

# A Loving and Gentle Approach to Challenging Behaviors with Alzheimer's Patients



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## What is an Alzheimer's Whisperer?

A person who enters the world of someone with Alzheimer's disease.

A person who understands that world and is willing to change without expectations that the person with AD will change.

A person who knows what is cognitively/functionally appropriate for the person with AD.

A person who understands the connection between brain damage and behaviors

## • Becoming an Alzheimer's Whisperer.....

- An approach that is:
  - ✦ Gentle
  - ✦ Flexible
  - ✦ Fun
  - ✦ Creative
  - ✦ Outside the Box.... And
  - ✦ Fun!!



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**First hippocampus** – stores **short term memory**

**Parietal lobes** where spatial processing is housed- **problems in perception** as well as in **navigating unfamiliar locations.**

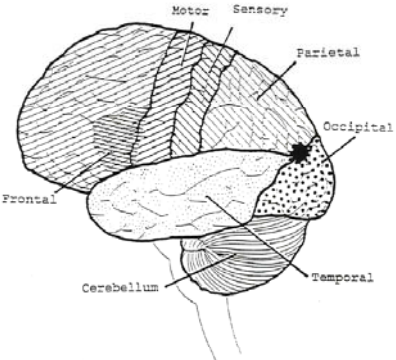
**Temporal lobes** control time awareness and language- word finding problems  
Middle stage, the hippocampus no longer no functions – **NO NEW LEARNING**

**Occipital lobe** –can't identify things that are seen – misuse objects; trouble understanding and thinking very concrete

**Limbic system**-emotional roller coaster

**Hypothalamus** – temperature and appetite

**Motor Strip** – walking, sitting up, continence, swallowing



## A QUICK TRIP THROUGH THE BRAIN


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## Theory of Retrogenesis

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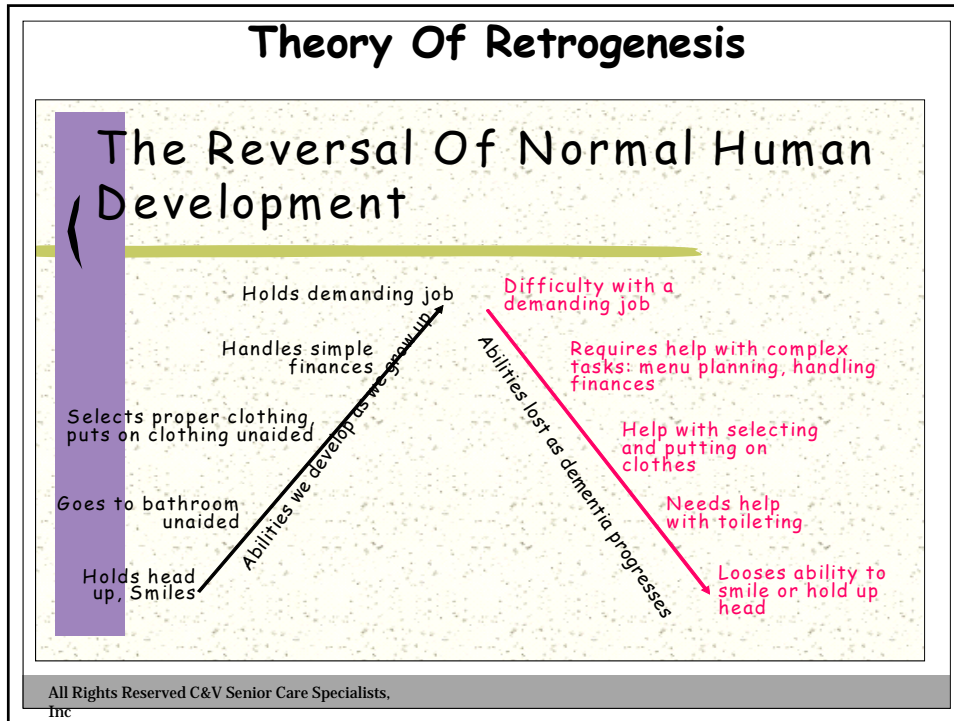
- **Once an Adult.....**
  - All that we learn going forward.....

- **Twice a Child....**
  - We repeat again going backwards.





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### Stages Of Alzheimer's Disease

<b>First (Early) Stage</b> Lasts 2- 4 years –up to and including dx May live alone or with little supervision “Great Foolers”	<b>Second ( Middle) Stage</b> 2-10 years Longest stage Needs full-time Supervision	<b>Third (Late ) Stage</b> 1-3 years Palliative Care May receive Hospice Care
Think about a young adolescent when planning approaches. Consider the judgment and responsibility of an 11 year old deteriorating to that of a 5 year old. <u>Repetition and reminders work at this stage.</u>	Think about a toddler. What is a 4 deteriorating to a 2year old capable of doing? How do you supervise a toddler? How much care is needed? <u>Safety issues very important.</u>	Think about an 18 month old to a newborn - what does this age need; how much care is involved; how does baby communicate needs? <u>Total care most likely needed due to total body shut down.</u>

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## Second (Middle) Stage Abilities



- ❖ Able to initiate familiar activity if supplies are available and in reach
- ❖ Able to do steps of self care with verbal and tactile cues
- ❖ Able to tell stories from past
- ❖ Able to read words slowly out loud
- ❖ Able to follow slow simple instructions
- ❖ Able to speak in short sentences or phrases; able to make needs known
- ❖ Able to sort, stack objects and do repetitive behaviors
- ❖ Able to sing, move to music, count
- ❖ Able to ambulate if no physical disability
- ❖ Able to feel and name objects

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## Second Stage: 2 - 10 years after dx, longest stage



- Needs full-time Supervision**
- Problems recognizing family and friends
- Problems organizing thoughts/ logical thinking
- Repeats statements and/or movements
- Trouble dressing -may not want to bathe
- Increasing disorientation and forgetfulness
- Can't find words - confabulates
- Suspicious, teary, fidgety, irritable, silly
- Challenging behaviors become apparent

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**□ - Repetition**

- 1. - Resistance to Care**
- 2. - Agitation and Aggression**
- 3. - Wandering**
- 4. What to do??**



**Specific Challenging Behaviors**

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**Don't Quiz!**

**Don't Argue or Reason!**

**Sometimes The Truth Does Hurt!**

**Remember The Five Minute Rule!**


**Kiss!**

**Use Gestures – Approach From Front!**

**Be Willing to Enter That Person's World**

**Smile**

**Be Positive**



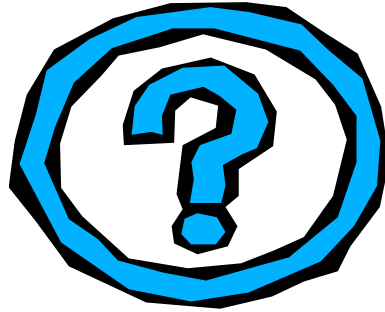
**COMMUNICATION SKILLS MAKE A HUGE DIFFERENCE!**

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**QUESTIONS???**



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