

Creating Connections: Working with People with Dementia



SafeCare BC

Alzheimer Society
BRITISH COLUMBIA

Alzheimer Society of B.C.

Vision: Our ultimate vision is to create a world without Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

Mission: The Alzheimer Society of B.C. exists to alleviate the personal and social consequences of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, to promote public awareness and to search for the causes and the cures.



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Dementia in B.C.

- 70,000 people in B.C. have Alzheimer's disease or another form of dementia
- Over 10,000 of these 70,000 people are 65 years of age or younger
- 15,150 new cases in B.C. each year



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Dementia and Long Term Care

- Over 80% of residents in residential care facilities living in B.C. have some level of dementia
- Person-centred care is associated with
 - Fewer incidents of responsive behaviours
 - Increased staff safety & job satisfaction
 - Higher quality of care for residents

Pilot Project

- Partnership formed between WorkSafeBC and the Alzheimer Society of B.C.
- Purpose: determine if there was a need and desire by B.C.'s paid frontline care workers for basic education on dementia.
- October 2012 to November 2013
- 8 six-hour workshops
- Participants had an average of 11.4 years experience



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SafeCare BC & Alzheimer Society of B.C.

- New partnership established Spring 2014
- ***Creating Connections: Working with People with Dementia***



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Your Health and Safety Association

What is SafeCare BC?

- Industry-funded, non-profit health and safety association for the BC continuing care sector

Our Mandate:

- We strive to ensure injury-free safe working conditions for continuing care workers by providing access to preventative training, education, and resources throughout all of BC.

Find us on Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn, or online at www.safecarebc.ca!



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Program Content

- Alzheimer's disease and dementia
- Changes in the brain
- Disease stages
- Dispelling the myths
- How communication is affected by dementia
- Understanding and responding to behaviour
- Creative approaches
- Person-centred care
- Resources



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What is Dementia?

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Alzheimer's Disease

*Vascular (Multi-infarct)
Dementia*

Frontotemporal Dementia

Lewy Body Disease

Other



BRAIN DAMAGE

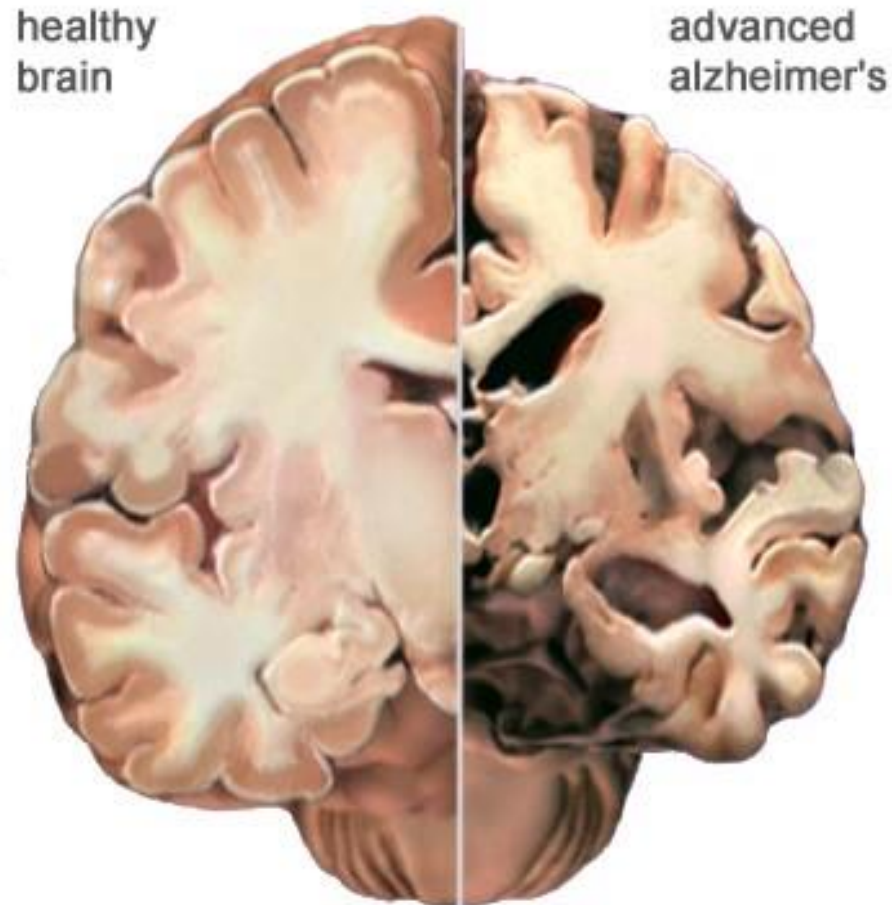
Death of brain cells & impaired function of remaining cells



DEMENTIA

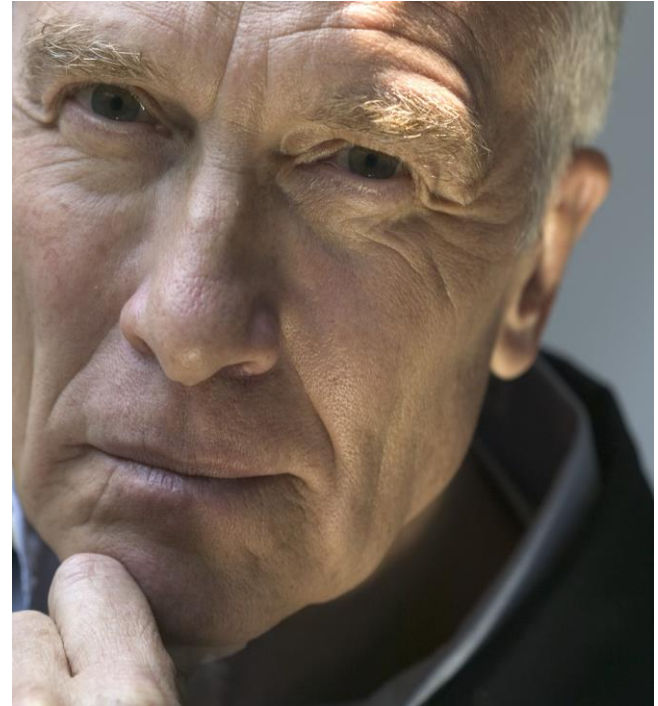
*A cluster of symptoms related to a
decline in cognitive abilities*

The Brain



Guiding Principle

***Every person,
regardless of
their losses,
has a core of self
that can be reached.***

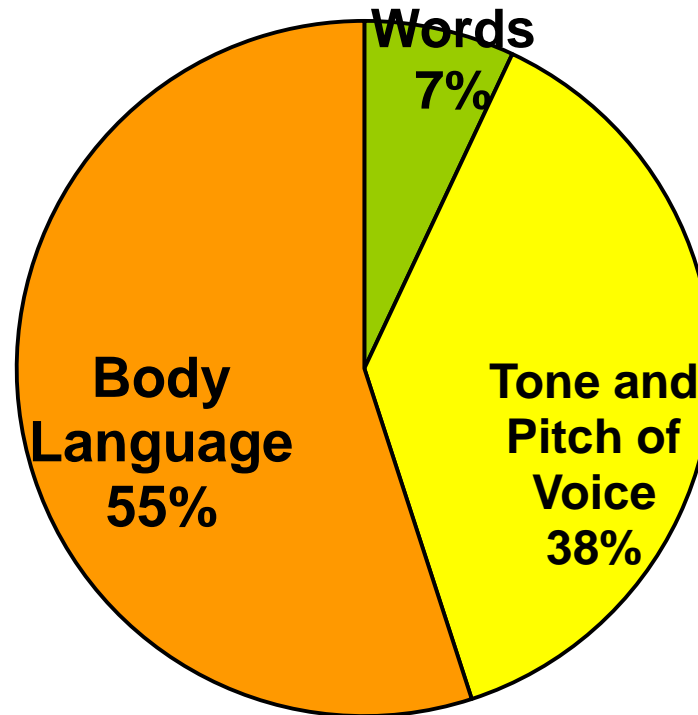


Person-Centred Care

Focuses on:

- The individual, rather than the condition
- The person's strengths & abilities, rather than their losses
- Recognizes that the personality of the person with dementia is not lost, just increasingly concealed by the disease.

Communication of Feelings & Attitudes



How to Communicate

Getting the message across:

- Set the stage
- Get the person's attention
- Make eye contact
- Speak slowly and clearly
- One message at a time

How to Communicate

Getting the message across:

- Show as you talk
- Pay attention/listen
- Allow time for response
- Repeat as needed
- Try again later

Communication Strategies

- Respond to **feelings**, not stories
- Provide distraction or ignore
- Maintain a positive attitude
- Use humour
- Be creative, patient, and respectful
- Reinforce existing abilities

Communication Tips

Kkeep

It

Short &

Simple



Personhood

*“When the emphasis is on the **person**, behaviour is not seen as a problem to be managed, but rather **actions and expressions** that need to be **understood.**”*

- Tom Kitwood

(Bradford Dementia Group)

I don't think that
Alzheimer's will ever
take away someone's
dignity. But *we* do.



- Joanne Koenig Coste
(author of “Learning to
Speak Alzheimer’s”)

Basic Facts about Behaviour

- There is a reason, cause, and meaning for every behaviour.
- Behaviour is an attempt to communicate.
- Some behaviours are a result of the disease.
- Behaviour is very individual.
- Behaviour can be influenced (we must adapt and problem solve).

Initial Questions to Ask

Be a detective, not a judge.

What's going on?

- Is it behaviour that needs to be changed?
 - Safety
 - The '**So What?**' test
 - Is it *your* problem?

The Five “W”s

1. **What** is going on?
2. **Where** is it happening?
3. **When** is it happening?
4. **Who** is affecting actions?
5. **Why** is behaviour being triggered?

Strategies for Responding

- Try to determine the immediate cause
- Don't apply logic and reasoning
- Focus on feelings, not facts
- Try not to get angry or upset

Strategies for Responding

- Agree with the person
- Accept blame
- Talk positively about the future
- Shift the focus to a familiar activity; e.g. going for a walk, looking at a photo album

Discussion

Brief presentation & discussion of 2 care scenarios



Focus on Feelings

“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

- Maya Angelou



4 Important Lessons

- Look for the mouse.
- The person is more important than the task.
- The person is more than his/her disease.
- Feelings are “right”, even when the facts are not.

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Resources for health-care providers

Health-care providers are important partners of the Alzheimer Society of B.C. Together, we can ensure that people with dementia and their families are receiving person-centred care and support throughout the different stages of the disease.

This section of the website contains useful resources for health-care providers who are supporting people with dementia and their families.

Programs & services



First Link® is an early intervention service designed to connect individuals and families affected by Alzheimer's disease or other types of dementia with services and support as soon as possible after diagnosis.

[Learn more about First Link® and how you can make a referral.](#)

On this page

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- [Creating Connections: Working with Individuals with Dementia](#)
- [Online training tools](#)
- [Helpful links for health-care providers](#)
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- [Driving](#)
- [Guidelines](#)
- [Grief and loss](#)
- [Wandering](#)
- [Public order form](#)
- [Additional resources](#)

Help near you

Are you looking for programs and services near you? ▶



Online Resources

For Current Workshop Schedule & Other Important Resources

please go to:

www.safecarebc.ca/education-initiatives/course-listing/



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Jan Robson

PROVINCIAL COORDINATOR, EDUCATION
ADVOCACY & EDUCATION

Direct: 604-742-4935

Phone: 604-681-6530

Fax: 604-669-6907

jrobson@alzheimerbc.org

300 – 828 West 8th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. V5Z 1E2
Provincial Office: 1-800-667-3742 Web Site: www.alzheimerbc.org





SafeCare BC

Steven Newhouse

Director of Programs & Sector Services
CRSP, EOH

steve@safecarebc.ca

safecarebc.ca

738-4710 Kingsway
Burnaby, BC, V5H 4M2

T 604-630-5572 ext 235

F 866-539-9694

