

Behavioral Expression in Patients with Dementia:

The Uses of Improvisation



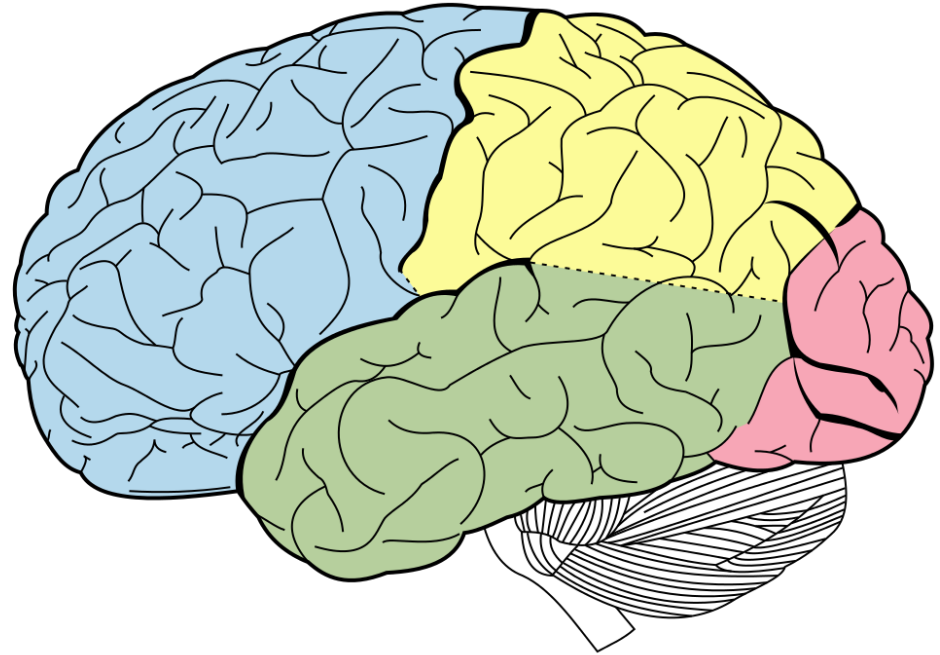
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Dementia and its impact

- Attention and concentration
- Language skills
- Memory
- Reasoning and judgment
- Visual-spatial abilities
- Sensory perception
- Anosognosia
- Behavioral and psychological symptoms (BPSD)

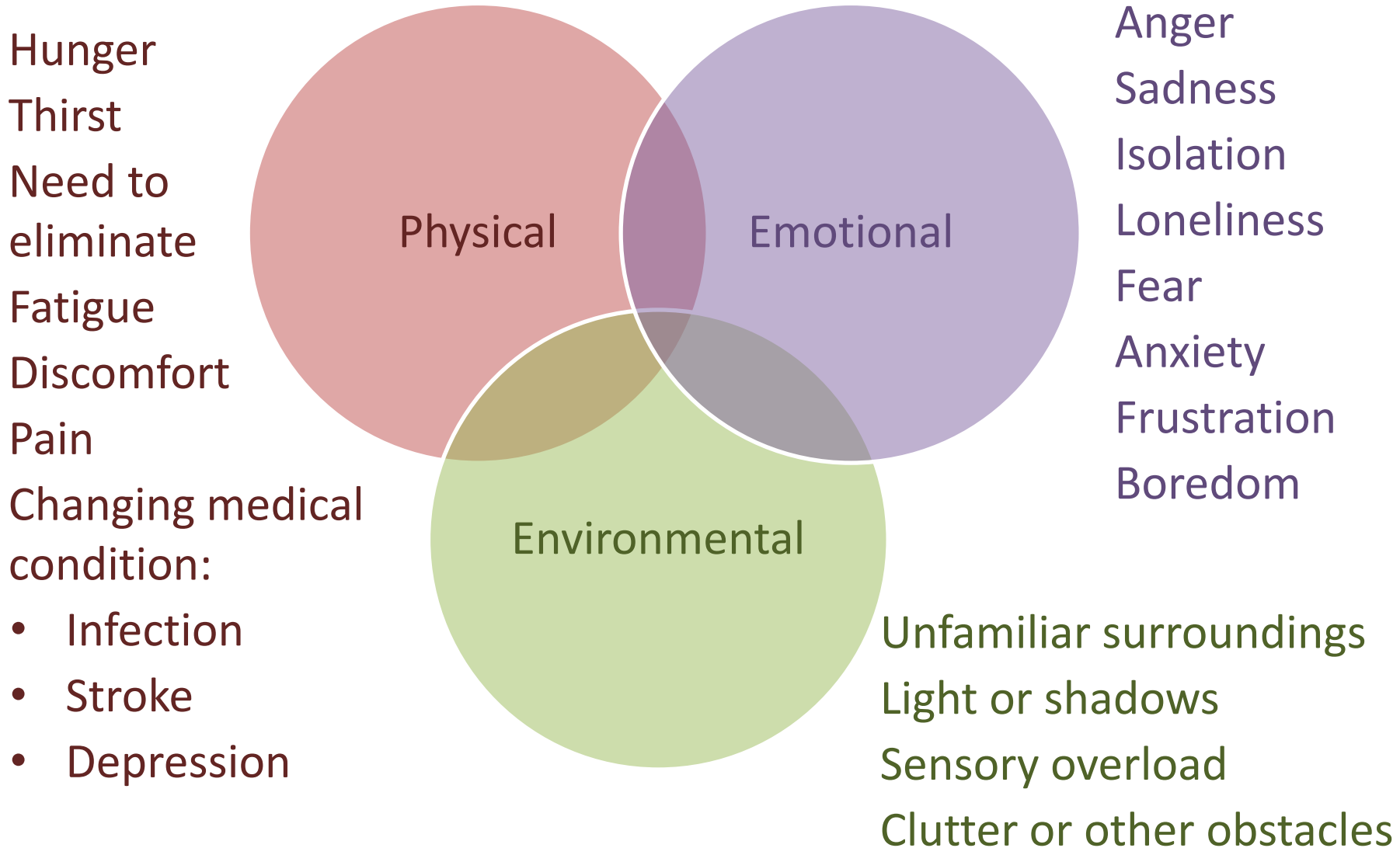


Behavioral and psychological symptoms of dementia (BPSD)

- Agitation
- Apathy
- Anxiety
- Delusions
- Disinhibition
- Hallucinations
- Irritability
- Repetition
- Sleep disturbance
- Wandering



Common triggers for behavioral expression



The needs of care partners



Care planning needs:

- Disease information
- Safety resources
- Long term care
- Emotional support
- Respite

Ongoing education and support needs:

- Respite
- Emotional support
- Skill-building



IMPROVISATION. *The art or act of responding to or developing a solution to a situation without preparation*

Responding to behavioral expressions

Assess for physical or medical needs

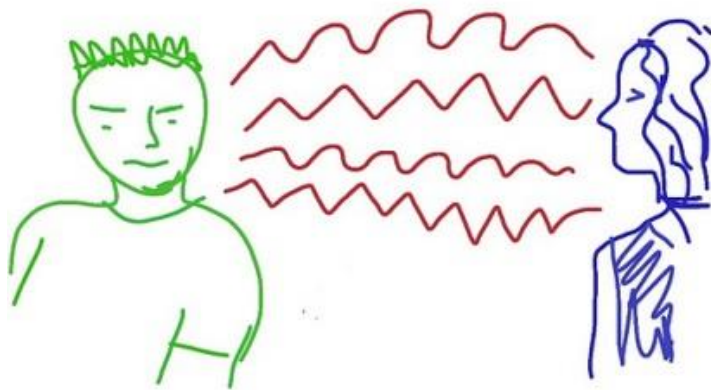
Address environmental or
emotional needs

Validate the person's
experience or feelings

Redirect



Common communication changes in people living with dementia



Trouble finding words,
or “word salad”

Primary and secondary
language confusion

Difficulty understanding
the meaning of words

Problems paying
attention

Frustration

Repetition

Respond versus react



Reacting

Correcting
Confronting
Arguing

Focus is on *you*
(talking)

vs

Responding

Validating
Reassuring
Redirecting

Focus is on *them*
(active listening)

Denying

Reacting

vs

“Yes, and ...”

Responding



- Listening
- Agreement
- Making your partner look good
- Keeping it going
- Presence
- Playfulness

Validation and the power of “Yes, and ...” or “I’m sorry”

Reacting
(denial)

vs.

Responding
 (“yes, and ...”)

“I’m late for work.
I’m going to miss
my bus!”

There’s nowhere you
need to be this
morning, Bill. You’re
retired, remember?

We’ve arranged a ride for you, and
there’s plenty of time. How about
a cup of coffee before you go?

“What time will my
Dad be here?”

Your father passed
away a long time
ago.

Let’s see, it’s almost 5:00 now, so pretty
soon. A good show is about to start,
let’s turn it on while we wait.

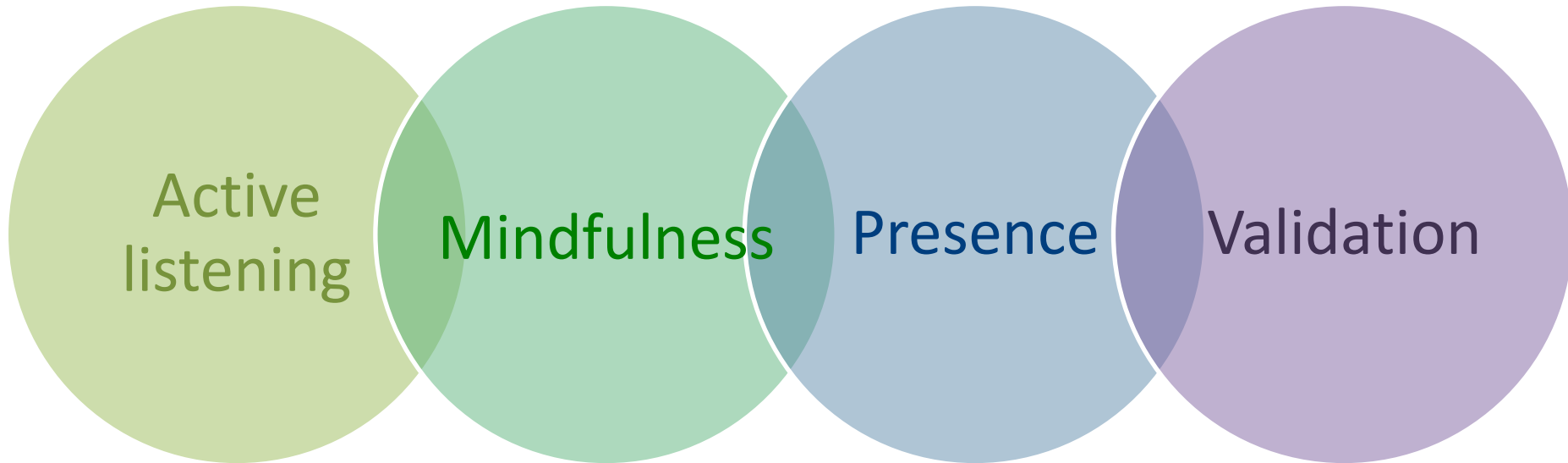
“That nurse stole
my wallet.”

I’m sure she didn’t.
You probably just
misplaced it.

I’m sorry it’s gone missing.
I’ll get it taken care of.

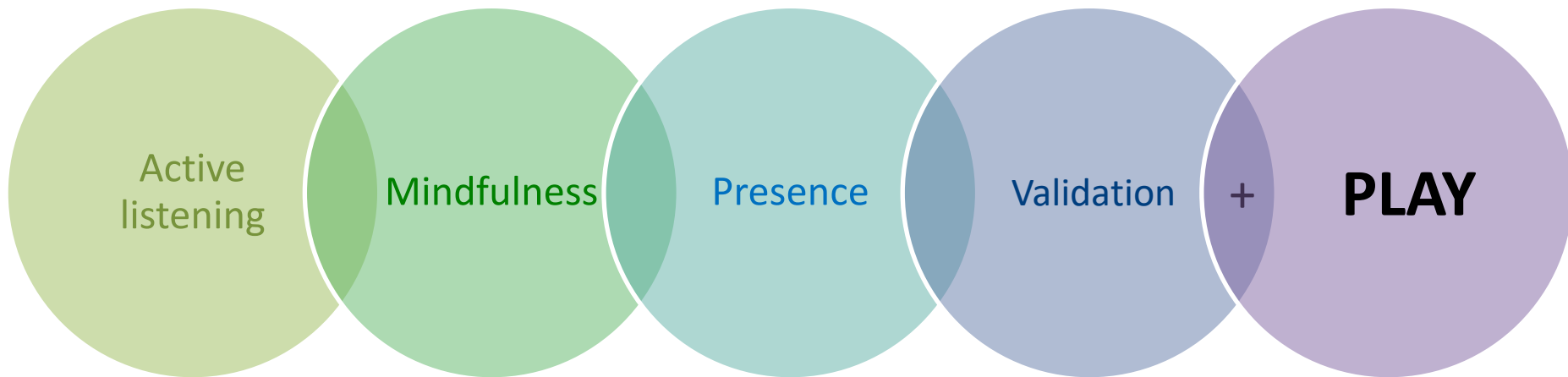
Making a conscious effort to not only hear the words being spoken, but the complete message being sent. Requires the listener to concentrate and comprehend before formulating a response.

The degree to which one is able to maintain mindful awareness. Often described in contrast to the “monkey mind,” which jumps from thought to thought.



The quality or state of being conscious or aware of something, by focusing one's awareness on the present moment, and paying attention to thoughts and feelings without judging them.

A method for connecting and communicating with persons with dementia by accepting their belief and current reality, and responding to the emotion that is being communicated, rather than to the facts of what is being said.



To engage in activity for enjoyment and recreation, rather than for a serious or practical purpose. Helps humans of all ages with problem-solving, creativity, and relationship-building.



LET'S PLAY!

In review

- The symptoms of dementia impact an individual's ability to communicate, and change their **behavior**
- Behavior is the **expression** of an unmet need
- Responding to behaviors requires **active listening**, and **validation** of the person's experience
- Learning and practicing communication techniques will improve **quality of life** for patients, caregivers, and members of their support system
- Patients and families need assistance in identifying local **supports and resources**



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Dementia Expert



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THANK YOU!

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