

THE 8 A's OF DEMENTIA

UNDERSTANDING THE MEANING AND FINDING STRATEGIES

Pathological forgetfulness.
Loss of **memory**.

AMNESIA

- keep consistent routines
- repeat as needed
- provide visual cues
- try an agenda or calendar

Loss of the ability to **recognize** people, sounds, objects, and their purpose and meaning.

AGNOSIA

- always introduce yourself
- offer one item at time
- demonstrate use of objects
- use other senses

Loss of **language**.
Includes impaired speech and/or comprehension.

APHASIA

- use gestures and visuals
- give each direction clearly
- speak slower, shorter phrases
- patient, positive body language

Loss of **self awareness**.
The person with dementia doesn't know they don't know

ANOSOGNOSIA

- validate concerns & feelings
- avoid challenging the person
- try personal safety devices
- try visual aids, *whiteboards*

Loss of **purposeful movement**.
Loss of ability to plan, sequence, and execute steps

APRAXIA

- simplify the task
- focus on 1 instruction at a time
- demonstrate actions
- use previous routines

Loss of **perceptual abilities** including depth perception, 3D, & acuity causing illusions.

ALTERED PERCEPTION

- visible, large print signage
- contrast to highlight or diminish
- keep lights on & use dimmer
- eliminate shadows

Inability to sustain or shift **attention**. Easily distracted or perseverates

ATTENTION DEFICITS

- only one person speaking
- reduce distraction and noise
- use smaller visitor groups
- present one item at a time

Loss of **initiative** and motivation. Does not occur to the person to participate.

APATHY

- assist task initiation
- keep activity props nearby
- offer verbal cues
- utilize remaining strengths