

Techniques for Managing Problem Behaviors of Alzheimer's Disease

fact sheet - 6

CONSISTENCY - Difficult behavior problems may develop as the Alzheimer's patient tries to cope with too many changes in his world. Keep changes to a minimum.

DISTRACTION - Caregivers can often control difficult situations by distracting the patient; by observing recurring behavior and avoiding precipitating events or factors leading to problems; or, in cases where distraction does not immediately work, letting the patient vent his frustration or anger in a controlled, protective environment.

REASSURANCE - The Alzheimer's patient needs a secure, predictable routine. In a world that is becoming more and more constricted and unpredictable for him, having a dependable person to interpret what is going on helps the patient function at optimal level.

TASK-SEQUENCING - The Alzheimer's patient may need the most simple task broken down into its smallest parts. For example, there are many steps in taking a bath. The patient may need to be talked through each step in order to do the task independently.

BEING REALISTIC ABOUT THE PATIENT'S ABILITIES - Concentrating on the patient's remaining skills and not his deficits proves less frustrating for the caregiver. Planning activities for the patient to do at a time when he appears to be his best makes the most of the patient's remaining abilities.

KNOWING YOUR STRENGTHS AND LIMITS - Caregivers vary in their ability to cope with and manage the Alzheimer's patient. Knowing one's limits as well as one's strengths allows for the effective use of support from fellow staff persons and other available resources.



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