



AFA Partners in Care: Supporting Individuals Living with Dementia

Behavioral Triggers

Emotional	Physiological	Environmental
Frustration	Hallucinations	Overstimulation
Disorientation	Delusions	Care Partner's Approach
Loneliness	Sleep Issues	Unmet Personal Needs
Fear	Pain	Medication Management
Boredom	Urinary Tract Infection	Feeling Isolated
Anxiety	Dehydration	Feel Restricted

As the illness progresses, individuals may experience changes in their ability to verbally communicate. As a result, individuals may express behaviors as a way to communicate their unmet need. As care partners, it is important to work as detectives to identify where an individual's distress is coming from. Whether it be an emotional, physiological or environmental trigger care partners should identify and understand an individual's distress and use appropriate approaches to address.

Emotional triggers can cause an individual to feel disoriented, scared, bored, anxious, etc. An individual that is feeling frustrated and who may not be able to verbalize that, may yell or ball up their fists. An individual who is wandering may be bored. Instead of stopping that behavior, give the individual a space to walk to add value to their behavior. Knowing the individual's baseline with whom we work will help care partners understand the individual is in distress and address the behavior effectively.

Physiological triggers may cause an individual to exhibit a behavior because they are in pain or physically uncomfortable. Is the individual hungry or thirsty? Are they experiencing pain? Utilizing our ability to perceive an individual's behavior will assist in addressing their needs.

The environment can be distressing to an individual's living with dementia. An individual may experience increased sensitivity to the stimuli in the environment. It is important as care partners to know our individual's likes/dislikes, what causes over/under stimulation, do they want a quiet space or social engagement. It important to check ourselves in our approaches to help ensure the individual is comfortable.