

Failure Free Activities: Packing a Lunchbox Filled with Endless Possibilities

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Learning Objectives

List

The learner will list the signs and symptoms of early, middle, and late-stage Alzheimer's disease.

Define

The learner will define the term clustering as it pertains to current functional abilities.

Describe

The learner will describe at least two activities to engage people living with Alzheimer's disease when they are relocated to unfamiliar environments.

Create

The learner will create a "memory-box" of failure free activities for a case-study patient who is living with Alzheimer's disease.

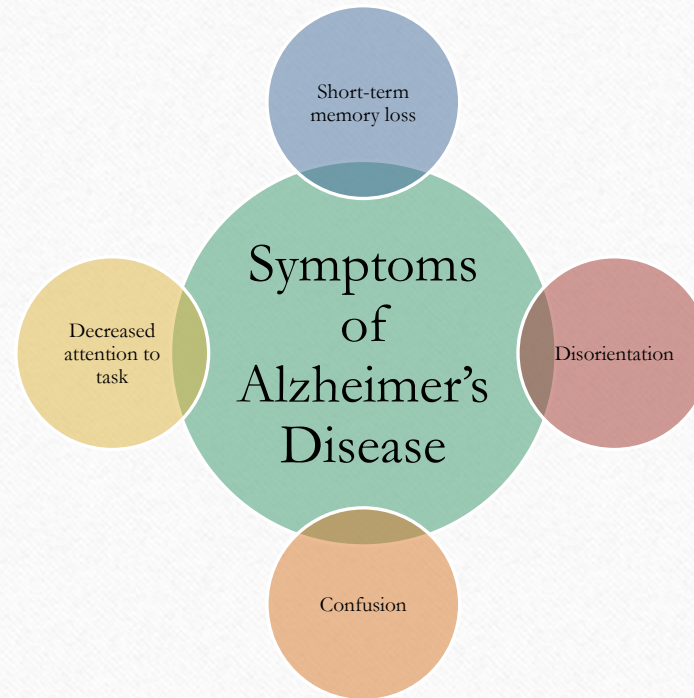
Dementia as an Umbrella Term

- Dementia is the medical term for a group of symptoms. It has 3 characteristics
 - Two or more areas of intellectual abilities are sufficiently impaired that daily functioning is interfered with.
 - The symptoms begin in adulthood.
 - The person is awake & alert, not drowsy, not intoxicated or unable to pay attention.



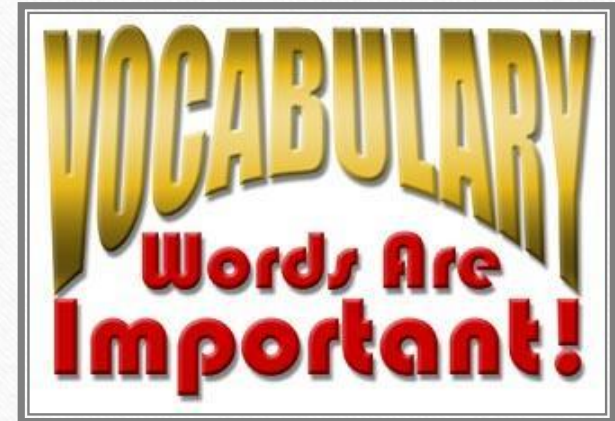
Recognizable Symptoms of Alzheimer's Disease

- Short-term memory loss.
- Disorientation.
- Confusion.
- Decreased attention to task.



Early Stage of Alzheimer's Disease

- Coming up with or choosing the right word.
- Remembering names when introduced to new people.
- Have difficulty performing tasks in work or home settings.
- Forgetting information that was just read.
- Losing or misplacing a valuable object.
- Experiencing increased trouble with planning or organizing.

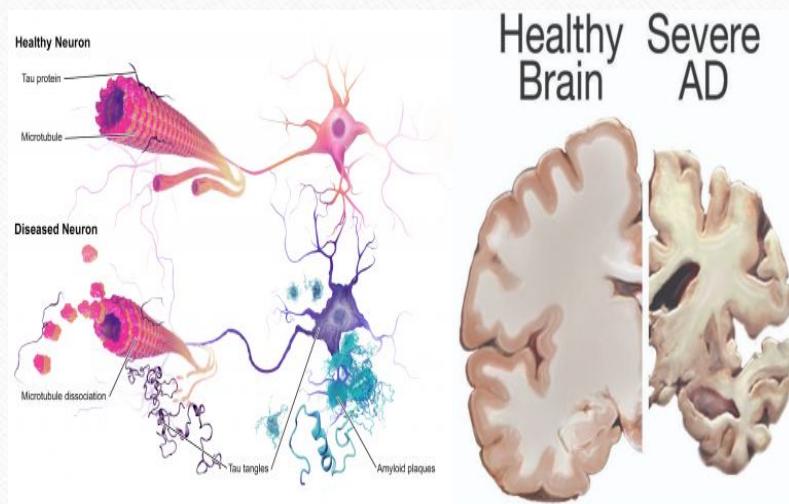


The Middle Stage



- *The middle stage of the disease may last 2-8 years.*
- *Being forgetful of events or personal history.*
- *Being unable to recall information about themselves like their address or telephone number, and the high school or college they attended.*
- *Confusion about location (where am I?) or what day it is.*
- *Requiring assistance to chose appropriate clothing for the season or occasion.*
- *Changes in sleep patterns.*
- *Wandering and/or pacing behaviors*
- *Some persons will display some behaviors some of the time.*
- *Personality changes may occur perhaps for the better or...*
- *Structure, routine, environmental modifications are vitally important*
- *If change must occur, the earlier in the disease the better for all.*

The Later Stages of the Disease



- The person's functioning will be maximized in a familiar environment that includes the sounds, sights and smells that are essential to feeling safe and secure.
- The need for 24-hour care becomes a priority.
- Changes in physical abilities, including walking, sitting & eventually swallowing difficulties.
- Fall risks.
- Recognize that some medications that was initially prescribed to manage behaviors may be decreased or discontinued.
- Increased vulnerability to infections.

Melding Environmental Components into a Therapeutic Milieu

- Milieu is defined as the interaction of all of the elements within an environment. The melding of all of the elements within an environment forms a whole that determines the kinds of experiences that the person will have.
- The therapeutic milieu, or the blending of the physical, social, and cultural environments, can be constructed to meet safety needs in many ways!

Every Action Is An Activity!

Physical, social & cultural
strategies that support
functioning.



Remember the One Room Schoolhouse?



FLIP CHART



Story Time

- Sharing your experiences
 - At school
 - Activities
 - Church/social settings
 - At home

Teaching Children versus Adults

- *It is possible, although in today's culture not preferable, to teach a group of children through kindergarteners through 12th grade, in one room. Some struggle concentrating while others are engaged in different types of activities. Thus, the one-room schoolhouse is a thing of the past!*
- *The one room schoolhouse approach has also moved into the past in terms of dementia care. To assist persons to participate in activities to their fullest capabilities, those activities must be strength-based and must consider diverse skills and needs.*
- *One-size does not fit all!*

Clustering As a Strategy To Organize Moments

- *“Clustering persons with dementia into groups of similar abilities and needs is a way to adjust all the components of the environment to be supportive of the person with Alzheimer’s disease” (Fazio, Seman, & Stansell, 2008).*



Mitigating the Impacts of Alzheimer's Disease

The Art & Science of Clustering



- The impairments caused by the disease require help from others to mitigate the impact of these losses on the person's physical, and psychological functional ability which includes the ability to relate to others.
- This process requires continual assessment as the stage of the disease and the moments of the disease are fluid in nature!

The Aim of Clustering

Retaining the essence of each individual with progressive memory loss issues!



- The aim of clustering is based on the belief that people with Alzheimer's disease hold onto their essence, and their individual identity throughout the course of their lives.
- Human beings tend to have an attraction for people that share similar interests and capabilities.
- Alzheimer's disease causes patients to lose the capacity to gravitate to others who might share common interests.



Applying the Science of Clustering to Varied Environments

- Our environment influences both functions and actions.
- Socially and culturally accepted behaviors and even the clothing we wear varies based upon our environment.
- Overstimulating & understimulating environments can be the source of behavioral challenges for persons with Alzheimer's disease.

Lillian's Day in the Adult Day Health

Lillian was an active participant in the adult day health program. Despite her memory loss she was articulate, social, and she functioned well independently. A staff member from the hospital visited her when she was hospitalized for a kidney infection. Lillian's nurse reported that even though her infection was resolving, Lillian was actively hallucinating, requiring a psychiatric consult and medication. The staff member pointed out the following stimuli that she had heard during her visit:

A bell-like sound in the hallway (which was a floor cleaning machine).

The sound of a "doorbell" which was actually the elevator.

The sound of "windchimes" which were actually cardiac monitors.





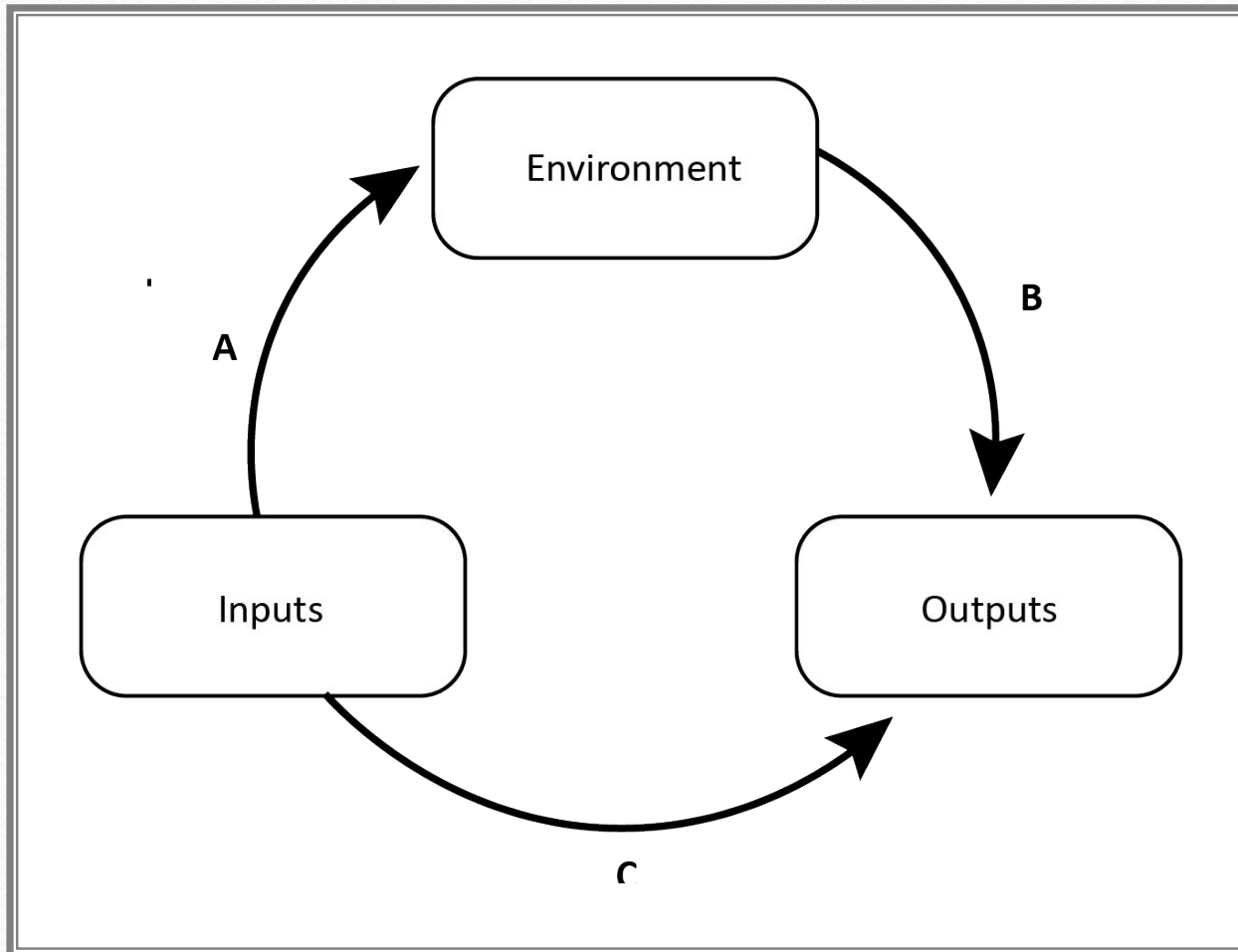
What Care Providers Can Do!

- If the person with memory loss experiences behavior challenges and the care provider believe that it is due to environmental stimuli, then that person can attempt to modify the environment rather than treating the person or the symptom as the problem.

Consider This!

- *Consider some elements in the environment where you provide care. Could they be misperceived?*
- *Consider some methods that you could use to help some people interpret these stimuli? How do these ways differ?*

The Environment



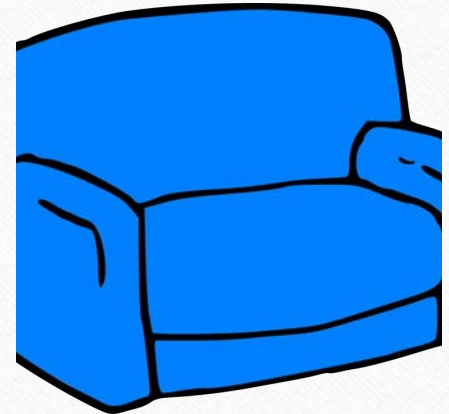
- Lawton (1983), stated that people who are living with progressive dementing illnesses are even more dependent on the environment in which they are living than people without dementing illnesses. This is often referred to as the environmental press theory.

Donna's Distress

- *During the Christmas holidays, Donna became extremely distressed in the evenings and constantly tried to go outside “to get the children.” None of the approaches that were typically effective with Donna, such as reassurance or redirection, helped decrease her distress. Her anxiousness would increase throughout the evening and made getting her to go to bed a challenging task. Donna’s daughter was looking out the window with her one evening and realized that Donna was focused a set of unplugged Christmas carolers perched on the front lawn. Donna asked her son to unplug the carolers. Within minutes, Donna’s distressed faded. The behavior that had been described as sundowning by some appeared to be Donna’s mothering instinct to “take care of the little ones out in the snow.”*

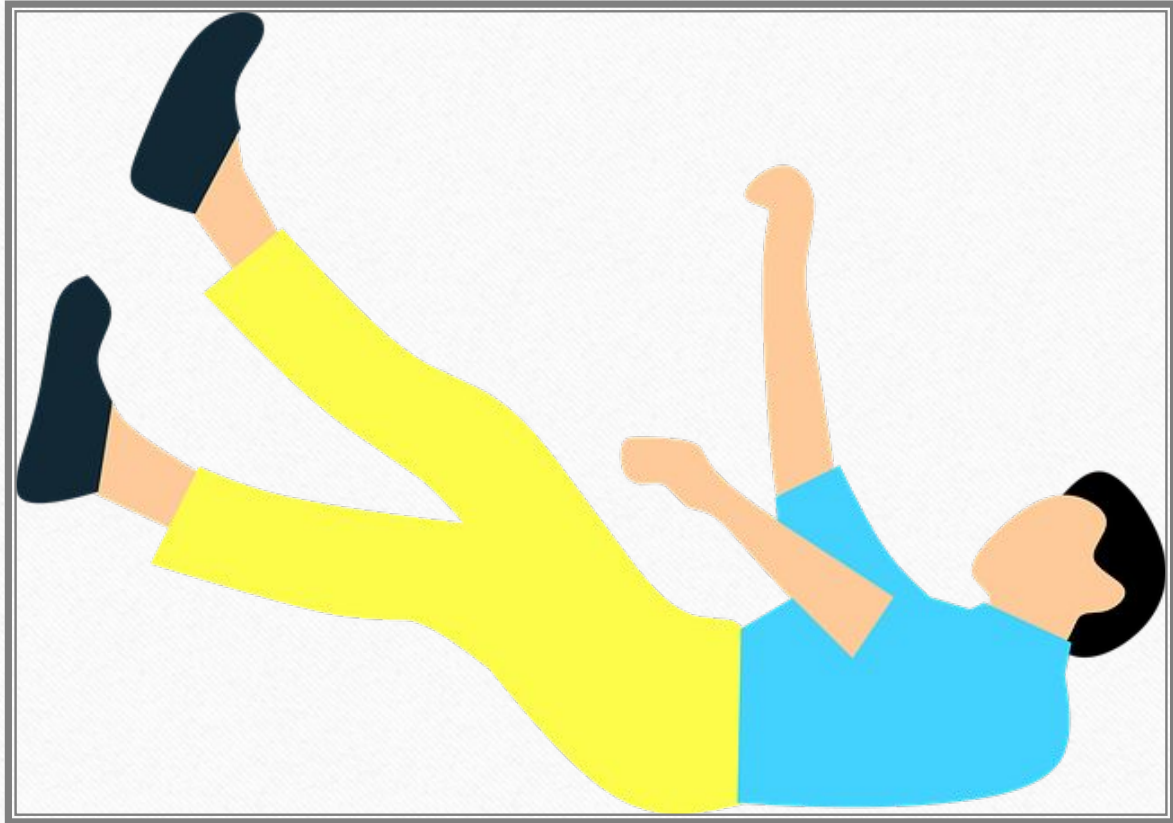


Which seat is calling your name?



Colors, Patterns, Furniture & Alzheimer's disease

- *What is most functional for persons with Alzheimer's disease?*
- *Patterns often worsen confusion.*
- *Colorful patterns and a lack of armrests are a recipe for:*





Understanding the Impact of the Social Environment

- A physical environment that is “failure-free” must be accompanied by responsive, compassionate care providers.
- “It is the human environment, not the physical environment, that often has the greatest impact on the culture of a place and how people act and function in a particular setting” (Fazio, Seman, & Stansell, 2008).



**Inside the UK's first
intergenerational care home**

Understanding the Impact of the Cultural Environment!

- Every family creates its own culture, including beliefs, power structure, and norms for behaviors which must be recognized to understand how the family functions. These same processes apply to groups such as senior centers, adult day health settings.
- Recognizing that every setting, like every family, creates its own culture helps us to understand the variation among health care settings.



Consider This!

- Consider the specific ways that staff interact with colleagues and with people who are living with *Alzheimer's* disease. Describe the beliefs that these interactions express.
- In what ways are these beliefs confirming (or not) of staff and people with *Alzheimer's* disease?
- What changes in elements of the executive structure would aid in the provision of more effective care for people with *Alzheimer's* disease.

The Mobile Activity Box

- *A mobile activity box that personalized to meet the needs of the person with Alzheimer's disease*



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Questions!

Next steps for the future.

