

The Cognitive Intervention Strategies

III. EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

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Look for ways to help this person categorize, organize, apply, and use information received, by helping them to more easily:

- Recognize the importance of various pieces of information
- Use information to solve problems
- Use information to make decisions and plan

A. Does this person focus attention on an object?

STRATEGIES:

1. Reduce distractions by modifying the environment, the task, and your interactions with this person, since they may be easily distracted by other stimuli even when they want to pay attention. Remind yourself that this person's brain may have difficulty screening out or ignoring irrelevant stimuli.

EXAMPLES for #A.1:

- *Reduce noise and visual distractions.*
 - *Close the door.*
 - *Turn off the phone ringer.*
 - *Reduce the number of items in the area of the task, such as excess dishes from the dining room table.*
 - *Reduce patterns in the object and the surrounding areas, so the object can be seen more easily.*
 - *Avoid unnecessary interactions, such as asking questions or touching.*
 - *Avoid moving around the room.*
2. Discern this person's level of interest or desire, at this time, regarding an object. If they are disinterested, try again at another time.
 3. Present objects only when this person is physically and emotionally ready to pay attention and focus.

EXAMPLES for #A.3:

- *Avoid presenting objects when this person is in pain, emotionally distressed, or tired.*
4. Get this person's attention before presenting an object. Help them shift their attention to the object.

EXAMPLES for #A.4:

- *Call this person's name.*
 - *Touch this person, if this person is comfortable with touch.*
 - *Identify the object.*
 - *Describe the appeal of the object.*
5. Give them time to shift their attention to the object.
 6. Make the object the strongest stimulus in the environment.
 7. Place the object close to them in the optimal part of their visual field.
 - Identify the optimal part of their visual field by finding the spot in the environment where, if this person stares straight ahead without moving their head, they see objects and people most easily, quickly, and accurately.
 - Avoid holding the object too far away, too close, too high, too low, too far to the left, or too far to the right.
 8. Contrast the object from its surroundings to be more visible to this person.

B. Does this person focus attention on what I am saying?

STRATEGIES:

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1. Reduce distractions by modifying the environment, the task, and your interactions with this person, since they may be easily distracted by other stimuli even when they want to pay attention. Remind yourself that this person's brain may have difficulty screening out or ignoring irrelevant stimuli.
2. Discern this person's level of interest or desire, at this time, regarding what you are saying. If they are disinterested, try again at another time.
3. Speak to this person only when they are physically and emotionally ready to shift their attention to the information you are giving them.

EXAMPLES for #B.3:

- *Address comments to this person about their pain or emotional distress when they are in pain or emotionally distressed. Avoid other topics until they are comfortable and relaxed.*
4. Get this person's attention before speaking to them. Help them shift their attention to you.

EXAMPLES for #B.4:

- *Call this person's name.*
 - *Touch this person, if this person is comfortable with your touch.*
 - *Look into their eyes at eye level.*
 - *Place your face close to theirs*
 - *Avoid calling or talking to this person from across the room.*
 - *Speak more loudly*
 - *Position yourself in the optimal part of their visual field. Sit beside them or, if necessary, kneel.*
 - *Contrast your clothing from your surroundings to be more visible to this person.*
 - *Give them time to shift their attention to you and your comments.*
5. When using touch to keep this person's attention, watch this person to ensure they are comfortable with your touch. Occasionally gently squeeze or move your hand on their hand, arm, or leg to help them relax, or to regain their attention, when necessary.
 6. When this person is focused on an object or engaged in a task, avoid distracting them with unnecessary interactions, such as asking questions or touching, or moving around the room.
 7. Be the strongest stimulus in the environment, both before and throughout your interaction with this person.
 8. Avoid environmental distractions, such as noise and visual stimuli.
 9. When speaking to this person, make your most important point first while they are still focusing on your words.
 10. Use short words and sentences.
 11. Present one idea and request at a time.
 12. Allow enough time to process each point you are making, but a short enough time to prevent them from forgetting or losing track of the thread of the conversation.

C. Does this person stay focused on what I am saying?

STRATEGIES:

1. Reduce distractions by modifying the environment, the task, and your interactions with this person, since they may be easily distracted by other stimuli even when they want to pay attention. Remind yourself that this person's brain may have difficulty screening out or ignoring irrelevant stimuli.
2. This person may find their mind wandering when trying to concentrate, even when there are no distractions. Remind yourself that this person may have difficulty sustaining focus and attention on words if they have trouble concentrating. Help this person sustain focus and concentration by modifying the environment, the task, and your interactions with them.

EXAMPLES for #C.2:

- *Other CAIS strategies sections give specific suggestions for modifying your communication, the environment, and the task.*
3. Discern this person's level of interest or desire, at this time, regarding what you are saying. If they are disinterested, try again at another time.
 4. Speak to this person only when they are physically and emotionally ready to stay focused on the information you are giving them.

EXAMPLES for #C.4:

- *Address comments to this person about their pain or emotional distress when they are in pain or emotionally distressed. Avoid other topics until they are comfortable and relaxed.*

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5. Get this person's attention before speaking.

EXAMPLES for #C.5:

- *Talk and/or touch this person, and look into their eyes to help them shift their attention to you. Be sure this person is comfortable with your touch before touching them.*
- *Avoid calling or talking to this person from across the room.*
- *Give them time to shift their attention to your comments.*

6. Keep this person's attention and focus throughout your comments.

EXAMPLES for #C.6:

- *Continue to touch, if they are comfortable with your touch. Gently move your hand on or occasionally squeeze this person's arm, hand, or leg to draw their attention back to you.*
- *Place your face close to theirs.*
- *Maintain eye contact.*
- *Speak more loudly.*
- *Position yourself in the optimal part of their visual field.*
- *Contrast your clothing from your surroundings to be more visible to this person.*
- *Avoid calling or talking to this person from across the room.*
- *Avoid moving or gesturing, unless they are necessary.*

7. When using touch to keep this person's attention, watch this person to ensure they are comfortable with the touch. Occasionally gently squeeze or move your hand on their hand, arm, or leg to help them relax.
8. When this person is focused on a task, avoid distracting them with unnecessary interactions, such as asking questions or touching, or moving around the room
9. Be the strongest stimulus in the environment, both before and throughout your interaction with this person.
10. Avoid environmental distractions, such as noise and visual stimuli.
11. When speaking to this person, make your most important point first while they are still focusing on your words.
12. Use short words and sentences.
13. Present one idea and request at a time.
14. Allow enough time to process each point you are making, but a short enough time to prevent them from forgetting or losing track of the thread of the conversation.

D. Does this person stay focused on a task?

STRATEGIES:

1. Reduce distractions by modifying the environment, the task, and your interactions with this person, since they may be easily distracted by other stimuli even when they want to pay attention. Remind yourself that this person's brain may have difficulty screening out or ignoring irrelevant stimuli.
2. This person may find their mind wandering when trying to concentrate, even when there are no distractions. Remind yourself that this person may have difficulty sustaining focus and attention on a task or object if they have trouble concentrating. Help this person sustain focus and concentration by modifying the environment, the task, and your interactions with them.

EXAMPLES for #D.2:

- *Other CAIS strategies sections give specific suggestions for modifying your communication, the environment, and the task.*

3. Discern this person's level of interest or desire, at this time, regarding a task. If they are disinterested, try again at another time.
4. Present tasks, objects, and comments only when this person is physically and emotionally ready to pay attention and focus.

EXAMPLES for #D.4:

- *Avoid presenting tasks, objects, and comments when this person is in pain, emotionally distressed, or tired.*

5. Get this person's attention before presenting a task, object, or comment.

EXAMPLES for #D.5:

- *Talk and/or touch this person, and look into their eyes to help them shift their attention to you. Be sure this person is comfortable with your touch before touching them.*
- *Avoid calling or talking to this person from across the room.*
- *Give them time to shift their attention to the task, object, or your comments.*

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6. Keep this person's attention and focus throughout the task.

EXAMPLES for #D.6:

- *Continue to touch, if they are comfortable with your touch. Gently move your hand on or occasionally squeeze this person's arm, hand, or leg to draw their attention back to you.*
 - *Place your face close to theirs.*
 - *Maintain eye contact.*
 - *Speak more loudly.*
 - *Position yourself and objects in the optimal part of their visual field.*
 - *Contrast your clothing and objects from their surroundings to be more visible to this person.*
 - *Avoid calling or talking to this person from across the room.*
7. When using touch to keep this person's attention, watch this person to ensure they are comfortable with the touch. Occasionally gently squeeze or move your hand on their hand, arm, or leg to help them relax, or to regain their attention, when necessary.
 8. When this person is engaged in a task, avoid distracting them with unnecessary interactions, such as asking questions or touching.
 9. Be the strongest stimulus in the environment, both before and throughout your interaction with this person.
 10. Avoid environmental distractions, such as noise and visual stimuli.

EXAMPLES for #D.10:

- *Close the door.*
 - *Turn off the phone ringer.*
 - *Reduce the number of items in the area of the task, such as excess dishes from the dining room table.*
11. When speaking to this person, make your most important point first while they are still focusing on your words.
 12. Use short words and sentences.
 13. Present one idea and request at a time.
 14. Allow enough time to process each point you are making, but a short enough time to prevent them from forgetting or losing track of the thread of the conversation.
 15. When this person is engaged in behavior that is safe, but mildly distressing to themselves or others, consider allowing the behavior to continue for a short time until it gradually stops due to this person's reduced ability or need to concentrate and focus on the task or behavior.

EXAMPLES for #D.15:

- *If this person is going into a room and looking through someone else's things, discern if it is more effective to wait until this person stops on their own before attempting other interventions, such as persuading them to stop the behavior or distracting them with some other activity.*

E. Does this person figure out what I mean, even if they can't hear or understand me very well?

STRATEGIES:

1. Remind yourself that if this person is an older adult, they may have age-related hearing and vision loss. Enhance this person's ability to hear you by presenting information in a low pitched and calm voice, slowly and clearly enunciated, and after you have their attention. Reduce noise and distractions in the environment.
2. Talk to this person when they are calm, relaxed, and well rested. Remind yourself that emotional distress and fatigue will likely decrease this person's ability to figure out what you are saying.
3. Discern if this person can hear you well enough to understand you.
4. Discern if this person can interpret what you are saying by guessing your content, even if they can't hear you.

EXAMPLES for #E.4:

- *An example of significant difficulty analyzing a situation and interpreting your words might be if this person is in their pajamas in the morning and they say "drecked?" after you said "It's time to get dressed".*
5. Provide an obvious context for this person.

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EXAMPLES for #E.5:

- *Orient this person to the time and situation by saying it is morning and that they are in their pajamas, before offering to help them get dressed.*
6. Use nonverbal interactions, such as gestures and touch to communicate with this person. Watch them to ensure they are comfortable with your touch. Remind yourself that all touch is a form of communication. Use touch to help them understand what you are asking.

EXAMPLES for #E.6:

- *Touch their body part when asking them to move it or if it hurts.*
7. Modify your interactions and the environment to better accommodate sensory changes, since this person may have an increased dependence on sensory functions when their brain cannot compensate for reduced sensory functions.

EXAMPLES for #E.7:

- *See the “I. Sensory Functions” section of the CAIS Cognitive Strategies and other CAIS strategies sections that give specific suggestions for modifying your communication and the environment.*

F. Does this person remember what they see or hear after ten minutes?

STRATEGIES:

1. Discern whether this person remembers most easily and accurately through their sense of hearing or seeing. If you are not able to present information through both hearing and seeing, then present information through the sense that is easiest for them to remember.

EXAMPLES for #F.1:

- *Present information in a way that they can both see and hear it.*
 - *Show this person a towel when you say it is time for a shower.*
 - *When you present this person with a note, read it aloud to them.*
2. Help this person relax when they are receiving and trying to remember information so they can think and remember more easily.
3. Present information when this person is comfortable, free of pain, and is emotionally calm. Avoid giving them information when they are distressed or tired.
4. When giving information, get and keep this person’s attention and focus by:
- *Touching if they are comfortable with your touch.*
 - *Placing your face or an object close to them.*
 - *Maintaining eye contact and directing their gaze to the object.*
 - *Speaking more loudly.*
 - *Positioning yourself and the object in a way that contrasts with surroundings, so as to be more visible to them.*
5. Ensure this person correctly received any information to be remembered when it was initially presented.

EXAMPLES for #F.5:

- *When you said you would help them with a shower, make sure they heard “shower” and not “flower”.*
 - *When their daughter came to visit, make sure they understood that this was their daughter.*
 - *When presenting a note to this person about a doctor’s visit or that says dinner will be in fifteen minutes, make sure they understand each of the words in the note.*
6. Ensure this person correctly interpreted the information to be remembered when it was initially presented.

EXAMPLES for #F.6:

- *This person may have heard “shower” but didn’t realize you meant they were going to take a shower, rather than you.*
 - *They may have understood the note about the doctor’s appointment, but didn’t realize it applied to them or that it meant the appointment was tomorrow rather than today.*
7. When this person’s response seems inappropriate, see if they are remembering a piece of information incorrectly or are remembering information that is different from what you expected and therefore are basing their response on an inaccurate assumption.

EXAMPLES for #F.7:

- *For example, when you said you would help them with a shower, you were brushing the dog, and they assumed you were intending to give the dog a shower.*

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- *They might have remembered the doctor mentioned in the note was ill and couldn't meet with them.*
8. Present any information they need to remember in a clear and concise manner.
 9. Avoid giving too much information.
EXAMPLES for #F.9:
 - *When telling this person about a doctor appointment, avoid telling them what you both will do after the appointment.*
 10. Avoid giving information when there is distraction or while you are doing something else.
EXAMPLES for #F.10:
 - *They may remember what they saw, instead of what they heard.*
 - *They may remember irrelevant information rather than the intended information when you told them while you were doing another task.*
 - *Avoid telling this person you will help them with a shower in a few minutes, while you are clearing the breakfast dishes. They may remember the breakfast dishes they saw rather than what they heard you say, causing them to think they are supposed to eat rather than take a shower.*
 11. Avoid giving confusing information or unintended cues.
EXAMPLES for #F.11:
 - *They may remember what they saw, instead of what they heard.*
 - *They may remember irrelevant information rather than the intended information when you told them while you were doing another task.*
 - *Avoid telling this person you will help them with a shower in a few minutes, while you are clearing the breakfast dishes. They may remember the breakfast dishes they saw rather than what they heard you say, causing them to think they are supposed to eat rather than take a shower.*
 12. Present visual cues when telling this person information to remember.
EXAMPLES for #F.12:
 - *When telling this person they will be going to the doctor in 20 minutes, give them a note with the same information.*
 13. Repeat suggestions, explanations, information, and requests to this person as often as is necessary to compensate for difficulty with memory. Use the same words when repeating them.
 14. When this person asks the same question frequently in a short period of time, remind yourself that a repeated question may be due to forgetting that they had asked it or forgetting the answer. It could also be due to this person thinking, consciously or not, that it had been some time since they had last asked it. If it is due to memory loss, then simply repeat your response. Give the same response in the same way that you did when your response first satisfied them. By simply repeating it, you may help relieve your own frustration and fatigue. Avoid the temptation to vary your response until you come up with a response that stops the questions once and for all. If it is due to thinking a long amount of time had passed since they last asked the question, patiently note the time and give them the information they are requesting or needing. Respond in a warm reassuring tone of voice.
EXAMPLES for #F.14:
 - *If they ask repeatedly when lunch is, respond with the same words, tone of voice, and hand gestures you used to respond when they were satisfied with your response. Repeat your response every time they ask the question.*
 - *Provide a note to remind them.*
 - *Invite them to help you make lunch.*
 - *Offer them some food now if they are hungry.*
 15. Be as consistent and predictable as possible. Avoid changes in the environment, schedule of events, the way tasks are performed, who helps this person with tasks, and the way in which care partners and other people interact with them.
 16. Use notes and other written cues.
EXAMPLES for #F.16:
 - *Use signs to inform this person where things are and when activities will occur.*
 17. Explain what you are doing and orient this person as often as necessary.
 18. Avoid quizzing this person or putting them on the spot to produce a word, name, or information. Pressure

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will likely make it more difficult for them to remember the word, name, or information.

EXAMPLES for #F.18:

- *Avoid saying, “What’s my name Mom? It starts with an ‘S’.”*
- *Avoid asking this person, “What did I say the last time you asked that question? Remember?”*

19. Introduce and identify people, even when this person has met them before. Be subtle if this person might be embarrassed about not remembering names or recognizing who people are. Avoid quizzing this person or asking them to guess.
20. Give this person enough time to remember and respond during a conversation or to a question.
21. Avoid the temptation to test this person’s memory or to encourage them to practice remembering, for example, with memory games, unless this person particularly enjoys them.
22. Remind yourself that the memory might be there in this person’s mind, but they aren’t finding it at the moment. Help orient this person to a change in topic, activity, or expectation, so they can “place” or find the different topic, fact, or skill in their mind. Provide information before making your point about the topic, activity, or expectation.

EXAMPLES for #F.22:

- *When talking about a relative starting a new job, say “Bill’s daughter Mary also has a new job. Mary said she is sorry she chose the job she did.” This gives time and orienting information to help this person shift from the first relative to Mary. It also helps this person to focus on and “place” in their mind who Mary is and previous information about Mary’s job situation.*
23. Remind yourself that memory is very complex. This person’s ability to remember information from long ago may be more intact than their memory for events that occurred recently or a few moments ago. They may also be able to remember certain types of information more easily than others or at certain times of day more easily than at others. Information or skills that they used frequently throughout life will likely be retained longer.

EXAMPLES for #F.23:

- *An engineer may be able to take apart and reassemble appliances even when they have many cognitive needs.*
24. Present tasks, task objects and methods of performing tasks in ways that are familiar to this person and are as similar as possible to the way they performed the tasks throughout most of their adult life. Rely on the skills and information this person has used throughout most of their adult life.
 25. Ask this person questions with a “yes” or “no” response or that invite opinions, rather than facts.
 26. Remind yourself that this person’s ability to remember may fluctuate or be unpredictable at any given moment. If you return a short time later, they may be able to remember more easily.
 27. When this person has difficulty remembering, adjust your communication, the environment, and the task to help them remember more easily or to compensate for their memory loss.

EXAMPLES for #F.27:

- *Other CAIS strategies sections give specific suggestions for modifying your communication, the environment, and the task.*
28. Remind yourself that this reduced ability to remember is most likely due to changes in this person’s brain’s ability to remember or to express themselves. It is rarely due to this person’s desire, intention or to manipulation. Comments such as “She can remember what she wants to.” or “He can remember when he wants to.” are usually false and a misinterpretation of this person’s abilities or desires. Be compassionate, patient, and tolerant.

G. Does this person easily make simple decisions? (For example, choosing among options, such as eggs rather than oatmeal for breakfast?)

STRATEGIES:

1. If this person has difficulty making decisions, present options to them.
2. Frequently assess this person’s ability to recognize and choose among options. Assess over time to accommodate changes in this person’s cognitive abilities and at this moment to accommodate specific conditions, such as fatigue or a transition from just waking up.
3. Adapt your approach and presentation of options to this person’s ability to choose among options. Remind yourself this person can make choices and express preferences regardless of their level of confusion or

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ability to process information, even when they cannot understand, speak, or move, or have very many cognitive needs.

4. Simplify your presentation of options when this person is making a choice, especially as they become increasingly confused and less able to understand multiple, unfamiliar, or abstract options.
5. Try to be creative when discerning what this person might want or need.
6. If this person is nonverbal, encourage them to point to what they want.
7. List specific options available.

EXAMPLES for #G.7:

- *Say, "Would you like eggs, cereal, or a muffin for breakfast?" rather than "What would you like for breakfast?"*

8. Use words that are familiar and recognizable to this person.
9. List fewer options at a time.

EXAMPLES for #G.9:

- *Say, "Would you like eggs or cereal for breakfast?" rather than "Would you like eggs, cereal, or a muffin for breakfast?"*

10. Present each option as a "yes/no" choice, when necessary.

EXAMPLES for #G.10:

- *Say, "Would you like eggs for breakfast?" and then, regardless of their response say, "Would you like oatmeal for breakfast?" in order to better understand what this person's desires might be, to let them know there is another option, and to ensure they meant to say the response they gave.*

11. Show this person the options rather than simply naming them.

EXAMPLES for #G.11:

- *Show them eggs and cereal, to make the options more concrete and visible.*

12. Help this person feel or taste the options, if they are unable to see or recognize objects, or to imagine them.

EXAMPLES for #G.12:

- *Put a small taste of each option in their mouth and watch for their response to each option.*

13. Present options slowly enough to allow time for them to process the information, but quickly enough they don't forget the options presented.
14. Discern this person's preferences, needs, and goals at this moment, to increase the chances the options will be desirable.
15. If this person appears unable to make a decision or choose an option at this time, present the opportunity or choices again later.

H. Does this person easily shift from one activity to another?

STRATEGIES:

1. Give this person enough time before and during a shift, to move from one thought or activity to another.

EXAMPLES for #H.1:

- *Enter this person's visual space and wait for them to focus on you before speaking.*
- *When offering to help this person take a bath or shower, allow time for them to process your words before handing them a robe or beginning to undress them.*

2. Assume this person needs time and help shifting focus, even when they seem to be uninvolved in an activity, such as staring off into space or sitting with their eyes closed.
3. Avoid changes in routine, expectations, the environment, the tasks, and your interactions with this person.
4. Avoid rapid or unexpected shifts in conversation, activities, or expectations.

EXAMPLES for #H.4:

- *When passing this person in a hall or room, avoid saying a brief "Hi" and short comment before moving on. Remind yourself that this person may need to use too much energy to shift their focus and orientation to you. If you don't have time to help them shift gradually, then simply pass by with only a smile.*
- *If while passing you establish eye contact and it is clear they have shifted their attention to you, then slow down and smile.*
- *If they say something to you, then stop and say a few words in response to their comment. Stay and converse as long as you are able.*

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- Orient this person to the shift in focus or activity.

EXAMPLES for #H.5:

- Orient this person to the time and situation by saying it is morning and they are in pajamas, before offering to help them get dressed.*
 - When changing the topic of conversation, provide information about the topic before making your point about the topic.*
 - When talking about a relative going on vacation, say “Bill’s daughter Mary is also going on vacation. Mary said she is sorry she chose Florida for her vacation instead of California.” This gives time and orienting information to help this person shift from the first relative to Mary. It also helps them to focus on and to “place” in their mind who Mary is and previous information they had about Mary’s vacation.*
- If this person doesn’t respond immediately to your suggestion of a task, avoid assuming they don’t want to do the task. Assume they may need time to shift their focus to your suggestion or to the new task.
 - Show this person other people who are doing a task before suggesting they do it.

EXAMPLES for #H.7:

- Bring this person to the dining table after other people are already there, so this person can more quickly see it is time to eat lunch.*

I. Does this person easily get started on a task or a response?

STRATEGIES:

- Remind yourself that this person’s apparent lethargy or lack of initiative is most likely due to brain functioning or an emotional disorder, such as depression. It is rarely due to laziness or this person’s intention.
- Ensure this person is professionally diagnosed to discern how much their reduced initiative is due to altered brain functioning, to an emotional disorder such as depression, or to something else.

EXAMPLES for #I.2:

- If this person seems to be uninterested in engaging in most activities or stays in bed or lounges around, consult a medical professional for diagnosis and recommendations.*
- When this person’s reduced initiative is due to brain functioning:
 - Compensate by providing activities and suggestions.
 - Use gentle and respectful humor, persuasion, and creativity to encourage them to participate in an activity or task.
 - Participate in the task with them.
 - Use objects of interest, aromas, and music in the environment to invite and stimulate them.
 - When an emotional disorder such as depression appears to be the cause of reduced initiative, seek medical advice and treatment.
 - When boredom seems to be the cause of the reduced initiative, introduce engaging stimulation and activities this person can easily do, rather than relying on conversation or a spectator type of stimulation, such as TV or watching someone else do an activity.
 - When this person hesitates in their response to a request, make sure the cause isn’t a physical challenge.

EXAMPLES for #I.6:

- When you ask this person to stand up, make sure they don’t have a sore knee.*
 - When you ask this person to stand up, check the chair to make sure it has adequate arm rests that fit this person so they can push themselves up more easily.*
- When this person hesitates in their response to a request, make sure the cause isn’t confusion or an emotional response such as anxiety or fear or other discomfort with the task or its setting.

EXAMPLES for #I.7:

- Make sure this person understands the request and that you are asking them to do it now.*
 - Make sure the setting isn’t intimidating or upsetting. Make sure the hallway you are asking them to walk down isn’t too dark or doesn’t have shapes and shadows this person might be misinterpreting or fearful of.*
- When this person has difficulty getting started on a task, such as standing up, allow adequate time between the request or invitation and the expectation of a response. Wait and/or repeat the request as often as necessary to allow adequate time and to help this person remember the request.
 - Initiate the task for this person, so they can then continue it.

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EXAMPLES for #I.9:

- *When this person is sitting in front of a plate of food at the dining table, pick up the fork, put it in their hand and move their hand toward their mouth until they begin to do it on their own.*
10. If this person doesn't respond immediately to your suggestion, avoid assuming this person doesn't want to do a task. Assume they may need time to get started on the task.
 11. When this person stops or hesitates before entering doorways or small rooms:
 - Patiently encourage them to continue.
 - Say that you are with them.
 - Encourage them to focus on a line on the floor in the room and to approach it or step over it.
 - Stand in front of them and ask them to focus on your face while walking forward.
 - Have someone else enter ahead of this person.
 - Try a little distraction to help them avoid noticing the doorway or room as much.
 12. Remind yourself that this person's difficulty with initiation, that is, getting started on a specific task or movement, is most likely due to brain functioning. It is rarely due to obstinacy or resistance or this person's desire or intention. Be compassionate and patient.

J. Does this person know how much time has passed? (For example, that they have been sitting at the dinner table for only two minutes rather than 20 minutes?)

STRATEGIES:

1. Have accurate clocks available throughout the environment.
2. Encourage this person to wear a watch and to use it.
3. Have signs or notes that indicate the starting and ending time of a task.
4. Tell this person verbally, but in a subtle way to avoid embarrassment, what time it is and how much time has passed since they began the task.

EXAMPLES for #J.4:

- *If this person leaves the dining table within minutes of sitting down, say "It's 12:00 noon. Should we take 10 more minutes to eat?"*
5. Distract this person by singing or engaging in a lively conversation to prevent them from noticing the task or becoming uncomfortable with a perception that a lot of time is passing.
 6. Inform this person as the task progresses what is being done and how close it is to being completed, so they focus more on the task and less on how they feel or the passing of time.

EXAMPLES for #J.6:

- *Show this person the soap on their body when they want to leave the shower too soon.*
7. When this person asks the same question frequently in a short period of time, remind yourself that a repeated question may be due to this person thinking, consciously or not, that it had been some time since they had last asked it, rather than forgetting that they had asked it or forgetting the answer they had received.

EXAMPLES for #J.7:

- *If this person asks repeatedly when lunch is, tell them that you haven't forgotten to call them, or invite them to help you make lunch, or offer them some food now if they are hungry.*
8. When this person confuses the amount of time between events in the past, ignore the confusion and focus on the feelings and the point they are trying to make.

EXAMPLES for #J.8:

- *When they, who are now 90 years old, say they need to go home to feed their children, reassure them that the children are being fed well and that this person did a wonderful job of raising them, rather than saying the children are now adults and don't need to be fed.*
- *If this person currently thinks of themselves as fifty years younger than they are now, focus on their concerns rather than on correcting the facts of time and history.*

K. Does this person recognize their own abilities?

STRATEGIES:

1. Remind yourself that this reduced ability to recognize their own abilities, that is, a lack of insight, is most

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likely due to brain functioning. It is rarely due to denial or this person's desire or intention. Be compassionate and tolerant.

2. Remind yourself that this person may not know that they know something.

EXAMPLES for #K.2:

- *They may know which chair they always sit in for lunch, but may say they don't know, even as they walk to the chair on their own and sit down.*

3. When this person doesn't seem to know they have significant difficulty performing tasks, or doesn't seem to realize how much difficulty they have, or doesn't understand the implications of their reduced ability, avoid calling their attention to the reduced ability or telling or explaining to them what they are able or unable to do.

4. Discern what this person is trying to do or say and offer options or suggestions.

EXAMPLES for #K.4:

- *"Are you looking for your sweater?" "You look sad." or "Let's find some tea."*

5. Avoid embarrassment for this person.

6. Avoid confronting this person with their mistakes or difficulty performing a task. Discreetly fix the mistake or help this person with the task without calling attention to it.

EXAMPLES for #K.6:

- *When this person is unable to put on their sweater, quietly help them.*

7. Encourage and reassure this person by telling them how well they are doing as a task progresses.

8. When this person tries to do something that is unsafe, or something they are not capable of doing, discreetly help them, distract them, or ask them to help you with something else, rather than saying "No, you can't do that! You'll hurt yourself."

9. Observe this person closely to discern what they can do and understand. Avoid overestimating or underestimating this person's abilities. Assess frequently since their abilities will change over time and possibly from moment to moment.

L. Does this person recognize their own needs or desires?

STRATEGIES:

1. Remind yourself that this reduced ability to recognize their own needs or desires, that is, a lack of insight, is most likely due to brain functioning. It is rarely due to denial or this person's desire or intention. Be compassionate and tolerant.

2. Remind yourself that this person may not know that they know something or that they feel a certain way.

EXAMPLES for #L.2:

- *They may not consciously know they are stressed or upset, and may say they are fine, but they are drawn toward calm areas of the space or toward calm people.*

3. Avoid asking questions that require self-awareness or insight, such as "What do you want?" "What are you doing?" "Where are you going?" "Why are you doing that?" "Why are you crying?" "What is wrong?" or "How are you feeling?"

4. Discern how this person is feeling by observing their behavior and comments. Avoid asking them questions about their feelings, such as "Are you feeling sad?"

5. Discern what this person is trying to do or say and offer options or suggestions.

EXAMPLES for #L.5:

- *"Are you looking for your sweater?" "You look sad." or "Let's find some tea."*

6. Avoid embarrassment for this person.

7. Remind yourself that this person may sometimes ask for one thing when they actually want or need something else. Discern and respond to their need or desire.

EXAMPLES for #L.7:

- *This person may say they want to go home, even when they are sitting in the home they have owned for fifty years. What they actually want may be such things as to use the bathroom, eat, leave a confusing environment or noise, do a task they feel they should be doing such as feeding their children, be comforted because they are anxious and uncertain, get exercise, be relieved from boredom, get help because they don't feel well, or to return to their childhood home. Avoid responding with "This is your home." Find and meet the need or desire they have.*

- *If they are in a new home or living in another setting and say they want to go home, avoid*

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saying “This is your home.” This likely doesn’t look like the home they are used to or recognize as home. They may become confused or upset. Or they may actually be expressing a different need or desire. Find and meet the need or desire they have.

8. Avoid giving this person information that is untrue, as much as possible. Withhold information that might be unnecessary, confusing, or painful, but ensure that the information you do give is accurate and honest. At some level this person may know they rely on you to help them understand what is real or true versus imaginary or a misinterpretation.

EXAMPLES for #L.8:

- *Avoid using cues in the environment that might be deceptive or frightening, such as a black spot on the floor in front of a dangerous door to discourage a person from approaching the door. The black spot can look like a hole that is frightening. Use cues that are effective, but that avoid deception and increase comfort in the environment.*
 - *When this person asks for their spouse who died twenty years previously, tailor your response to this person’s actual need. Discern the reason this person is asking for the spouse. Is this person bored, thinking they need to prepare supper for the spouse, wanting to make sure the spouse is ok, simply wondering where the spouse is, or missing their spouse? How emotional is this person about their request for their spouse? When you discern this person’s need and emotional intensity regarding the need, then respond to their need. Tell them the information necessary to meet their need. Avoid telling them their spouse will visit tomorrow, is at work, or went to the grocery store. You might say instead that their spouse isn’t here, ask questions and converse about their spouse, give warmth and comfort, or divert this person’s attention by suggesting they help you make supper.*
9. Watch and assess frequently to see how well this person knows what they need or want during each situation. Avoid assuming they know what they need or want, or will take initiative to ask for what they need or want. Also avoid assuming they don’t know what they need or want.

EXAMPLES for #L.9:

- *When necessary, assess for pain without asking questions. Do not wait until they ask for pain medication before offering it.*
 - *Observe this person’s behavior, as well as body and facial expressions, to discern what they may need or want. Avoid relying only or primarily on this person’s words.*
10. Help this person recognize their needs and desires.
 11. Use cues or information that draws this person emotionally rather than simply cognitively. Use these emotional cues in addition to cognitive cues, or if the cognitive cues confuse this person, then use emotional cues instead of cognitive cues.

EXAMPLES for #L.11:

- *In addition to (or instead of) using a sign that says “den” or “quiet room” with an arrow to help this person come to a quiet area when they feel the room they are in is too noisy, place a plant with a low-light cozy lamp in a spot that is visible from the noisy room. As this person approaches the plant and lamp, they may be able to see the quiet area and be drawn to it. This allows this person to meet their own needs emotionally without having to recognize them cognitively or to understand the word cues.*
12. Observe this person closely and frequently to discern their needs, goals, and desires, and to recognize when these change.
 13. Find out what goals this person has had throughout most of their adult life, so you can creatively help this person continue to meet those goals.

EXAMPLES for #L.13:

- *Ask people who knew them well what kind of person they seemed to want to be.*
 - *Discern what characteristics were high priorities for them when trying to be successful as a person, such as accomplished, compassionate, admired, busy, elegant, or socially popular.*
 - *Help this person host a tea if they enjoyed hosting previously.*
 - *Ask this person advice if they enjoyed being an authority in a particular area of expertise, such as gardening or repairing equipment or a tool.*
14. Remind yourself that this person can make choices and express preferences even when they are nonverbal or have very many cognitive needs. Be creative when discerning what they might want or need.

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EXAMPLES for #L.14:

- *In addition to (or instead of) using a sign that says “den” or “quiet room” with an arrow to help this person come to a quiet area when they feel the room they are in is too noisy, place a plant with a low-light cozy lamp in a spot that is visible from the noisy room. As this person approaches the plant and lamp, they may be able to see the quiet area and be drawn to it. This allows this person to meet their own needs emotionally without having to recognize them cognitively or to understand the word cues.*
 - *Check for preferences by trying various strategies and noting this person’s reaction. Remove noise to see if they need quiet and less distraction. Put on some music or initiate an activity to see if they are bored. Offer this person headphones with rhythmic music to see if they need rhythm to help them move or feel calm.*
15. When this person is unable to recognize or communicate desires, present options in a way they can understand, can reject or accept, and can indicate preferences.

EXAMPLES for #L.15:

- *If this person is nonverbal or unable to see or recognize objects, try putting a small taste of each food option in their mouth and watch for their response to each option.*
 - *Watch this person’s face and their whole body to notice their reactions to your touch or to the feel of various cloths on their skin, such as clothes, towels, or sheets.*
 - *In addition to (or instead of) using a sign that says “den” or “quiet room” with an arrow to help this person come to a quiet area when they feel the room they are in is too noisy, place a plant with a low-light cozy lamp in a spot that is visible from the noisy room. As this person approaches the plant and lamp, they may be able to see the quiet area and be drawn to it. This allows this person to meet their own needs emotionally without having to recognize them cognitively or to understand the word cues.*
16. At all times, watch and listen to this person to see how they are reacting to what you are doing and saying. Immediately change what you are saying, doing, or how you are doing it when you see or hear negative reactions.
17. Adapt your presentation of options over time and moment to moment to accommodate changes in this person’s ability to recognize their own needs, desires, and preferences. Remind yourself this person can make choices and express preferences regardless of their level of confusion or ability to understand and process information or to express their desires and needs.

M. Does this person recognize their own mistakes?

STRATEGIES:

1. Remind yourself that this reduced ability to recognize their own mistakes, that is, a lack of insight, is most likely due to brain functioning. It is rarely due to denial or this person’s desire or intention. Be compassionate and tolerant.
2. Remind yourself that this person may not know that they know they made a mistake.

EXAMPLES for #M.2:

- *This person may feel embarrassed without knowing why, after they made a mistake. What they know consciously, what they can express to you, and what they know not consciously all may vary.*
3. When this person doesn’t seem to know they made a mistake, or doesn’t seem to realize how embarrassing or injurious their mistake is, or doesn’t understand the implications of their mistake, avoid calling their attention to the mistake or telling or explaining to them why what they did was a mistake. Explain this to them only if they seem to want to know about their mistake.
 4. Remind yourself that this person may sometimes ask for one thing when they actually want or need something else. Discern and respond to their need or desire.

EXAMPLES for #M.4:

- *They may say they want to go home, even when they are sitting in the home they have owned for fifty years. What they actually want may be such things as to use the bathroom, eat, leave a confusing environment or noise, do a task they feel they should be doing such as feeding their children, be comforted because they are anxious and uncertain, get exercise, be relieved from boredom, or to return to their childhood home.*
5. When this person says something that seems surprising or inappropriate, avoid correcting them or asking

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them for explanations, especially at night. Talk conversationally with them to discern if they are unclear about what is a dream, a memory, or a real event.

6. Avoid confronting this person with their mistakes or inaccurate statements. Discreetly fix the mistake without calling attention to it.

EXAMPLES for #M.6:

- *When this person puts the milk pitcher in the oven, quietly move it to the refrigerator when this person is out of the room.*

7. Avoid correcting this person's beliefs or statements.

EXAMPLES for #M.7:

- *Say "That must be upsetting. I'll help you." rather than "No, they weren't stolen. You just put them somewhere and forgot."*

8. When they make a mistake in public, discern what they actually want and discreetly help this person move to an appropriate space to meet their need or desire.

EXAMPLES for #M.8:

- *If this person removes their clothes because they are hot or the clothes are uncomfortable against their skin, adjust the air temperature or help them to the bedroom to change to softer clothes. Avoid telling them to stop the behavior. Instead, discreetly respond to their need or desire.*

9. Discern what this person is actually trying to do or say and offer options or suggestions, so they can more easily recognize their own intention.

EXAMPLES for #M.9:

- *Make sure this person means "yes" when they say "yes". They might mean "no", but have difficulty finding the correct word. They may not realize they said "yes".*
- *Ask this person, "Are you looking for your sweater?" or "You look sad." or "Let's find some tea."*

10. Avoid embarrassment for this person.

11. Avoid calling attention to this person's incorrect use of words.

EXAMPLES for #M.11:

- *When they say "No" when meaning "Yes", respond as though they said "Yes".*

12. Encourage and reassure this person by telling them how well they are doing as a task progresses. Identify specific parts of the task they are doing well and avoid drawing attention to their mistakes.

EXAMPLES for #M.12:

- *When this person is mixing cake batter in a bowl and spills some of it, mention how well the batter is mixed and that it's ready for the next step.*

13. Avoid giving this person information that is untrue, as much as possible. Withhold information that might be unnecessary, confusing, or painful, but ensure that the information you do give is accurate and honest. At some level this person may know they rely on you to help them understand what is real or true versus imaginary or a misinterpretation. Make information from both your statements and the environment as truthful and accurate as possible.

EXAMPLES for #M.13:

- *When this person asks for their spouse who died twenty years previously, tailor your response to this person's actual need. Discern the reason this person is asking for the spouse. Is this person bored, thinking they need to prepare supper for the spouse, wanting to make sure the spouse is ok, simply wondering where the spouse is, or missing their spouse? How emotional is this person about their request for their spouse? When you discern this person's need and emotional intensity regarding the need, then respond to their need. Tell them the information necessary to meet their need. Avoid telling them their spouse will visit tomorrow, is at work, or went to the grocery store. You might say instead that their spouse isn't here, ask questions and converse about their spouse, give warmth and comfort, or divert this person's attention by suggesting they help you make supper.*
- *Avoid using cues in the environment that might be deceptive or frightening, such as a black spot on the floor in front of a dangerous door to discourage a person from approaching the door. The black spot can look like a hole that is frightening. Use cues that are effective, but that avoid deception and increase comfort in the environment.*

N. Does this person stop doing a task when it is completed?

STRATEGIES:

1. Remind yourself that this person may not know when a task is completed or may not be able to stop themselves when it is completed.

EXAMPLES for #N.1:

- *This person may continue to wipe a table long after it is clean or put on multiple shirts when dressing.*
2. Keep daily routines and tasks as consistent and simple as possible. Avoid changes. Perform a task the same way each time with the same task objects, people, and order of task steps, so they can develop a sense of what the task consists of and when it is time to move onto the next task.
 3. Decide how important it is to prevent this person from continuing to do a task even when it is completed. If there is no harm in this person continuing the task then focus on what this person is feeling and respond to the feeling, or wait until they stop the task before initiating another with them.
 4. When this person needs to stop doing a task or behavior, discern the reason for their continuing the behavior or task. Respond to their needs or desires and feelings, rather than focusing on the task or behavior. Avoid drawing their attention to the behavior.
 5. Gently inform this person, clearly and kindly, when the task is done or an activity is over.
 6. Gently remove a task object or take this person's hand when the task is done (if this person is comfortable with your touch).
 7. Help this person shift attention and focus from this task to the next task and thought. Distract them, use humor, or move to another room with them.
 8. When you need to quickly stop this person from continuing a task or behavior, remain calm, reassuring, and comforting. Avoid using many words or a loud voice. Avoid arguing or rationalizing. Avoid touching them unless it is helpful or necessary.

EXAMPLES for #N.8:

- *If this person is reaching out to strike another person, place yourself between this person and the other person about to be struck. Face this person, so you can watch, calm, and comfort them.*
 - *If they are about to pour boiling water onto their hand instead of a cup, remove or at least shift the direction of the tea kettle spout.*
9. When this person has problems with collecting too many things or putting things in places they cannot find later, ask if they would like help with cleaning or straightening up. If they consistently say "No", and it is necessary or very important to reduce the number of items collected or hidden, discreetly find or remove items a few at a time when they are out of the room. Tailor your response to this person, since the reasons for and particulars of this situation are often highly individualized.

EXAMPLES for #N.9:

- *If this person has piles of soiled underwear in their room and declines to move them so they can be washed, then quietly remove the soiled clothes a small number at a time.*

O. Does this person stop focusing on a thought when it is time to stop?

STRATEGIES:

1. Remind yourself that this person may not know when a thought is completed or may not be able to stop themselves when it is completed. This could be due to the brain's reduced ability to stop the thought from coming, to recognize that it is time to stop the thought, or to remember they had had the thought and resolved it already. Or anxiety may be causing this person to relentlessly focus on the thought. There may be other reasons as well.

EXAMPLES for #O.1:

- *This person may continue to say a sentence over and over again.*
 - *They may constantly worry about an upcoming doctor's appointment.*
 - *This person may keep focusing on or frequently refer to a topic that came up earlier in the day or in a conversation.*
2. Decide how important it is to prevent this person from continuing to focus on a thought when it is no longer applicable to the original situation. If there is no harm in this person continuing the thought, focus on what this person is feeling and respond to the feeling, or wait until they stop the thought before initiating another with them.

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3. Remind this person of their previous resolution of the thought.
4. Identify the source of the worry, concern, or fear, and address the source by changing it if possible.
5. Reassure this person as though this were the first time they expressed the thought.
6. When this person needs to stop thinking or expressing a thought, discern the reason for their continuing the thought. Respond to their needs or desires and feelings, rather than focusing on the thought. Avoid drawing their attention to the thought.
7. Help this person shift attention and focus from this thought to the next thought. Distract them, use humor, or move to another room with them.
8. Respond positively to a persistent thought or idea, even when this person needs to stop the thought. Avoid saying “No” or “Stop”, since that would require this person to rapidly shift out of the idea or behavior. Offer a different idea, repeat key words they are using and initiate a conversation about them, or suggest you and they do something else first.

EXAMPLES for #O.8:

- *When they say they want to go outside when it is too cold or dangerous, say “That would be fun. For now, let’s make supper. Could you please help me?” Then immediately engage them in the task to help shift their focus.*
 - *Ask them questions about when they used to go hiking in the mountains in the past.*
9. Keep daily routines as consistent and simple as possible. Avoid changes.
 10. When this person asks the same question frequently in a short period of time, remind yourself that a repeated question may be due to forgetting that they had asked it or forgetting the answer. It could also be due to this person thinking, consciously or not, that it had been some time since they had last asked it. If it is due to memory loss, then simply repeat your response. Give the same response in the same way that you did when your response first satisfied them. By simply repeating it, you may help relieve your own frustration and fatigue. Avoid the temptation to vary your response until you come up with a response that stops the questions once and for all. If it is due to thinking a long amount of time had passed since they last asked the question, patiently note the time and give them the information they are requesting or needing. Respond in a warm reassuring tone of voice.

EXAMPLES for #O.10:

- *If they ask repeatedly when lunch is, respond with the same words, tone of voice, and hand gestures you used to respond when they were satisfied with your response. Repeat your response every time they ask the question.*
- *Provide a note to remind them.*
- *Invite them to help you make lunch*
- *Offer them some food now if they are hungry.*

P. Does this person easily control their impulsive responses to their own thoughts and feelings by censoring, delaying, or stopping their responses?

STRATEGIES:

1. When this person does or says something that immediately comes to their mind without first considering it and it offends you, remind yourself that this impulsive behavior is likely due to changes in this person’s brain. It is rarely due to this person’s true desire or intention. Avoid taking their actions or comments personally.
2. When this person says something that offends another person, ignore the comment and reassure the offended person.
3. Reassure family members and friends that these impulsive comments or behavior most likely do not reflect feelings this person has long held and hidden. They are more likely immediate impulsive reactions to current events and this person’s distressing situation. This person may have intense feelings of anxiety and anger about the difficulty with their cognitive abilities that are then directed at other people.
4. Watch this person closely to see when they might say or do something without first waiting (“counting to 10”) or considering the consequences. Gently distract them or remove the trigger for the thought or reaction.

EXAMPLES for #P.4:

- *If this person is about to swear or say “her hair is ugly” about someone who is walking by, comment on the flowers in the vase or this person’s own hair.*
5. Remind yourself that even when this person appears to be aware of what they are doing, it might not mean

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they can control it, or that they can understand or analyze it quickly enough to prevent the action.

EXAMPLES for #P.5:

- *If this person squeezes someone's breast as she leans over to adjust something in this person's chair, then winks and grins at a care partner (caregiver), it doesn't mean this person could have easily controlled their behavior. They could have squeezed the breast before they could stop themselves, but knew soon afterwards that they shouldn't have done it. Deciding that it was wrong took longer than did the action to squeeze. This person's next thought might have been, "but it felt good", so they winked at a care partner. This person may not have been able to quickly appreciate the consequences of the wink and squeeze or the subtle differences between the effects of acting on a sexual impulse versus merely saying or thinking a sexual thought. They may not recognize the extent to which various actions are inappropriate, or the risks of offending people they depend on.*
6. Help this person get adequate rest, since impulsivity might increase with fatigue.
 7. Help this person stay busy to avoid boredom, irritation, and anxiety which could increase impulsive behavior and comments that are offensive.
 8. Modify the environment, tasks, and your interactions to prevent misinterpretation or unintended invitations for impulsive behavior and comments.

EXAMPLES for #P.8:

- *Other CAIS strategies sections give specific suggestions for modifying your communication, the environment, and the task.*

Q. Does this person know and follow a sequence of task steps, pieces of information, or logic? (For example when getting dressed?)

STRATEGIES:

1. Keep tasks steps, task objects, and the care partner assisting as consistent and familiar as possible. Avoid changing the order of the task steps from day to day.
2. Order the task steps in the same order that this person has performed the task throughout most of their adult life.
3. Recognize when a particular order to task steps is necessary. Suggest the conventional order only when necessary.

EXAMPLES for #Q.3:

- *If this person starts putting clothes on in an unusual order while dressing, such as one pant leg on before they put each sock on, avoid calling their attention to it, unless the change in order confuses them.*
4. Write the order of task steps in a note or sign that this person can follow as they perform the task. Make sure this person can read and understand what they read when they see the note or sign.
 5. Present each task step one at a time.
 6. After each task step is done, tell this person what task step comes next, if necessary.
 7. Avoid rationalizing or trying to convince this person when they are confused or disagree with your logic. Instead, nurture their trust in you and your judgment and suggest alternative explanations or options.
 8. Avoid correcting this person when they confuse the order of events throughout their own life. Ignore the confusion and focus on their feelings and the point they are trying to make.

EXAMPLES for #Q.8:

- *When they, who are now 90 years old, say they need to go home to feed their children, reassure them that their children are being fed well and that this person did a wonderful job of raising them, rather than saying the children are now adults and don't need to be fed.*
- *If this person currently thinks of themselves as fifty years younger than they are now, focus on their concerns rather than on correcting the facts of time and chronology of historical events.*

R. Does this person do more than one thing at a time? (For example, putting on a jacket while talking to you?)

STRATEGIES:

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1. When approaching this person, do only one thing at a time. Move into their visual field, then wait until they focus on you, then touch if they welcome touch, then speak. Begin speaking with a comment, such as “Hello, Mary” before asking them a question.
2. Present only one idea or one task step at a time. Avoid sentences with multiple ideas.

EXAMPLES for #R.2:

- Say “*Let’s walk to the bathroom.*” rather than “*Let’s go to the bathroom and take a shower.*”
3. Pause long enough between single-idea sentences to allow time for this person to process the idea before introducing the next idea.
 4. Avoid giving them information when they are focused on a task. Give them time to stop the task, shift their attention to you, and to absorb what you are telling them.
 5. Avoid using many words when this person is emotionally distressed, so they don’t have to think and feel at the same time.
 6. Avoid asking them to do something when they are emotionally distressed.

EXAMPLES for #R.6:

- Avoid asking this person to stop a behavior when they are focused on their emotions, since it may be difficult for them to figure out how to stop an action and to feel intense emotions at the same time.
7. Avoid calling attention to their behavior since it may be difficult for them to cope with embarrassment about the behavior and change the behavior at the same time.
 8. Have one care partner assist at a time.
 9. Help this person prioritize among a variety of options or task steps, since they may have difficulty holding all the options or task steps in their mind simultaneously and choosing which one to do at the moment.

S. Does this person know what something is even when they can’t see, hear, touch, taste, or smell it?

STRATEGIES:

1. Remind yourself that this person may have difficulty imagining an object when they can’t see, hear, touch, taste, or smell it. To them, it may not exist if it isn’t in front of them.
2. Keep options concrete, if this person has difficulty creating a picture in their mind of an object.

EXAMPLES for #S.2:

- Show this person eggs and cereal as options for breakfast rather than simply showing them a menu or asking them which of those they want.
3. Tell this person what an object is, if it is difficult to recognize or seems to be invisible to them.

EXAMPLES for #S.3:

- Tell them there is water in a glass, even when the glass is clear, since the water can’t be seen.
 - When the glass is opaque, tell and show them what is inside it.
4. Provide calm and quiet areas within sight of this person and where this person can see care partners.

EXAMPLES for #S.4:

- This person may want to be in a less confusing place, such as a bedroom, but may also want other people visible for security and in case they need help. They may feel safer if they can see help nearby.
5. If this person is reading instructions or information, watch this person to see if they recognize that what they read applies to them, to a particular moment, and that they are expected to take action regarding what they read.

EXAMPLES FOR #S.5:

- After they read a note that suggests they put the cup in the sink, watch to see if they do put the cup in the sink, indicating that they understand that the note is expected to result in their action at this moment.
 - If the note says to take a medication on Tuesday, watch to see if they take the medication on the correct day (whether or not they received the note on that day).
6. Watch closely to see if this person is comfortable seeing themselves in a mirror. They may be confused or uncomfortable if the task of recognizing themselves and comparing their image in the mirror with how they would prefer to look is too abstract a task for them to do easily. They might think the person in the mirror

is someone else, especially if they think of themselves as being a different age than they actually are.

T. Does this person's expression of emotions match the intensity of their emotions?

STRATEGIES:

1. When this person expresses an emotion strongly, such as tears or appears sad, tell them "You look sad." If they reply, "No, I'm fine," it might indicate their expression of emotion is not matching the actual intensity of their emotion. Respond to their actual level of emotion and do not call further attention to their expression of emotion.
2. If this person doesn't know how they feel, even when expressing emotion, reassure them and move to another topic.
3. When this person seems to react emotionally, either verbally or nonverbally in an exaggerated way to events, touch, certain people, or words they hear, take this person's feelings and behavior seriously and respond with kindness and calm patience. Remind yourself this person may have reasons for acting in this way, which might include a current experience or history of emotional, sexual, or physical discomfort, pain, or trauma.
4. Avoid asking them why they are feeling an emotion, since they may not know. If they do know, they may say their reason in response to your comment "You look upset", if you wait and remain calm and quiet.
5. When they appear very angry, discern the actual level of intensity of the anger and respond to the actual level.

EXAMPLES for #T.5:

- *If a little irritation is producing profuse swearing, respond to the irritation without drawing attention to their swearing.*
6. Remind yourself that this person's exaggerated or minimized expression of an emotion, or their switching from one emotion to another rapidly and without apparent reason, may be due to changes in this person's brain or to this person's emotional and physical pain from current experience or from their past. They are rarely due to this person's manipulation or intention. Be compassionate, patient, and tolerant.
 7. Take this person's emotions and expression of emotions seriously, even when they appear to be exaggerated. Avoid trying to convince them that they don't really feel that bad or dismissing the situation causing distress. Avoid talking about them in front of them. Reassure them and then distract with another topic or activity.
 8. Avoid misinterpreting this person's physical changes as a reflection of their emotions. When this person looks intimidating or more angry and stubborn than they actually are, because of their slightly monotonic speech and rigid set face, remind yourself that this appearance may be due to changes in the brain; inside, they may feel very differently. The brain changes may be causing a reduced variation in speed and range of movement. Their pattern of rhythm and cadence of speech and of movement of arms or legs while walking may become more abrupt and rigid.
 9. Help this person feel they are in control, especially if they seem to focus anger about a lack of control or about their difficulties on other people.
 10. When this person is angry, anxious, or sad, let them know you understand that they are upset and reassure them.

U. Does this person adapt to new situations or a change in plans by explaining to themselves, soothing themselves, or problem solving?

STRATEGIES:

1. Avoid changes in this person's environment. Keep the surrounding space and structure of tasks and daily schedules as consistent as possible.
2. Keep tasks and care partners consistent over time.
3. When change is necessary, make as little change as possible and introduce the change slowly and carefully. They may feel anxious or unable to do a task in unfamiliar surroundings or with unfamiliar task objects.

EXAMPLES for #U.3:

- *This person may have difficulty brushing their teeth with pump toothpaste rather than tube toothpaste, even though physically the pump toothpaste may be easier.*
4. Keep tasks and routines consistent with how they were through most of this person's adult life.
 5. Explain changes since this person may not be able to explain or interpret unfamiliar surroundings and events to themselves.

Cognitive Abilities and Intervention Strategies (CAIS): Cognitive Intervention Strategies

EXAMPLES for #U.5:

- *When eating in an unfamiliar space, say “Today we are eating here, but tomorrow we will be in our own dining room.”*
6. Remind yourself that this person may not be able to understand your explanations, even though they may talk as though they do.
 7. Soothe this person as they experience change. Address their emotional distress.
 8. Watch them carefully to discern their needs, since they may not know how they feel or what they need, and may not have ideas of how to help themselves feel better.

EXAMPLES for #U.8:

- *If this person appears to be distressed, suggest you both go to another room where it is quieter.*
 - *If this person is bored, use information about their past experiences, interests, hobbies, and goals to initiate conversations and suggest activities to relieve the boredom.*
 - *Be sensitive and careful when making suggestions, since this person may be unaware of their feeling, such as boredom, and have difficulty thinking of ways to alleviate the boredom or agreeing to the suggestions.*
9. When this person is angry, frightened, or panicked and is accusing you of something that isn't true, avoid being defensive and taking it personally. Let them know you are on their side. Tell them you and they will solve the problem together. Remind yourself that they may not be able to think of possible explanations for an experience and may get stuck on an inaccurate explanation, because of changes in their brain. Avoid contradicting or correcting them.

EXAMPLES for #U.9:

- *If the water tastes odd due to medications they are taking, and they accuse you of poisoning them, say, “Oh the water tastes bad; let's find something else to drink.”*
10. Conserve this person's energy by making tasks easier or doing the tasks for them. Even if they can do a task, it is likely hard work and might take energy away from other more pleasurable or more difficult tasks and activities.
 11. Think of this person as a unique individual at all times. Tailor your observations and responses to this person in this specific situation at this particular time.
 12. When you are frustrated, remind yourself of what you like and appreciate about this person.