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Being With a Person with Alzheimers Disease: Navigating this New World Together

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Speaker Disclosures:
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Objectives:
1. Describe the common challenges and typical changes, and how a person with Alzheimer's Disease (AD) has begun to address these to support life. Specifically:
   - Word finding
   - Frustration
   - Processing time
   - Memory – cueing
2. Demonstrate how to support with PAC skills those living with AD, with a focus on verbal interaction including:
   - Positive Personal Connectors (PPC)
   - Positive Action Starters (PAS)
3. Accurately describe the uses of and order of visual, verbal, and touch cues to support those with AD in order to complete tasks
Realities About Alzheimers:

1. Word finding
2. Frustration
3. Processing (how)
4. Vision changes (scanning)
5. Memory … it takes a cue!

Difference between usual forgetting and AD: It's not “Oh, I do that too!”
Entryway Scanning + Memory Cues:

Visual Memory Cues for Medications:

Processing:
Executive Control Center: Emotions Behavior Judgment Reasoning

Wiring – connecting, bringing data in and sending data out

Storage units - data

Vision Changes:
With each new level of vision change, there is a decrease in safety awareness

1. Loss of Peripheral Awareness
2. Tunnel Vision
3. Binocular Vision
4. Binocular + Object Confusion (discriminating senses)
5. Monocular Vision
6. Loss of Visual Regard

Visual scanning
White space between items
A place for everything...
A visual grid created

Big Vision Changes
Visual scanning
White space
between items
A place for
everything…
Using visual grid

Using a visual grid

Leaving Plan:

Before Leaving

- Lisa Purse
- Check clothes, shoes
- Glasses
- Money
- Metro Card
- Keys
- Lock door!
- Cold weather protection, not winter (as in cold)
- Key plans
- Return to
- undress
Social

Everything covered?

Yeah, yeah, yeah, We think everybody needs this...

Hippocampus

Big Changes:

• Learn and remember
• Way-finding
• Passage of time

Positron Emission Tomography (PET)

Alzheimer's Disease Progression vs. Normal Brains
Five Ways to Say “I Am Sorry!”

INTENT
I’m sorry. I was trying to help

THIS IS HARD
I’m sorry, this is hard. I hate it for you

EMOTION
I’m sorry I made you feel…

THAT HAPPENED
I’m sorry, it should not have happened

INTELLECTUAL CAPACITY
I’m sorry, I had no right to make you feel that way

Positive Personal Connections (PPC):

1. Greet or Meet: introduce yourself and use their preferred name: “Hi___I am ___” or “I am___ and you are?”
2. Say Something Nice: indicate something about them of value
3. Be Friendly: share about you, then leave a blank
4. Notice Something: point out something in the environment
5. Be Curious: explore a possible unmet like, want, or need

Positive Action Starters (PAS):

1. Help: Be sure to compliment their skill in this area, then ask for help.
2. Try: Hold up or point to the item you would like to use, possibly sharing in the dislike of the item or task, “Well, let’s try this.”
3. Choice: Try using visual cues to offer two possibilities or one choice with something else as the other option.
4. Short and Simple: Give only the first piece of information, “It’s about time to (first task).”
5. Step by Step: Only give a small part of the task at first, “Lean forward.”
Pace of Processing Skills:
- **Sapphires** – timely and flexible based on partner’s needs and preferences
- **Diamonds** – If attentive, timely, if focused elsewhere, 1-3 seconds to disengage then engage – hesitation when switching focus or topic
- **Emeralds** – Slowed by 1-6 seconds if already focused, focuses on task or on relationship, transitions may require a pause and guidance
- **Ambers** – Highly variable – immediately reactive to non-attentive - depends on state of sensory need or distress
- **Rubies** – 6-10 seconds to take in single pieces of data, more time to process the piece, and more time to offer responses, reaction times are also slowed
- **Pearls** – 10-60 seconds to respond, may not respond, once connected speed may increase, still delays exist

People Awareness Skills:
- **Sapphires**: sustained – slower to ID
- **Diamonds**: recent ?, older/deeper better
- **Emeralds**: recognize like/not like,
- **Ambers**: can get lost in old-new relationships, will like or not like in the moment
- **Rubies**: like or not like, familiar versus not
- **Pearls**: voices, faces, touches, smells familiar or not

Place Awareness Skills:
- **Sapphires**: sustained → turned around
- **Diamonds**: familiar feels best → gets lost in community and in unfamiliar places
- **Emeralds**: if OK with what is seen is OK, if not OK seeks the old familiar –task or social
- **Ambers**: OK if “here” feels OK, otherwise will go “there”
- **Rubies**: may or may not have a destination more a movement or stillness pattern
- **Pearls**: is what is experienced comforting
**Time Awareness Skills:**

- **Sapphires:** lifelong – crunched or expanded
- **Diamonds:** more the past than now
- **Emeralds:** lost in episodes or caught in loops
- **Ambers:** in the moment not the task or sequence
- **Rubies:** in the experience, not the time
- **Pearls:** time has much less meaning

**Situation Awareness Skills:**

- **Sapphires:** sustained → tough to think
- **Diamonds:** old emotions drive new interactions
- **Emeralds:** has moments of time travel
- **Ambers:** more sensory awareness than intellectual awareness, immediate not big picture
- **Rubies:** only in moments, less body aware
- **Pearls:** more inside than externally aware

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