

Feelings remain even when facts are forgotten

So a happy occasion can be 'spoilt' by a sad farewell

*Plan ahead for
Happy Exit strategies
(for example say 'I'm just going to the loo')*

*Explanations for Absent folk
(for eg say "remember he often was away in Africa")*

*Affirming Moments
(such as 'you always were good at jigsaws')*

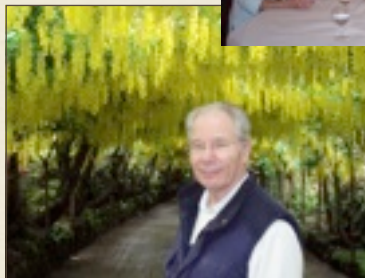
*Reasons to sit rather than follow around
(tell me 'we don't want you to conk out')*

Situations that can precipitate Meltdown

- Unfamiliar Surroundings
- A task that is too complicated
- Difficulty in Communicating
- Travel
- Large Gatherings
- Guests
- Illness
- Noise



Stanley



Local Friends

Alzheimer's upsets memory, thought processes & speech; also behavioural changes such as agitation, confusion, distress, hallucinations and false beliefs

We are born unable to do many things and have to learn such. In Alzheimer's it appears one unlearns these things again going back to earlier behaviours

The Film 'The Curious Case of Benjamin Button' illustrates the unlearning of Social inhibitions, which include what is acceptable to say, or what to do, or even being unable to use the bathroom or feed ones-self. (All of which is perfectly acceptable or even cute, in an infant!)

There may be physical reasons for Meltdown such as infections, drug side effects, pain, hunger, thirst

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many of these things I will have read elsewhere but cannot remember where or have absorbed as general principles over time when working as a GP or since my diagnosis.

ALZHEIMER'S

Explanations and Suggestions

for when things are, or might become, muddled

MELTDOWN



WHAT TO DO

When I am finding it difficult
...to cope in a situation
..to communicate effectively
..or am generally adrift

Calm the environment.



Strategies to cope with my Meltdown

1. Introduce yourself. Please don't ask me questions.
2. Simplify or calm my environment.
3. Reassure, and *show* me what I should do. Don't overwhelm me with words.
4. Remove or reduce stress triggers -
Noise - perhaps turn down or off
Lighting - switch more lights on or off
Too many people - take me to a quieter place.
5. Change to a more familiar activity or make a cup of tea. Perhaps remove me from the situation and take me for a walk or a car ride.
6. Music can calm and reassure.
7. Remember, Jesus has always been my Centre.
8. Talk about hobbies, passions, or subjects that meant a great deal to me earlier in my life.
9. Videos or pictures of events or outings.
10. I might not be able to distinguish dreams from reality. Please don't laugh or call me a liar.

THERE IS A REASON

'Every communication has a purpose and the challenge is to discover it. No word or action is meaningless, what sounds like nonsense or repetition of the same question or sentence is, to express a feeling, to show a need, to give information or to get a response. What appears to be an inappropriate response or action may be a form of communication.'

WORDS / SPEECH

"The meaning of words may become disconnected from their sounds and although able to hear (I) may not understand or even if (I) understand (I) may not be able to construct a logical sentence ..and may produce a word salad" I do not always understand the letters in words so reading can be difficult. Talking about something familiar might enable me to 'join in'.

ACTIONS

Perhaps a need is being expressed. Wandering may have a purpose or I might be responding to an hallucination. Sleep patterns might get muddled with my not knowing if it is day or night time.

VISUAL SPATIAL RECOGNITION

Mirrors. I might not recognise myself and think it is someone else. I can misjudge edge of the table or bathroom furniture unless distinct with contrasting colours. Pouring liquids can be tricky or dangerous.

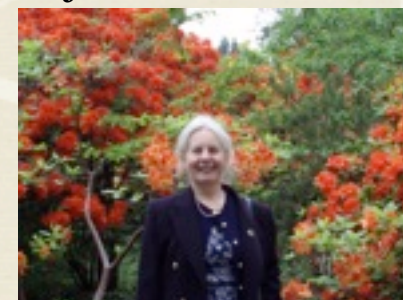
STORIES; PLEASE LISTEN & INTERPRET

A woman at a day centre repeatedly told of her first day at school when she wet herself and was humiliated by the teacher and everyone laughed. She might in fact have been saying, "that is how I feel now".

Asking what the time is, might just mean, "I have no idea what I am meant to be doing".

Guy ropes when adrift.

Beautiful plants



Water views



Familiar Places

Calling someone by the wrong name means that I know you are important to me even though I do not remember exactly who you are. Not knowing your name might mean at that particular time I have no idea who you are, so please tell me.