



What is Dementia?

**Understanding and
Supporting
Persons Living
with Dementia and
their Families**

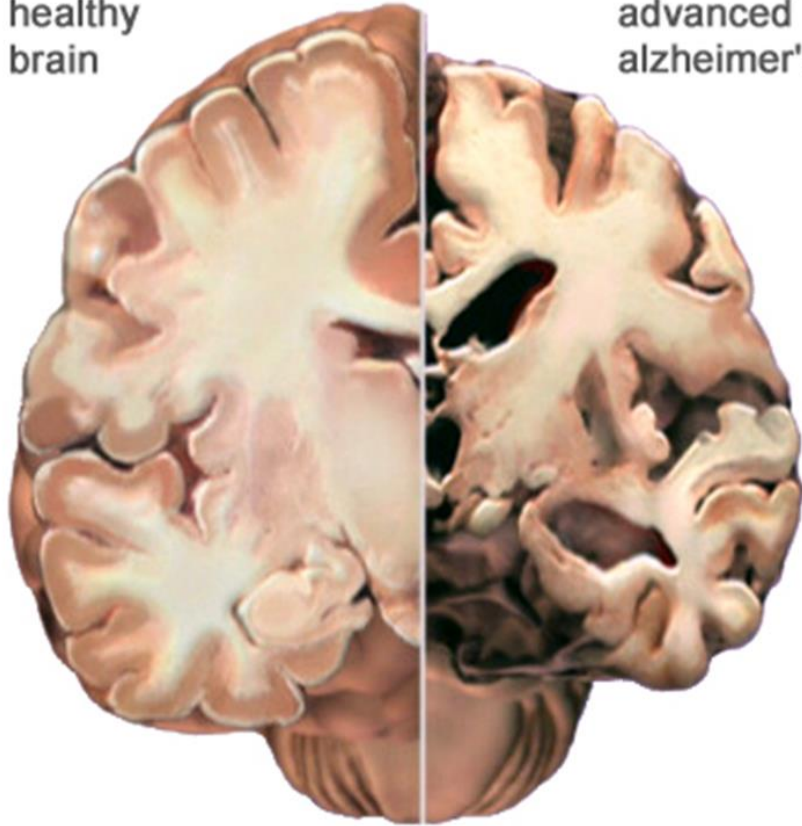


Objectives

To increase understanding of dementia and learn supportive strategies.

Day 1 (April 6 2022):	Overview of dementia
Day 2 (April 7 2022):	Effects of dementia on communication and behaviour
Day 3 (April 13 2022):	Resiliency in persons living with dementia and caregivers
Day 4 (April 14 2022):	Brain health and lifestyle

healthy
brain



advanced
alzheimer's



Responsive Behaviours

- All personal expressions (words, gestures, actions) have **meaning**
- Personal expressions communicate **meanings, needs** and **concerns**
- To understand their meaning, you must consider **the factors influencing his behaviour** (physical, emotional and environmental elements etc.)



"You may learn about parts of your loved one's past that you never knew about. This could be good or painful, depending on the memories that surface. If they are painful, comfort your loved one and care for yourself as best you can.

Consider what in their routine or environment could have pushed that memory to the surface and change it if you can"



What May Happen to a Person Living with Dementia

8A's of Dementia

- Memory Loss
- Loss of Awareness
- Inability to Recognize Familiar Things
- Changes in Purposeful Movement
- Loss of Drive
- Altered Perception
- Attention Deficit
- Language Difficulties

Memory Loss (Amnesia)

- Memory loss
- May not remember recent conversations, comments, questions
- Access to information is from the past
- Difficulties with sequencing activities (what happened before, what happens next?)



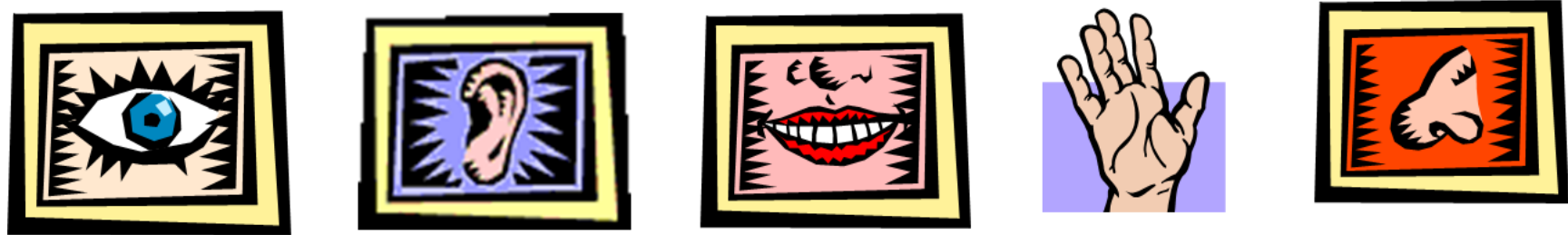


Loss of Awareness (Anosognosia)

- Loss of knowledge of illness
- Unaware of deficits in cognitive abilities
- Forget they forget so blame others when things go wrong

Inability to Recognize Familiar Things (Agnosia)

- Loss of recognition of sensory information (sight, sound, taste, touch, smell)
- Misinterpret what is seen/heard, etc.





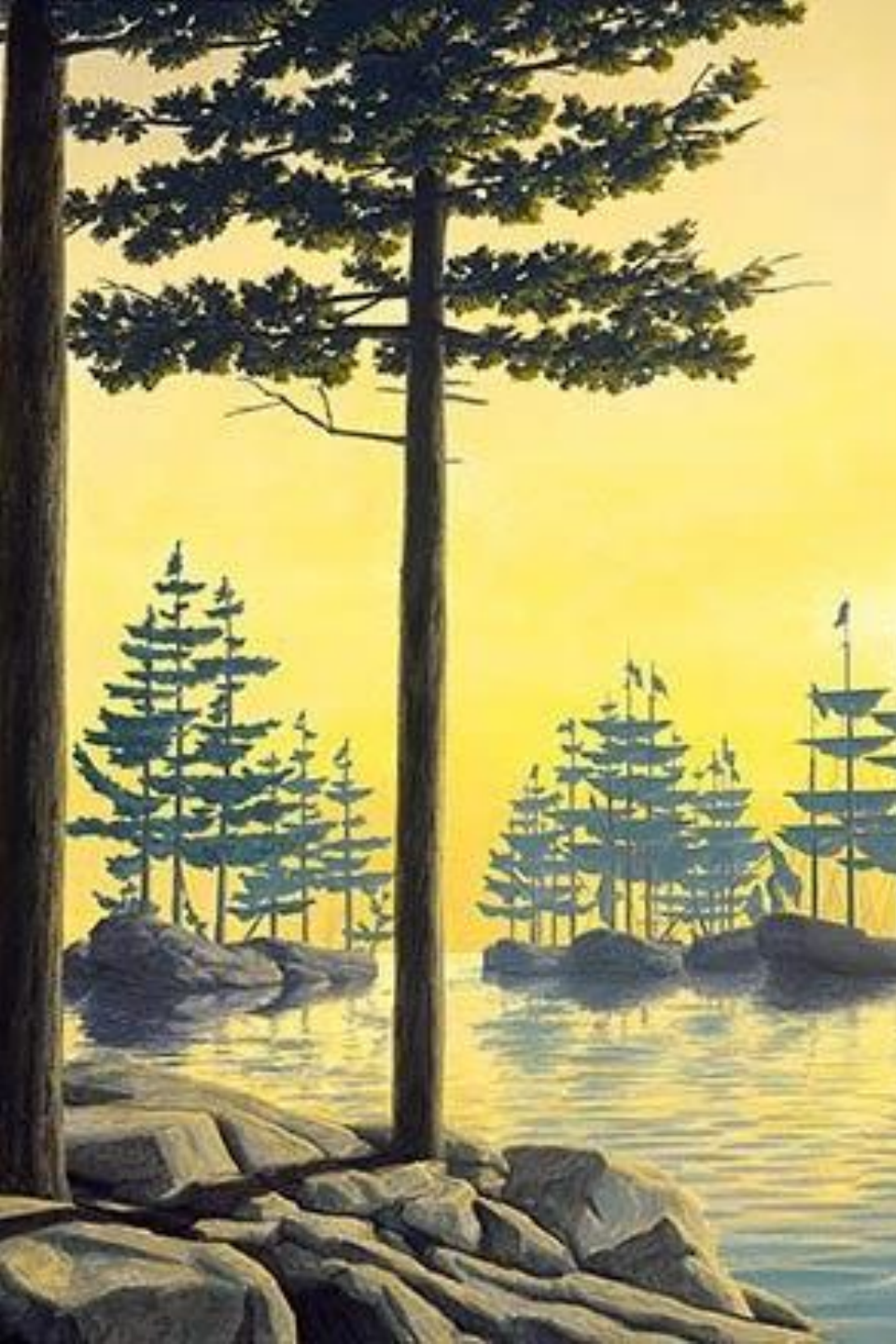
Changes in Purposeful Movement (Apraxia)

- Difficulty initiating purposeful movements
- Difficulty directing body parts to do familiar tasks
- Difficulty understanding directions - up, down, back, front, left, right



Loss of Drive (Apathy)

- Loss of drive
- Reduced or no initiation of activity
- Little or no emotional response



Altered Perception

- Misinterpretation of sensory information
- May lead to illusions and/or delusions
- Loss of colour and visual perception
- Loss of depth perception

Attention Deficit

- Inability to focus, maintain and shift attention
- Loss of ability to concentrate
- The person may become easily distracted or unfocused
- Difficulty completing tasks
- May repeat tasks or have a difficult time shifting their focus to a new task

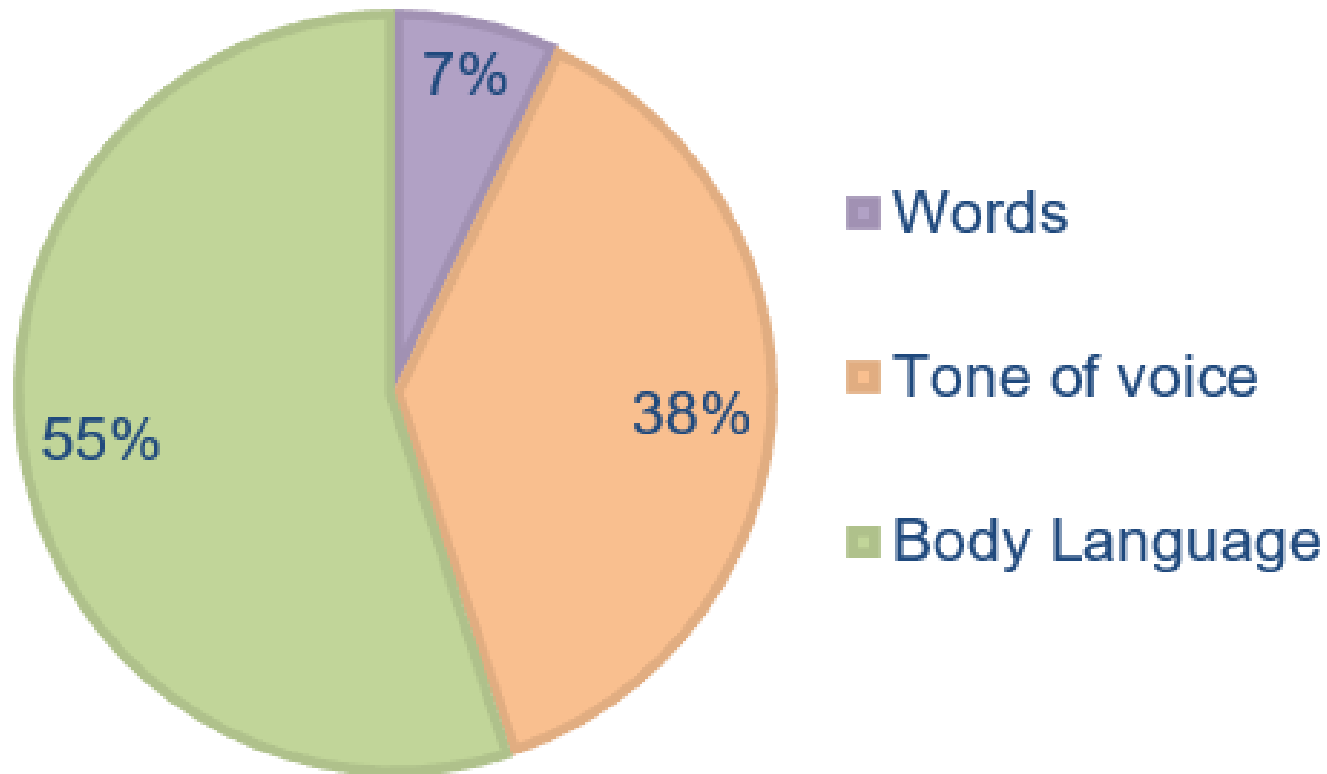




Language Difficulties (Aphasia)

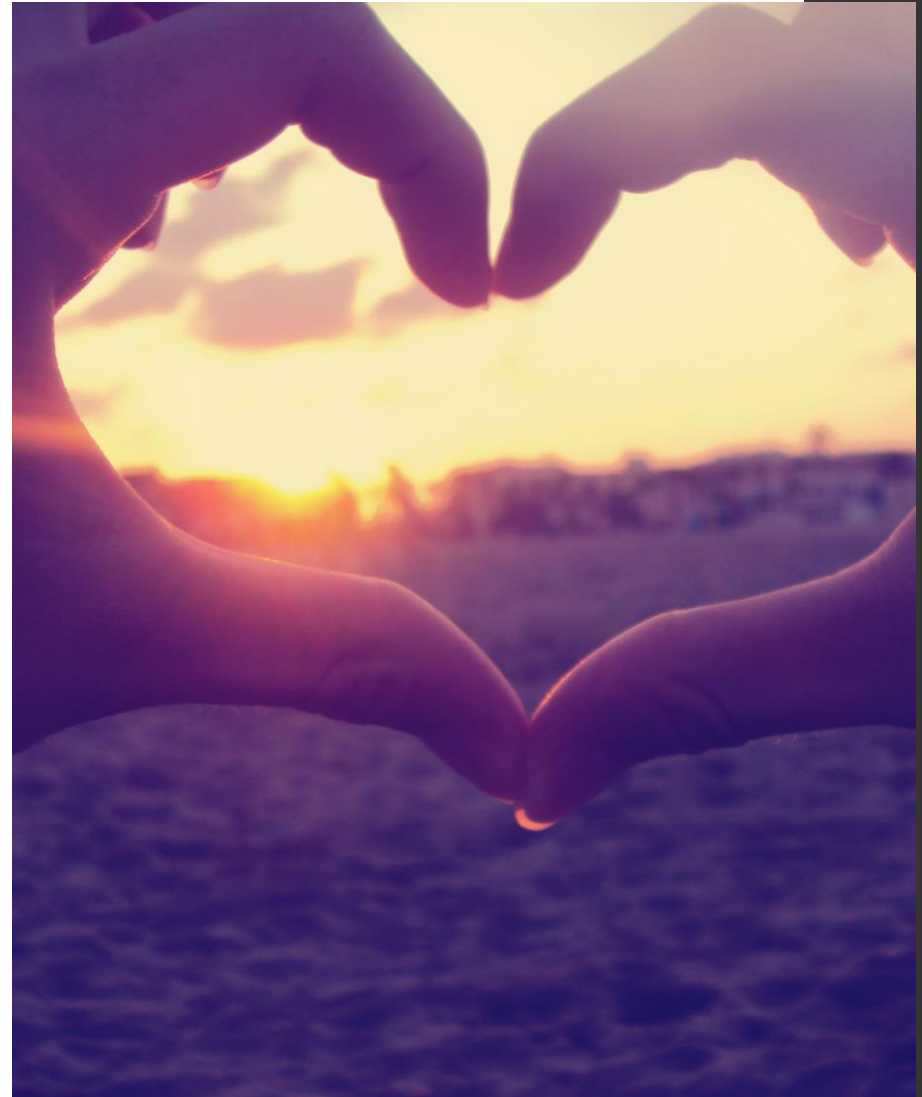
- Loss of language (both speech & comprehension)
- Word finding difficulties
- May not participate in conversations
- May revert to first language

Communication Breakdown



*“When you have dementia,
you no longer understand
words. You understand
love.”*

Valerie Beaudin, Caregiver, M’Chigeeng First Nation
– Anishinaabek Dementia Care Video (2019)



How Do We Communicate with One Another?

Remember...

It takes **TWO** to
TANGO – or *TANGLE**



Challenges with Expressing Language

- Difficulty naming things
- Use words with like sound or meaning
- Word substitution
- Make up words
- Jumbled sentences
- Rambling & vague speech
- Increased use of forbidden words



Challenges with Understanding Language

- Problems with comprehension – assigning meaning to words heard
- Ability to filter out background noise
- Trouble following conversations that go off topic
- Problems with abstract thinking
- Trouble making sense of words spoken with an accent

BEFORE YOU SPEAK



**Approach from the
front**

**Find a quiet place to
talk**

Make eye contact

**Be aware of body
language**

**Create a positive & safe
space**

HOW TO SPEAK



Speak clearly & calmly

**Present one idea at a
time**

Ask simple questions

**Speak to them as an
adult**

**Give them time to
answer**

WHAT TO DO & SAY



Identify yourself

**Rephrase rather than
repeat**

**Avoid reality checking
or testing**

Listen with your eyes

**Focus on body
language**

Gentle Reminder to Take with You

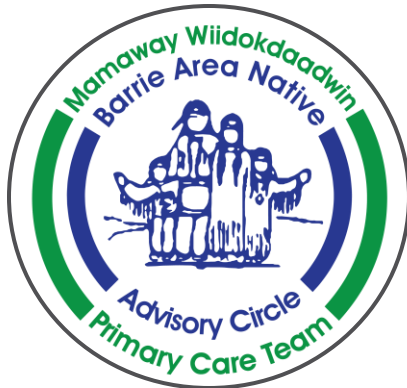
- You **cannot** expect your loved one to change
- You **can** influence another person's behavior
- You **can** control your own behaviour
- Look for the person behind the disease



Questions?

Day 3 (April 13, 2022)

Resiliency in Persons Living with Dementia and Caregivers



AlzheimerSociety
SIMCOE COUNTY

***Thank you to Mamaway Wiidokdaadwin –
BANAC for the opportunity to collaborate on
this education series.***