Understanding and Managing Challenging Behaviors

Tips for better assisting individuals living with dementia

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Tell me about it!

What are some difficult behaviors you all have experienced while helping individuals living with dementia?
10 Strategies to Handle Refusal Behaviors

- Rita Jablonski, CRNP, PhD
- Blog with information on non-drug interventions for handling dementia behavior
Refusal Behavior

• Individuals will resist or refuse care at times

• Think about what was going on before the refusal behavior—may provide clue to why the person started to resist

• “Fear” response could play a role
The Brain

**Frontal lobe**
- Word production
- Problem solving
- Planning
- Behavioral control
- Emotion
**Common symptoms:**
Include changes to behavior, speech, and mood

**Parietal lobe**
- Sensory information
**Common symptoms:**
Include problems with perception, judging distances, and three-dimensional spaces

**Occipital lobe**
- Vision
**Common symptoms:**
Include problems with reading, recognizing faces, and distinguishing shapes

**Temporal lobe**
- Word understanding
- Emotion
**Common symptoms:**
Include unusual emotions and difficulty finding words

**Hippocampus**
- Memory
**Common symptoms:**
Unusually pronounced lapses in memory and loss of memory (usually short-term memory at first)

Source: neupsykey.com
The Brain Changes

Brain Atrophy in Advanced Alzheimer’s Disease

Normal

AD

Source: firstmemoryclinic.co.uk
1. Enter Their Reality

- Think about past life experiences and how you can fit that into the narrative
  - Usual schedule
  - Career
  - Trauma
  - Family life
2. Distraction

• Take the persons mind off whatever you are doing by doing something they enjoy
  • Singing
  • Talking about something they love
  • Favorite memory
3. Bridging

- Use an object related to the care activity
- Similar to priming
- Object could help the person remember the familiar activity
4. Hand-over-Hand

- Put your hands over the person with dementia to guide in activity
- Put person with dementia’s hands over your hands while doing activity
5. Mirror-Mirror

- Have person stand in front of a mirror as they used to do when doing daily routine
- DO NOT use if person is alarmed by “stranger” in the mirror
6. Caregiver Vibes

- Always come into any situation with a good attitude
- Rushing the person can cause anxiety
- Take a deep breath
- Their mood can reflect your mood
7. Ask For Help

- Can you help me?
- Puts the person back in control
- Use short, 1-step requests
8. Apologize with Praise

• If person seems upset, apologize.
• After the apology, praise the client
  • “I am so sorry, I don’t feel like I am doing this right. You are so patient with me.”
• This will help **NOT** escalate the situation
9. Rewards

• Offer a reward when finished with task
• Does not have to be food related- grandkids, fun activity, pets, walk
10. Rescue

- To be used as a last resort
- Refusal continues to escalate and the task is ESSENTIAL
- Someone else step in and tell you to leave
- Person #2 comes in and takes over
- Person #2 MUST be someone the person knows and likes
More Information

- Alzheimer’s Association
  - Helpline 1-800-272-3900
- Memory Disorder Clinic
  - 850-431-5002
- National Institute on Aging
Mission:
To engage communities across the state to be more dementia friendly, promote better care for Floridians affected by dementia, and support research efforts to find a cure.

Vision:
To see all Florida communities engaged in providing better care for those affected by dementia while we work towards a cure.

Goals:
• Increase awareness of dementia and of services and supports for those with dementia, their families, and caregivers.
• Provide assistance to dementia-caring communities.
• Continue advocacy for care and cure programs.
Your Dementia-Caring Community

- Business
  - Supermarkets
  - Financial Institutions
  - Restaurants
  - Retail Business Staff

- Health Care
  - Acute Care Providers
  - Residential Care Providers
  - MDC Catchment Area

- Government & Public Service Agencies
  - Social Services Providers
  - City/County Leadership
  - AAA/ADRC Planning and Service Areas
  - Local Government Staff
  - Places of Worship
  - Homeless Shelters
  - Transportation, Housing, Public Spaces

- Community
  - Civic Organizations

- First Responders
  - Firefighters
  - Paramedics
  - EMTs
  - Law Enforcement

- Caregivers and Family

- Developing Dementia-Caring Communities Across Florida
Participating DCCI Communities

- Pensacola
- Tallahassee
- Jacksonville
- Gainesville
- Orlando
- Tampa
- Brevard
- Sarasota
- Ft. Myers
- Miami
Most Important Slide!

Need help strategizing? Need to talk?

CALL ME!

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