COMPASS
After the Dementia Diagnosis
After the Diagnosis

- What is dementia / Alzheimer’s Disease?
- Progression & Treatment
- Common Problems and Solutions
Dementia

• General term that describes a category of diseases that result in impairment of:
  – Memory
  – Language
  – Personality
  – Behavior
  – Judgment
Dementia

- Vascular Dementia
- Frontotemporal Dementia
- Alzheimer’s Disease
- Lewy Body Dementia

Over 70 types
Progression of Dementia

• Typically 7-10 years

• Stages:
  • Early (Mild)
  • Middle (Moderate)
  • Late (Advanced)

• Requires different services & strategies along the way
Early Stage

- Short-Term Memory Loss
- Executive Function
- Problems with language
- Disorientation of time
- Emotions
Middle Stage

- Memory
- Communication
- Senses
- Impaired judgment & problem solving
- Changes in personality & behavior
- More dependent with self care tasks
Late Stage

- Severe memory loss
- Communication
- Orientation only to self
Treatment

**Early Stage**

**Cholinesterase Inhibitor**
- Aricept/donepezil
- Exelon/rivastigmine
- Razadyne/galantamine

Chronic conditions

Depression

**Middle Stage**

**Cholinesterase inhibitor**

NMDA Receptor Antagonist
- Namenda/memantine

Chronic conditions

Mood/behavior

**Late Stage**

NMDA receptor antagonist

Mood/pain/comfort

Hospice care
Common Problems & Solutions

- Fatigue
- Change
- Too Much Demand
- Overwhelming / Misleading Stimuli
- Communication
- Activities
- Illness
Fatigue

• Problem:
  – More energy for same tasks

• Solutions:
  – Provide plenty of rest/ rest periods
  – Shorten activities
  – “Best time of day”
Change

- **Problem:**
  - Loss of ability to plan & sequence activities
  - The world becomes less familiar

- **Solutions:**
  - Be consistent
    - Routine
    - Environment
Too Much Demand

• Problem:
  – Information can be overwhelming
  – Unrealistic expectations

• Solutions:
  – Announce only *when* & *what* is necessary
  – Create positive moments
Overwhelming / Misleading Stimuli

• Problem:
  – Brain’s ability to interpret information has become damaged

• Solutions:
  – Never argue or orient to reality
  – Remove distractions
  – Consider what will work for them
Communication

• Problem:
  – Ability to express and understand has changed

• Solutions:
  – Respond to the emotion
  – Watch your non-verbals
  – Agree, Apologize, Distract
  – Therapeutic fibbing
Activities

- Problem:
  - Lack of initiative
  - Decreased ability to engage
  - Loss of purpose

- Solutions:
  - Put it all together
    - Manage fatigue
    - Incorporate routine
  - Focus on pleasure
  - Look towards previous hobbies/ routines
Illness

Problem:
- Difficult to identify
- Sudden change in behavior

Solutions:
- Call your medical provider immediately.
- Consider:
  - Dehydration
  - Infection
  - Pain
  - Constipation
  - Medications
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