



Challenging Conversations

With Someone Living With Brain Changes

Unlocking the Doors
to a Better Dementia Care Experience

Sheri Fairman, MSW
Owner, Dementia Care Solutions, LLC



About the Owner

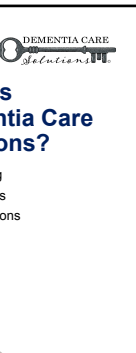
- MSW Social Work
- Certifications
 - Montessori Dementia Care Professional
 - DICE Approach to Dementia Care
 - Independent Consultant with Teepa Snow's Positive Approach to Care (PAC)
 - Independent Trainer with Teepa Snow's (PAC)
 - NTG EDSD as an educator and screener for dementia in people with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities
- Independent Contractor and Mentor with Teepa Snow's (PAC)
- Nearly Two Decades of Working with Care Partners





What is Dementia Care Solutions?

- Consulting
- Workshops
- Presentations
- Coaching
- Support



What makes a Challenging Conversation "Challenging?"



The Blind Men and the Elephant



1. ...Very Like a WALL
2. ...Very Like a SPEAR
3. ...Very Like a SNAKE
4. ...Very Like a TREE
5. ...Very Like a FAN
6. ...Very Like a ROPE

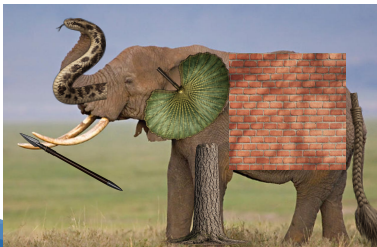
John Godfrey Saxe (1816-1887)

8

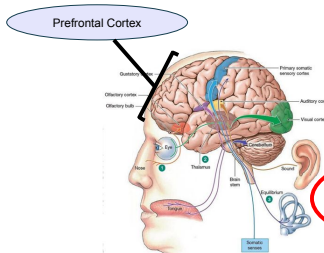
•What came to mind as you listened to the story.



•How can our perspectives impact how we manage challenging conversations?



1. Brain Change & Perspective



- Impulse Control
- Being Logical
- Making Choices
- Start-Sequence-Complete
- Self Awareness
- Seeing Others' Point of View

Challenging Conversations & Perspective



1. Discussion about Driving
2. Managing Finances
3. Getting More Help



2. Brain Change & Processing Speed



"You know, dad you really shouldn't be driving anymore. I saw that you have scratches down the side of your car and that means there is something damaged somewhere. You don't remember that and now I'm worried about the safety of other people on the road. We are going to have to take your keys away. Don't worry...I will take you where you need to go."

Challenging Conversations & Processing Speed



1. Discussion about Driving
2. Managing Finances
3. Getting More Help



3. Brain Change & Independence - Sense of Control.



HAPPINESS IS

- Basic Human Need
- Being Helpful rather than Helped
- Being seen as Competent and Capable



...being independent.

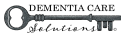


Challenging Conversations & Sense of Control



1. Discussion about Driving
2. Managing Finances
3. Getting More Help



The Fish Approach 


People with dementia are like fish in the water.

The water is their reality.

Fish don't like to be out of the water.
They flip. They flop.
They get anxious and uncomfortable.

Pulling someone with dementia out of their reality and into ours can make a situation worse.

We need to get in the water with them to approach them from their perspective.



Copyright © 2024 Dementia Care Solutions, LLC. May not be duplicated or reused without prior permission. 13

They are COMMUNICATING with us. 

We MUST be skilled in how we communicate with them.

Communication Snags

Avoiding these communication snags will help keep people with dementia from experiencing the stress of "being pulled out of the water." It puts us in a position to be more understanding and empathetic to their point of view.

- ▲ Reasoning
- ▲ Explaining
- ▲ Arguing
- ▲ Orienting
- ▲ Convincing

Getting in the Water


Stepping into the reality of the person with dementia can reduce anxiety and provide a supporting foundation to start improving the situation.



```

    graph TD
      Investigate --> Reflect
      Validate --> Reflect
      Reassure --> Reflect
      Respond --> Reflect
      Reflect --> Apologize
  
```

Copyright © 2024 Dementia Care Solutions, LLC. May not be duplicated or reused without prior permission. 14


When to Include Them in the Conversation 

Emotions play a major role in the daily experience for the person with dementia.

Our responses and support can impact how situations turn out. Put everything you say or do through this filter...

"If I say this, if I do this, how will it make them feel?"

If the answer is "not good" then don't say or do it. We have to find another way to support them.



Copyright © 2024 Dementia Care Solutions, LLC. May not be duplicated or reused without prior permission.

Take a Moment



How do we stay calm as caregiver to support others?

**THE
MINDFUL BREATH:**
SIMPLE, EFFECTIVE SELF-CARE

How can you apply this information to other Challenging Conversations?





Ready to dive in more?
Scan the QR code or visit our website to enroll today!



www.CurrentOfCare.com

THE FISH APPROACH ACADEMY
Now live! Online, self-paced, available anytime, anywhere.
Sign up for at www.currentofcare.com

This content may not be copied, reproduced, distributed, published, displayed, or modified in any way.



**Dementia Care is now
ON-DEMAND!**

Previous presentations are available on our website 24/7.

Scan the QR code to the right or visit:
www.DementiaCareSolutions.org/on-demand



1. Grab your phone
2. Open your camera
3. Scan the QR code
4. Click the link



Thank you for attending this event!

We would love for you to share your feedback with us!

Or visit:
www.DementiaCareSolutions.org/share



1. Grab your phone
2. Open your camera
3. Scan the QR code
4. Click the link



Contact Me 

Sheri Fairman, MSW
Owner, Dementia Care Solutions, LLC
And Current of Care, LLC

920-883-5076

sheri@dementiacaresolutions.org

www.dementiacaresolutions.org
