Taking a Step Back: A Problem Solving Approach to Behaviors

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The 3 Truths

1. People with FTD are doing the best they can
2. Their care partners are doing the best they can
3. But it’s difficult...
   – for both people!!!

So...it’s all about the relationship!
If you want to...

Tangle:
• Argue
• Take over too quickly/try to help too much
• Ignore what the person says or does
• Treat the person like a child
• Do it all by yourself
• Don’t take any time for yourself

Tango:
• Go with the flow
• Help at the level of the person’s loss
• Listen with your eyes, ears, heart and spirit
• Simplify, don’t baby-fy
• Build a caregiving team
• Take time away, physically, emotionally & spiritually
Tangle or Tango

• When you tangle:
  – You think about the differences
  – You help too much or not enough
  – You interpret responses as “resistant”, “on purpose”, “knows what he/she’s doing”, “aggressive”, “mean” or “manipulative”

• When you tango:
  – You realize we’re just like them
  – With the lid off
And you understand that being ‘right’ doesn’t necessarily translate into a good outcome for either of you
It’s the relationship that is MOST critical

NOT the outcome of any one encounter
BRAIN FAILURE

1. Structural brain failure
2. Chemical brain failure
3. Type of FTD
4. Level of progression
Behaviors make sense!

• To the person with FTD

• To us...if we listen with our heads...

and our *hearts*
The 6 P’s of Behaviors

- Problem
- Person
- Possible cause
- Plan
- Practice
- Pass it on
Think about the PROBLEM

• What’s the problem?
  – When?
  – Where?
  – Who’s around?
  – What else is going on?
  – How long?
  – What makes it better or worse?
More about the PROBLEM

• Who’s problem is it?
  – Person with FTD
  – Care partner
  – Others

• Is it really a problem?
  – Different
  – Recurrent
  – Risky?
Knowing the PERSON

- History
- Values and beliefs
- Habits and routines
- Personality and stress behaviors
- Work & family history
- Leisure and spiritual history
- Hot buttons & comforts
What is the POSSIBLE CAUSE?

• History
• Basic need
• Physical changes
• Emotional difficulties
• Environment (cuing)
• Stress
• Impact/pattern of day
Develop a PLAN

• Work with your team
• Make it specific
• Make it creative
• Make it individual
• Make it realistic
PRACTICE your Plan

• Give it a chance to work
• Make simple adjustments
• Then try again
• More adjustments
• Another chance
• Watch what happens
PASS IT ON!!

• What worked
• What needs more work
• What to try next
• Success might not mean the problem goes away, it might mean it’s less intense or less frequent
Everybody takes them apart...
you’ve got to put them back together

- Physical
- Emotional
- Social
- Spiritual
- Routines
- Preferences
It’s all up to you...

• Change YOUR behavior
• How you react and respond...

  – What YOU do
  
  – What YOU say
Understanding the Problem

• The Real Problem is: BRAIN
• The Real Answer is: The RELATIONSHIP

• The Real Problem is: FAILURE

Is it worth it?

YES!

For the person with FTD

Care partners (family and other)

Care partners (professional)

Society

Do it well and with all of your gifts:
your brain, your body, your heart and your spirit
Your Approach

• Use a consistent positive physical approach
  – pause at edge of public space
  – approach within visual range
  – approach slowly
  – offer your hand & make eye contact
  – call the person by name
  – stand to the side to communicate
  – respect personal space
  – wait for a response
CONNECT
Positive Physical Approach

• CONNECT
  – Come from the front
  – Open palm
  – Not too fast
  – Not in front
  – Establish hand contact
  – Smile with your face
  – Take a seat/squat/kneel
Your Interaction...

• Communicate with awareness
  – look, listen, think!
  – give your name
  – make an empathetic observational statement
    • “You look busy…”
    • “It looks like you are tired…”
    • “It sounds like you are upset…”
  – wait for a response
Give Information

• Keep it short and simple
  – “It’s lunch time”
  – “Let’s go this way”
  – “Here’s your socks”

• Use familiar words and phrases

• Use gestures and props to help
Encourage Engagement

- ask a person to try
- ask a person to help you
- give simple positive directions - 1 step at a time

- use props or objects
- gesture
- demonstrate
- guide
- distract
- redirect
Environmental Factors & Changes

• Setting
• Props
• Programming
Environmental Aids

• Setting
  – familiar
  – friendly
  – functional
  – forgiving (safe)
Environmental Aids

• Props
  – visible & invisible
  – timely
  – available
  – matched to ability
  – matched to interests
Managing the Day

• Old habits and routines
• Patterns during the 24 hrs
• A time to rest, work, play...socialize
• Your needs... my time
Find balance in the day

- Self care
- Work
- Leisure
- Rest
How can we make the day better???
Try using...

• Sight or Visual cues

• Verbal or Auditory cues

• Touch or Tactile cues
Visual cues

- Words
- Pictures
- Signs (words & pictures)
- Tools and equipment
- Gestures
- Facial expressions
- Body language
- Demonstrations
Verbal cues

• How you speak
  – Tone
  – Pitch

• What you say
  – Promote action
  – Social interaction
  – Reduce distress

• Be positive
• Be agreeable
• Give cueing—what to do instead of what not to do
• Simplify—don’t baby-fy
• Step by step
• Familiar words and language
Tactile cues

- Doing with
  - Attention cuing
  - Hand under hand

- Doing for
We get back to the basics!!!

• A Positive **Physical Approach**
• Positive **Empathetic Communication**
• Strong & Desirable **Visual Cues**
• Short & Effective **Verbal Cues**
• Minimal & Familiar **Tactile Cues**
• Focus on **This Unique Individual**
• Change the **Environment** to help
• Find time for **Joy and Fun** in the day
So WHAT should we do???

Remember who has the healthy brain!