

Understanding and Responding to Challenging Dementia Behaviors

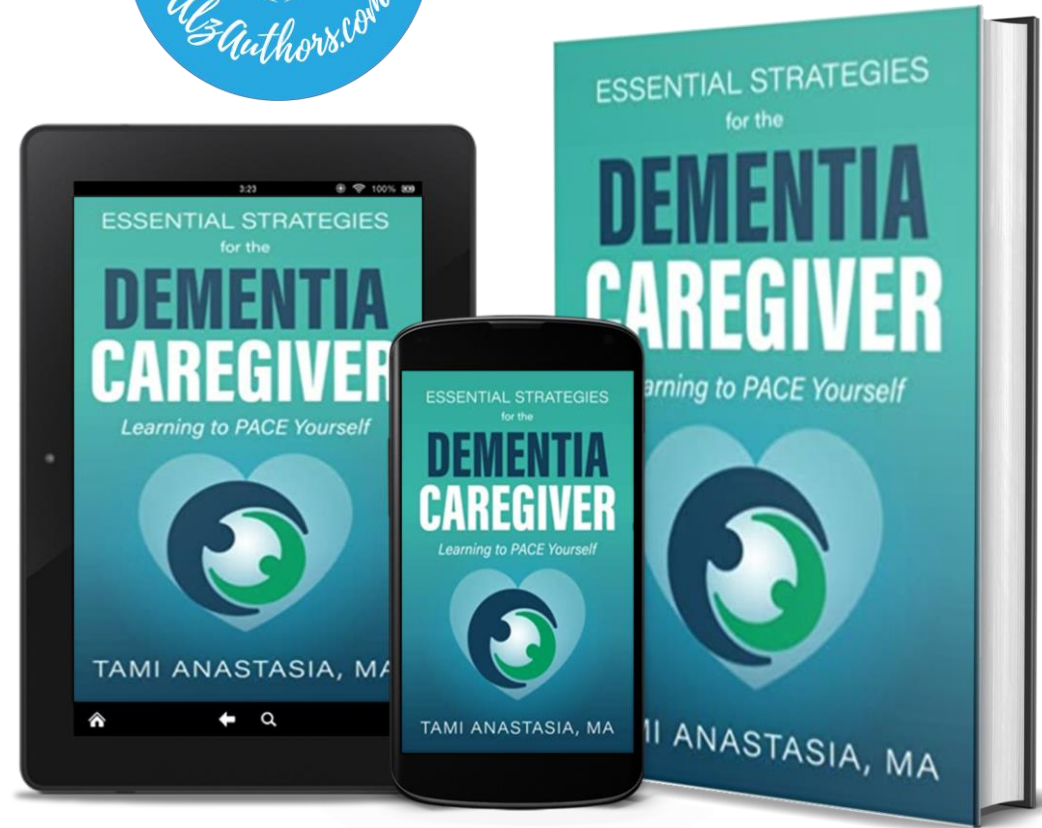
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Meet Your Presenter



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Dementia Basics – What to Expect

- Dementia causes cognitive decline and functional impairment
- Memory loss, irrational thinking, increased confusion and distorted perceptions are symptoms of dementia
- People with dementia don't have control over the things they say and do
- People with dementia aren't aware of their limitations
- All behaviors are a form of communication
- We have to adapt to their impairments



Types of Challenging Behaviors

- Accusatory
- Argumentative
- Combative
- Uncooperative
- Inappropriate
- Wandering - Exit Seeking
- Hallucinations/Delusions
- Collecting Items



Safety always comes first

Professional Caregiver Challenges

- Don't take what the person says and does personally
- Not getting angry or impatient with the person
- Change your expectations of the person
- Person-centered approach vs task oriented



Avoid Pitfalls

- Arguing
- Correcting
- Over-explaining
- Challenging them
- Being forceful or insistent
- Pointing out their limitations
- Trying to use reason and logic
- Rushing them
- Asking open-ended questions



Four D's of Dementia Care

1. Detach – don't take what is said and done personally
2. Document – look for patterns and triggers
3. Diffuse – compassionate care
4. Distract – reframe and redirect



D = Detach - Enter Their World

1. Listen to learn
 - What are they telling you?
 - What do they want you to know?
2. Listen to understand
 - What are the feelings behind their words?
 - What is the immediate need?
3. Validate
 - Paraphrase what they are telling you
4. Reassurance and comforting responses
 - Thank you....
 - I'm sorry....



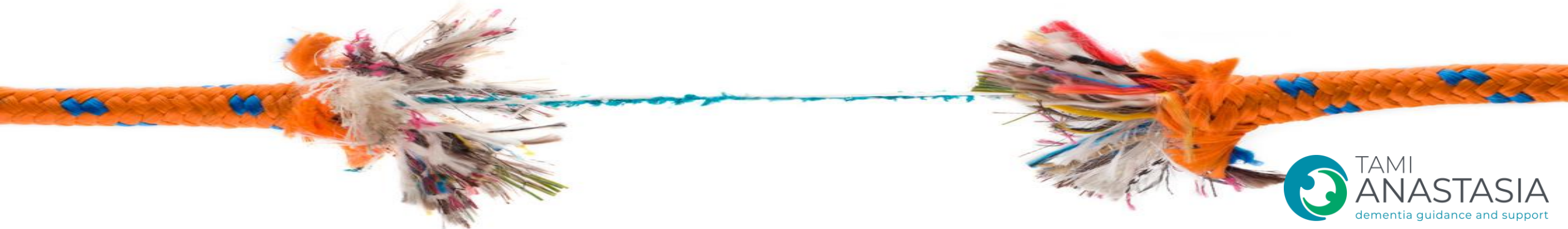
D = Document

- Identify patterns, causes or triggers
- Keep an observation log
 - Date/time
 - Event
 - Potential trigger
 - Observation
 - Note to self: What could you do differently next time?
- Prepare responses in advance



D = Document Potential Triggers

- Unmet needs, desires, or feelings
- Pain or physical discomfort
- Inability to process information
- Reaction to your approach or body language
- Overstimulation
- Boredom
- Reliving past memories
- Loss of sequential memory
- Disoriented
- Fears, worries, or concerns
- Time of day
- Underlying medical condition



D = Diffuse

Compassionate Care

- Use “we” and “us”
- Invite them to participate
- Ask them to be a helper
- Demonstrate how to do it
- Compliment them
- One step at a time
- Provide verbal and visual cues
- Give them two choices
- Use non-verbal gestures
- Speak slowly
- Make eye contact

D = Distract, Redirect or Reframe



Activities

- Favorite movie
- Helper task
- Music
- Food
- Reminisce
- Walk

Reframe the situation

- Use appealing words
- Rhymes
- “Special”
- Bribe or reward
- Game or competition
- Recite a favorite song, passage, quote, or story
- Humor
- Normalize

Take Time Out

- What happened?
- What caused you to react this way?
- What can you learn from this?
- What do you need to do differently?



Closing Thoughts





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THANK YOU!

