
- Seeing things & people
- Not eating or drinking
- Contractures & immobility

Why Do These Things Happen?

- **EVERYTHING** is affected
 - Thoughts
 - Words
 - Actions
 - Feelings
- It is progressive
 - More brain dies over time
 - Different parts get hit
 - Constant changing
- It is variable
 - Moment to moment
 - Morning to night
 - Day to day
 - Person to person
- Dementia is predictable
 - Specific brain parts
 - Typical spread
 - Some parts preserved



Why Might These Things ***NOT*** Happen?

- Dementia is individualistic
- The person 'doesn't have it in them...'
- The situation doesn't come up
- Other conditions keep it from happening
- Caregivers have great skills
- The dementia isn't bad enough yet
- You get LUCKY!

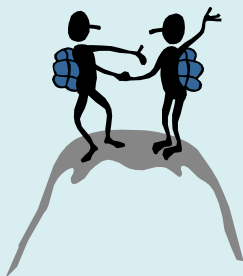
What Makes 'STUFF' Happen?

- SIX pieces...
 - The type & level of dementia ... NOW
 - The person & who they have been
 - Personality, preferences & history
 - The environment – setting, sound, sights
 - Other medical conditions & sensory status
 - The whole day... how things fit together
 - How the helper helps -
 - Approach, behaviors, words, actions, & reactions

What Can YOU Control? OR NOT!

CONTROL...

- The environment – setting, sound, sights
- The whole day... how things fit together
- How the helper helps -
 - Approach, behaviors, words, actions, & reactions



NOT CONTROL

- The person & who they have been
 - Personality, preferences & history
- The level of dementia ... NOW
- Other medical conditions & sensory status

For your persons with
problem behaviors...

What are the behaviors that
'challenge' you?

But the REAL question
should be...

Is this behavior dangerous?

Does this behavior create *danger* for the person or others in the setting?

- YES –
 - Then further assessment and problem solving is needed!
- NO –
 - Give it up...
 - Don't sweat it
 - Learn to live with it
 - It's a '*So what?*' behavior – different, but *not* dangerous!

THEN...

- Use a Problem Solving Process
- Know the person
- Build Caregiver Skills & Education
- Create & Control the Environment

How to Help with Dangerous Behaviors?

- Identify the behavior...
- Make sure – *Is it dangerous?*

Building Caregiver Skills & Knowledge

- Understand dementia & its progression
- Know how symptoms affect behavior
- Describe needs connected to behavior
- Optimize interaction skills

What Do They Do?

- Question
- Refuse
- Release – verbal
- Intimidate – physical
- Tension reduction

What Should You Do?

- Be supportive
- Offer choices & be directive
- Set realistic limits
- Act – Take control
- Re-connect

Why will they do them?

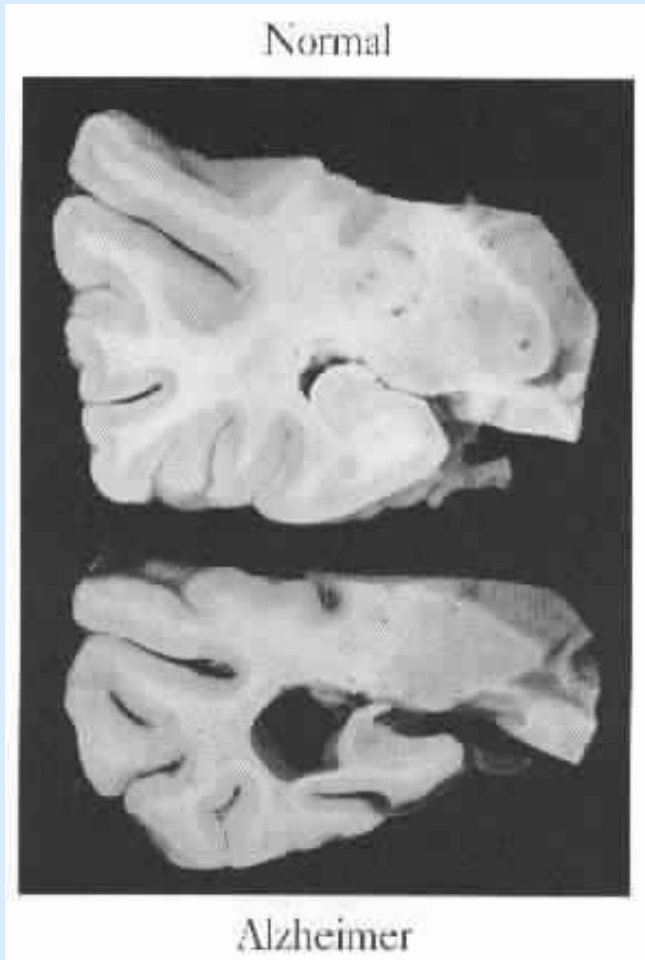
- Physiological factors
- Physical factors
- Psychological factors
- Social factors

Brain atrophy

- the brain actually shrinks
- cells wither then die
- abilities are lost
- with Alzheimer's area of loss are fairly predictable
- ... as is the progression
- BUT the experience is individual...



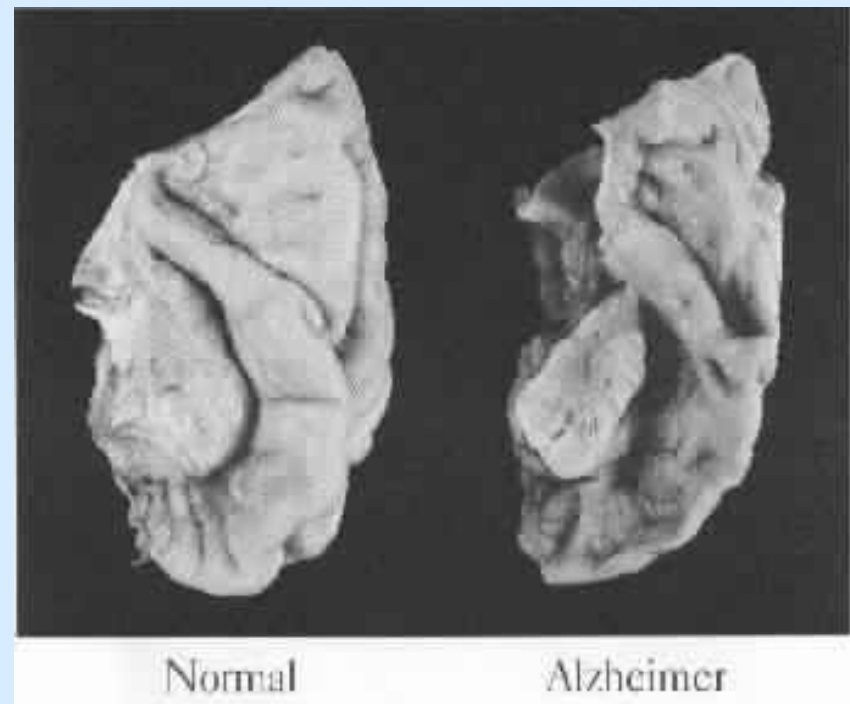
Memory Loss



- Losses
 - Immediate recall
 - Attention to selected info
 - Recent events
 - Relationships
- Preserved abilities
 - Long ago memories
 - Confabulation!
 - Emotional memories
 - Motor memories

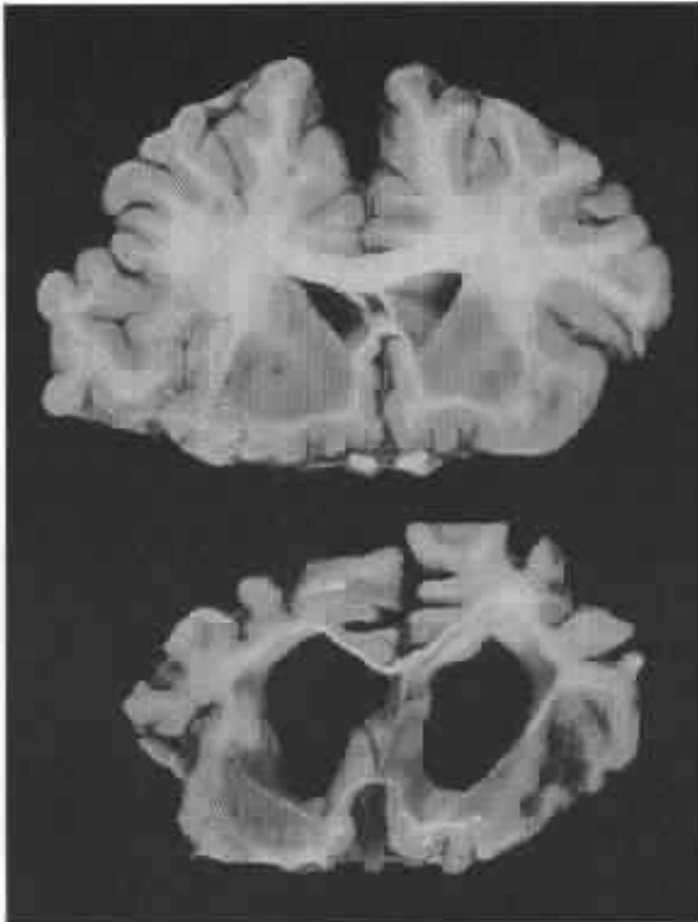
Understanding

- **Losses**
 - Can't interpret information
 - Can't make sense of words
 - Gets off target
- **Preserved abilities**
 - Can get facial expression
 - Hears tone of voice
 - Can get some non-verbals



Language

Normal



Alzheimer

- Losses
 - Can't find the right words
 - Word Salad
 - Vague language
 - Single phrases
 - Sounds & vocalizing
 - Can't make needs known
- Preserved abilities
 - singing
 - automatic speech
 - Swearing/sex words/
forbidden words

Impulse & Emotional Control

- Losses
 - becomes labile & extreme
 - think it - say it
 - want it - do it
 - see it - use it
- Preserved
 - desire to be respected
 - desire to be in control
 - regret after action



Self-Care Skills

- Losses
 - initiation & termination
 - tool manipulation
 - sequencing
- Preserved Abilities
 - motions and actions
 - the doing part
 - cued activity



Factors to Assess...

- Level of dementia
- Personal history
- Health history
- Caregiver approach & assist
- Environment
- Schedule & flow of the day

Progression of Cognitive Loss

- What is lost
- What is retained
- What is typical behavior
- What helps & works
- Levels 5-1

Give information

- Keep it short and simple
 - “ It’s lunch time”
 - “Let’s go this way”
 - “Here’s your socks”
- Use familiar words and phrases
- Use gestures and props to help

Encourage Engagement

- ask a person to try
- ask a person to help you
- give simple positive directions - 1 step at a time
- use props or objects
- gesture
- demonstrate
- guide
- distract
- redirect

Environmental Factors & Changes

- Setting
- Props
- Programming

Environmental Aids

- Setting
 - familiar
 - friendly
 - functional
 - forgiving (safe)

Environmental Aids

- Props
 - visible & invisible
 - timely
 - available
 - matched to ability
 - matched to interests

Daily Routines & Client-Centered Programming

- Old habits and routines
- Patterns during the 24 hrs
- A time to rest, work, play...socialize
- Your needs... my time

To Intervene...

- Where will you start???
- An idea –
 - caregiver education
 - caregiver skill building

Then...

- Observe & document the risky behavior thoroughly
 - what is the pattern
 - when does it happen
 - where does it happen
 - who is involved
 - what is said, done, attempted
 - what makes it better... worse

Is it really a problem? ... A danger

- If NO - leave it alone
- If YES - its time to problem solve
 - call the team together
 - put on the thinking caps

Explore all of the following -

- Type & level of dementia
- Personal background information
- Health information
- Caregiver approach & assistance
- Environmental issues
- Habits, schedules & time of day

Re-look at the problematic challenging behavior...

- What does the person need?
- What is the meaning of the behavior?
- Do you understand the behavior better?

Make a PLAN!

- Who will do what
- When will it be done
- How will it work
- What environmental change is needed
- What props are needed - where will they be

Implement your plan!

- Keep track of progress
- Document what is happening
- Communicate among the team members

- Rethink - if it isn't working.....

- **CELEBRATE** - if it is!