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Activities for Older Adults  
with Cognitive Issues  
AGE – Striking a Balance  
Caregiver Conference  
August 16-21, 2021

NANCY TURCO

Amnesia

Agnosia

Aphasia

Apraxia

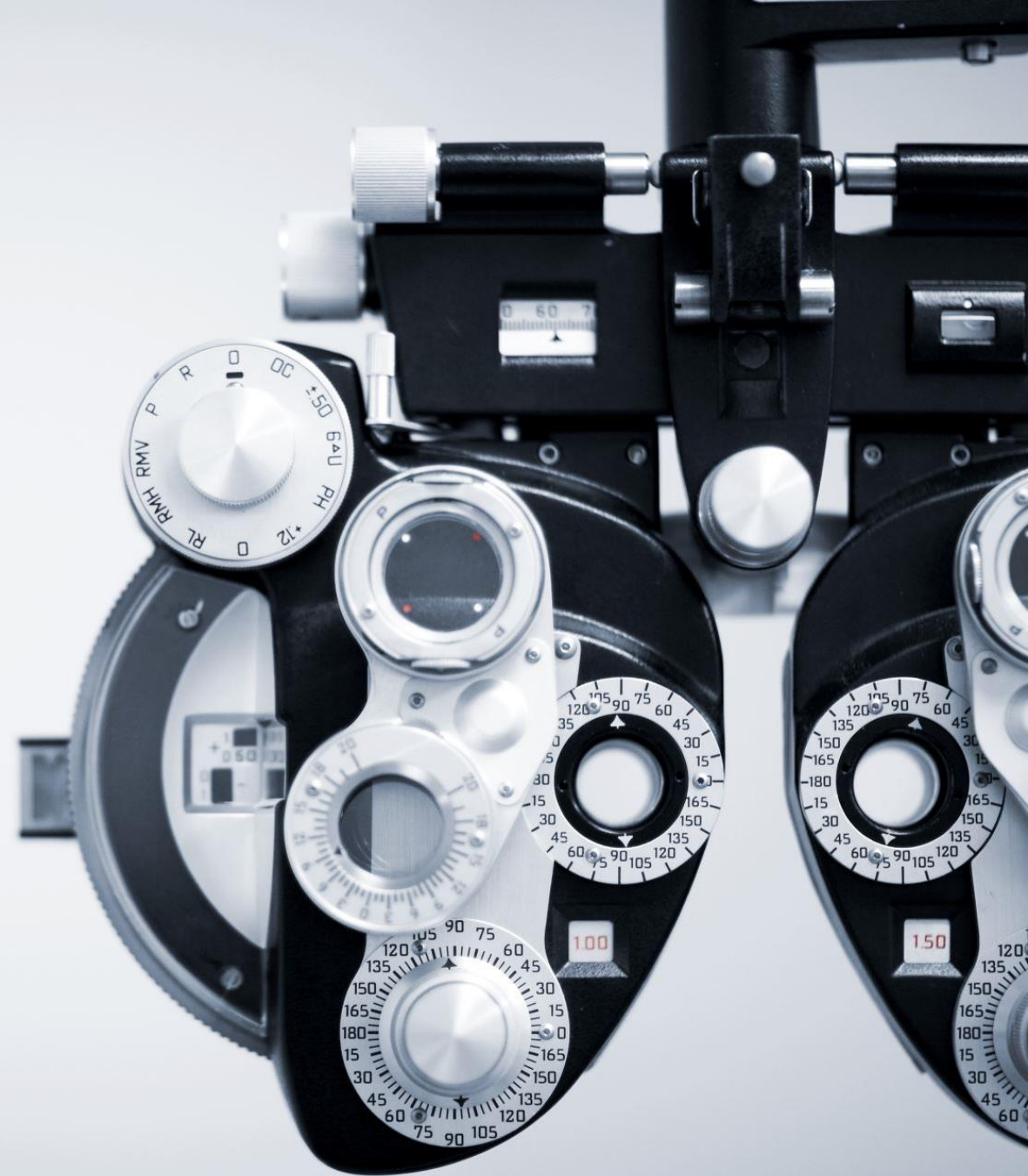
# Vision

Field of Vision – 12-18 inches  
eye level

Not the eye that's damaged  
but the Occipital Lobe

3 dimensional to 1  
dimensional

No peripheral vision



# COMMUNICATION IN THE EARLY STAGES OF DEMENTIA

ARE WE ON THE  
SAME PAGE?

# HOW COMMUNICATION SKILLS ARE AFFECTED

COMMUNICATION  
IN THE MIDDLE  
STAGE OF  
DEMENTIA

DIDN'T I JUST SAY  
THAT?

# HOW COMMUNICATION SKILLS ARE AFFECTED

Difficulties of  
communicating  
in the late stage

“Do you know  
who I am?”

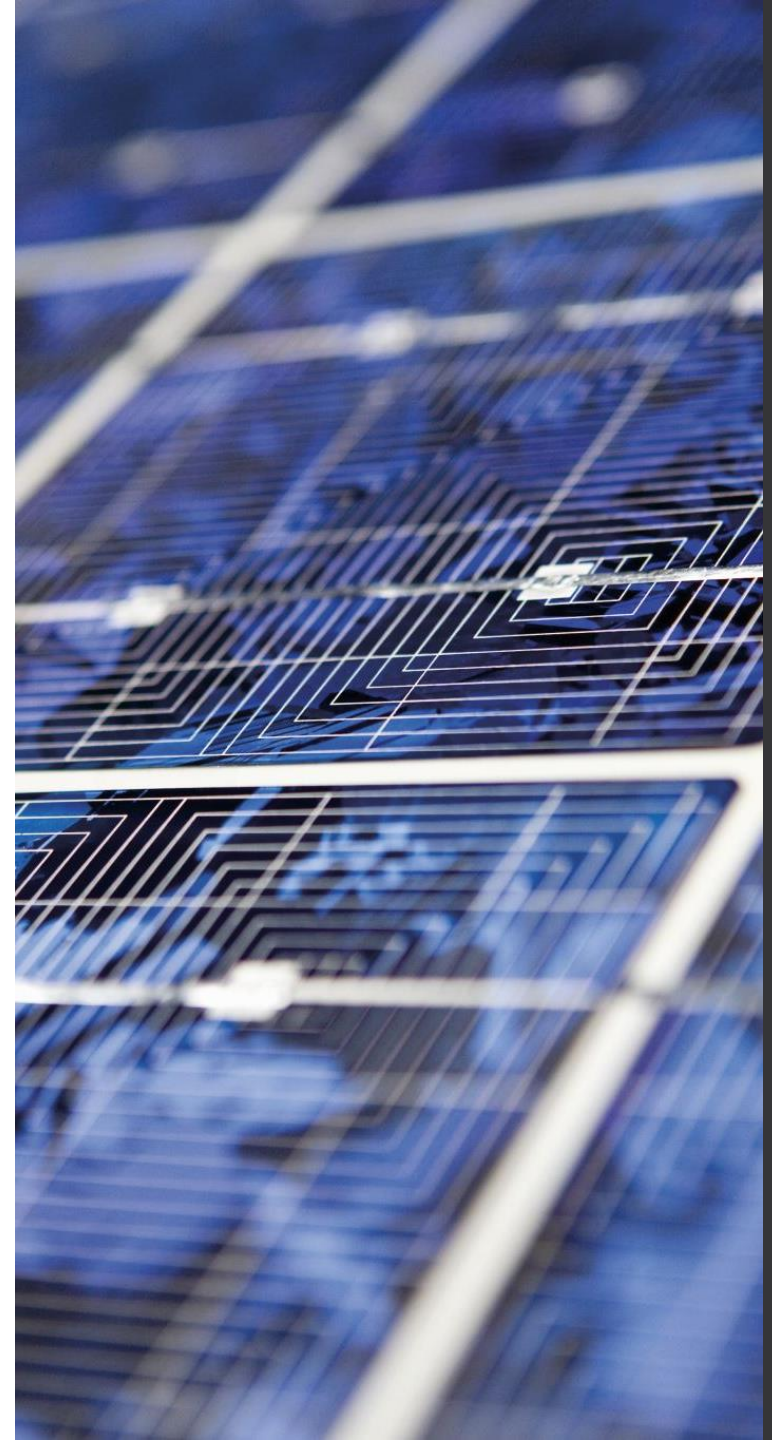


# APPROACHING A PERSON WITH DEMENTIA

EYE CONTACT

TOUCH

VERBIAGE



REDIRECTING

The diagram consists of two rounded rectangular boxes. The left box is blue and contains the text 'REDIRECTING'. The right box is green and contains the text 'WHERE/WHEN/WHY IT WORKS'. Two thin, curved lines connect the top and bottom of the two boxes, forming a partial circle around them.

WHERE/WHEN/WHY  
IT WORKS

**TECHNIQUES TO IMPROVE  
COMMUNICATION**



# TECHNIQUES TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION

- Strategies to redirect individuals with dementia
  - - Understanding the behavior
  - - Managing and redirecting the behavior

# TECHNIQUES TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION

- REMINISCING
  - HOW IT WORKS
  - WHY IT WORKS



**TECHNIQUES TO  
IMPROVE  
COMMUNICATION**

- **RECONNECTING**

# VALIDATION THERAPY

- TECHNIQUES

- FEELINGS VS. FACTS

# REALITY ORIENTATION

- *WHY IT IS  
INEFFECTIVE*

# FEEDING THE FANTASY

- ***BE READY to answer twenty questions at least twenty times and be ready to change your answer every time***



Preventing  
and  
Managing  
Sundowning

Symptoms

Risk Factors

Suggestions



# MASTERING COMMUNICATION

- - **THREE P'S**
  - **PATIENCE**
  - **PERSISTENCE**
  - **PRACTICE**

- If I get dementia, I want my friends and family to embrace my reality. If I think my spouse still alive, or if I think we're visiting my parents for dinner, let me believe those things. I'll be much happier for it.
- If I get dementia, I don't want to be treated like a child. Talk to me like the adult that I am.
- If I get dementia, I still want to enjoy the things that I've always enjoyed. Help me find a way to exercise, read and visit with friends.
- If I get dementia, ask me to tell you a story from my past.
- If I get dementia, and I become agitated, take the time to figure out what is bothering me.
- If I get dementia, treat me the way that you would want to be treated.
- If I get dementia, make sure that there are plenty of snacks for me in the house. Even now, if I don't eat I get angry, and if I have dementia, I may have trouble explaining what I need.
- If I get dementia, don't talk about me as if I'm not in the room.
- If I get dementia, don't feel guilty if you cannot care for me 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It's not your fault, and you've done your best. Find someone who can help you or choose a great new place for me to live.
- If I get dementia, and I live in a dementia care community, please visit me often.
- If I get dementia, don't act frustrated if I mix up names, events, or places. Take a deep breath. It's not my fault.
- If I get dementia, make sure I always have my favorite music playing within earshot.
- If I get dementia, and I like to pick up items and carry them around, help me return those items to their original places.
- If I get dementia, don't exclude me from parties and family gatherings.
- If I get dementia, know that I still like receiving hugs or handshakes.
- If I get dementia, remember that I am still the person you know and love.

# If I get dementia...