



Sapphire Normal Aging

BASIC CHARACTERISTICS

+ May feel blue due to changes due to normal aging +

Can learn new things + Repetition is needed + Ability to take in information is slowing + Making decisions can take extra time

STRATEGIES THAT WORK

+ Respecting their choices and decisions + Noticing and checking out changes in emotional or physical well-being + Using written reinforcement (calendar, notes, lists) + Using validation and empathy

STRATEGIES TO AVOID

+ Telling instead of asking + Arguing or not honoring choices + Asking for quick decisions on important matters + Being bossy + Taking over without permission



Diamond Early-Stage Dementia

BASIC CHARACTERISTICS

+ Uses old habits and routines + Becomes more protective of self and belongings + Less aware of boundaries + Likes things that are familiar and has difficulty with change + May share old stories and ask questions repeatedly

STRATEGIES THAT WORK

+ Offering apologies + Approaching and speaking as a friend, not an authority + Using the phrase, "We could try" + Using established habits and routines when possible + Going with their flow + Giving up being "right"

STRATEGIES TO AVOID

+ Using the phrase "Don't you remember?" + Not accepting changing abilities + Robbing them of opportunities to participate + Not offering alternative responsibilities when taking over tasks + Forcing changes or arguing



Emerald Early-to-Mid-Stage Dementia

BASIC CHARACTERISTICS

+ May lose their personal timeline of past life, places, and roles + Emotions change quickly + May misplace important things and accuse others of taking their belongings + Words are vague or not always on target + Ability to comprehend is limited

STRATEGIES THAT WORK

+ Correcting mistakes discreetly + Getting connected to the person prior to doing tasks or care + Presenting one-step-at-a-time + Using humor; doing tasks together + Greet before you treat

STRATEGIES TO AVOID

+ Pointing out all of the person's errors + Putting your hand on the person without proper cues + Treating the person like a child + Using reality orientation + Lying to the person when they become confused + Acting bossy



Amber Mid-Stage Dementia

BASIC CHARACTERISTICS

+ Seeks enjoyable sensory experiences (hearing music, soft blanket) + Gets into things + Difficult to communicate needs + May be private and quiet, or public and loud + In the moment, can't wait

STRATEGIES THAT WORK

+ Demonstrating or showing what you want person to do + Limiting distractions + Communicating with tone of voice, facial expression, and props or objects + Building in time away from each other + Approach, back off, then re-approach when something isn't working

STRATEGIES TO AVOID

+ Using lots of explanations or words + Doing "to them" or "for them" instead of "with them" + Not having permission to do tasks + Being loud + Allowing too much stimulation + Trying to complete tasks when the person is distressed



Ruby Mid-to-Late Stage Dementia

BASIC CHARACTERISTICS

+ Big movements and strength in arms and legs remain, BUT skilled use of fingers, feet, eyes, and mouth are lost + Can do only one thing at a time (look, listen, rest) + May put or hold food in their mouth, but not safely chew or swallow it

STRATEGIES THAT WORK

+ Using rhythm and music more than words and speech + Using demonstrations more than gestures or verbal instructions + SLOWING DOWN – take more time to get person to notice you + Get connected before starting a task

STRATEGIES TO AVOID

+ Trying to get tasks done quickly or making person perform tasks with force or pressure + Giving too many pieces of information or options at a time + Going too fast + Using high pitched tone of voice of "baby talk"



Pearl Last-Stage Dementia

BASIC CHARACTERISTICS

+ Able to connect with the world around them for short periods of time + Spends most time inside themselves + Takes a long time for information / data from the world to be taken in and processed + Startles easily with unexpected movement, touch, or other sensations

STRATEGIES THAT WORK

+ Taking time to look at the person, listen to them, and notice what is happening before you start care + Using a soothing tone and rhythmic voice + Offering comfort through preferred touch, rhythm, and sight options

STRATEGIES TO AVOID

+ Hurrying through movements to get tasks done + Worrying more about the body than the person living inside + Forgetting to let the person know you are there before you start doing things + Talking about the person, instead of to or with the person

