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# Occupational Therapy and Family Caregiver Training: The Key to Successful Dementia Care

Catherine V. Piersol, PhD, OTR/L

*Thomas Jefferson University, catherine.piersol@jefferson.edu*

Ann O'Sullivan, OTR/L, LSW, FAOTA

*Thomas Jefferson University, ann.osullivan@jefferson.edu*

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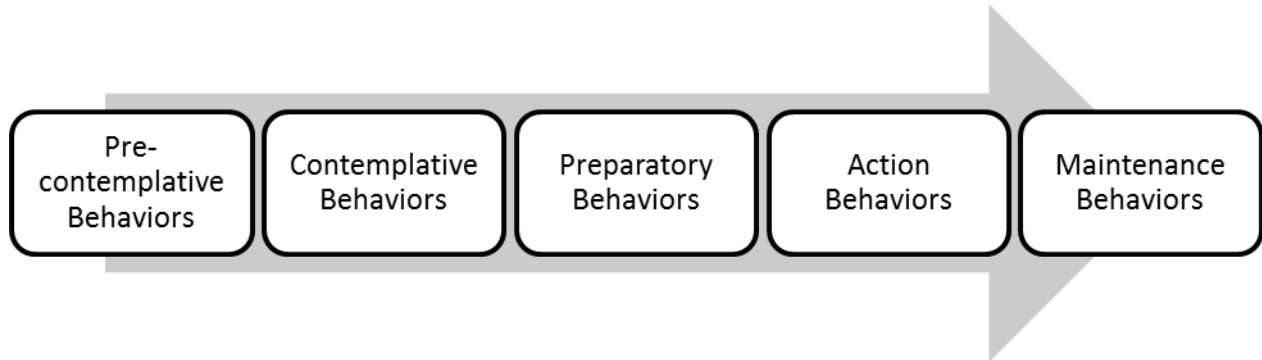
# Occupational Therapy and Family Caregiver Training: The Key to Successful Dementia Care

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## FRAMEWORKS TO GUIDE CAREGIVER TRAINING

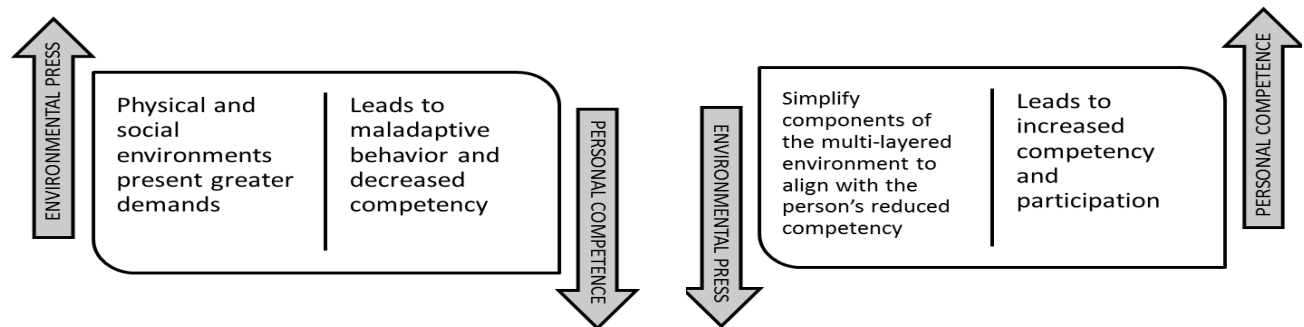
### Transtheoretical Model (Prochaska et al., 1988)



- Family caregiver training requires that caregivers adopt new approaches to care. Understanding the level of caregiver readiness to learn and implement new strategies can inform the approach to training.
  - Caregivers with *low levels of readiness* may need more education about the disease and an understanding that troublesome behaviors are not intentional but a consequence of the disease.
  - Caregivers with *high levels of readiness* tend to be immediately receptive to learning and implementing strategies.

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### Competence-Environmental Press Framework (Lawton & Nahemow, 1973)



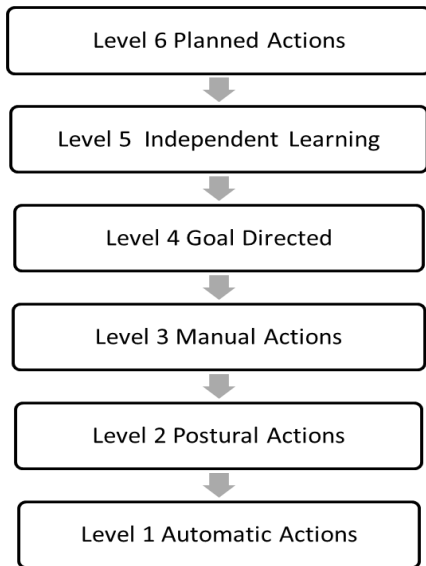
- Educating family caregivers to obtain that “just-right fit” between personal capabilities and environmental demands results in positive behaviors and enhanced quality of life for both the caregiver and the individual with dementia.

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## Cognitive Disabilities Model (Allen & Blue, 1998)



- Six Allen Cognitive Levels (ACL) that describe the complex and dynamic interaction between a person's cognitive abilities and the context in which functional performance takes place.
- Based on the ACL, occupational therapists can
  - Teach caregivers how to match abilities with tasks.
  - Provide suggestions that facilitate the person's best ability to function within the least restrictive environment.

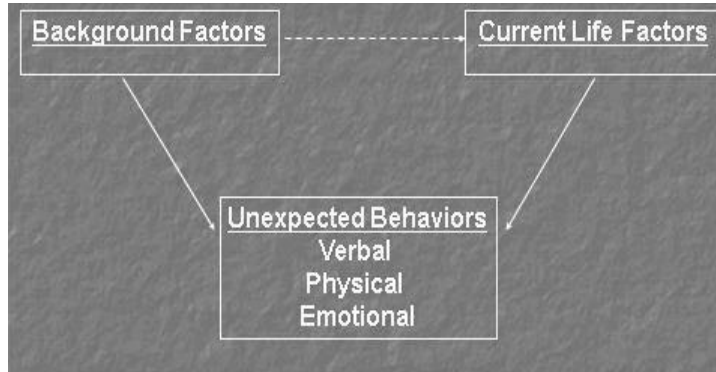
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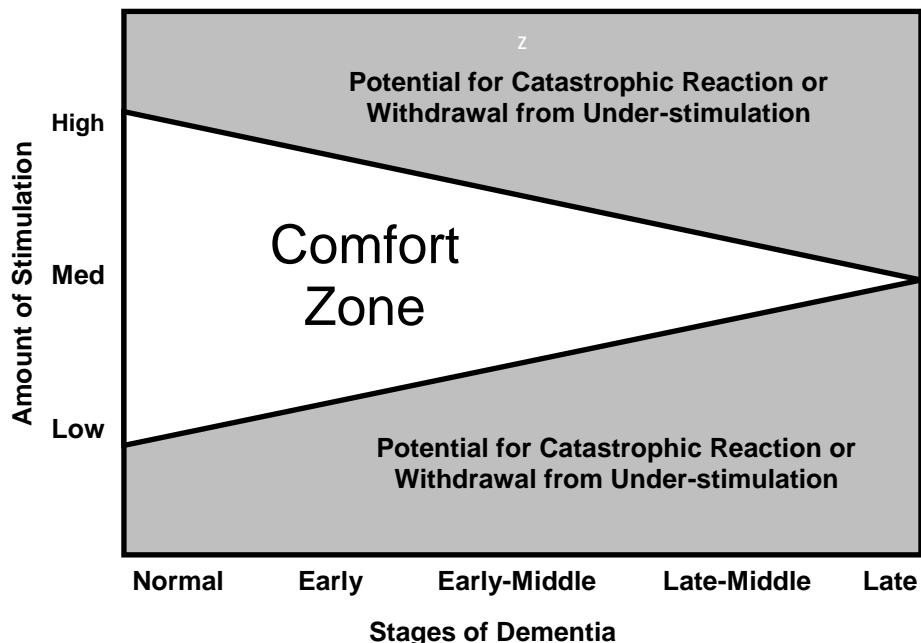
## MODELS FOR ANALYZING BEHAVIORS

### Need-Driven Behavior Model [NDB] (Algase et al., 1996)



- Persons with dementia have difficulty expressing their needs.
- Behavior is the result of an attempt to meet a basic human need that is not currently being met.
- Background factors cannot be controlled, where current factors may be, but awareness and understanding of both help with behavior guidance.

### Progressively Lowered Stress Threshold [PLST] (Hall & Buckwalter, 1987)



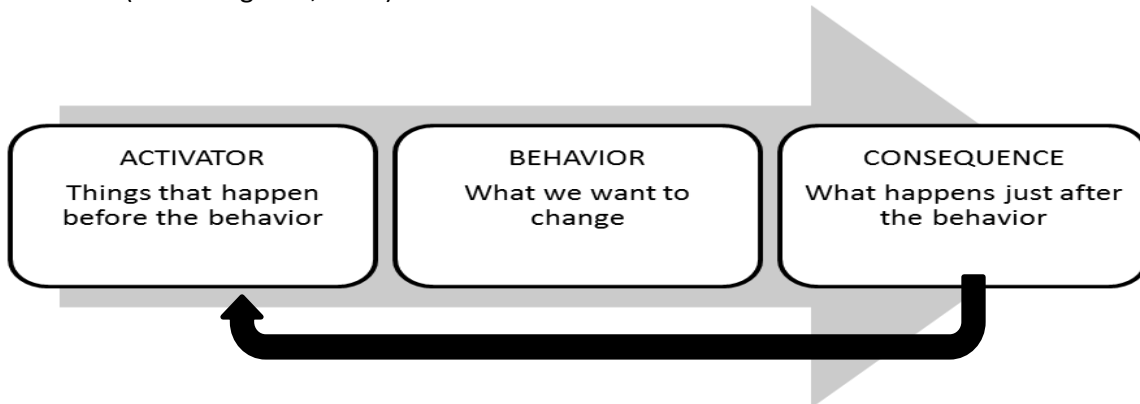
- Stress threshold is lower in persons with dementia.
- Behavior is a result of excess environmental stress and caused by increasing anxiety.
- A person's stress threshold shrinks both during the course of dementia and over the course of the day.

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## ABC Model (Teri & Logsdon, 2000)

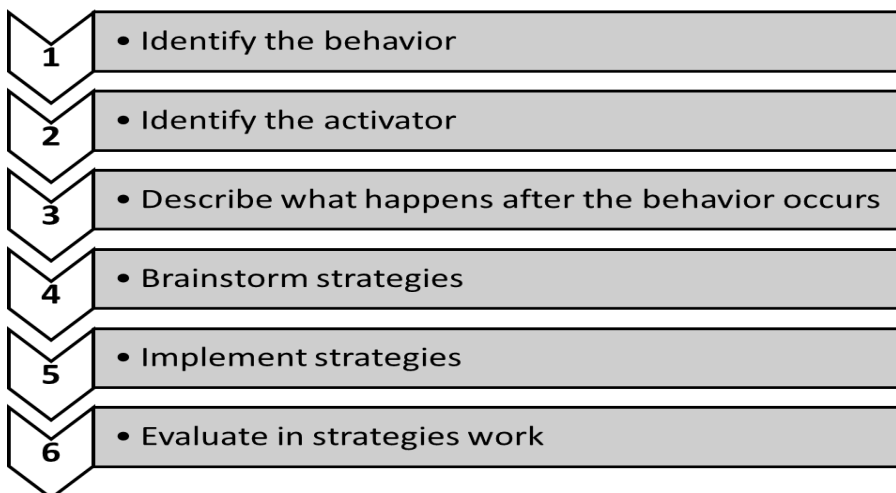


- The ABC model can be used to instruct the caregiver to identify the stimulus (activator) that triggers a specific behavior and clearly define and analyze the potential consequences. This includes both positive and negative behaviors.
- In training, caregivers learn to evaluate each behavior to assess how often and for how long it occurs. Through this process, the caregiver can identify the specific activator(s) that can be enhanced, modified or eliminated.
- The process is cyclical, and the consequence can become a new activator for behavior.

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## MODEL FOR ANALYZING BEHAVIORS AND APPROACHES

### Problem Solving Process Model (Gitlin, 2009; Yura & Walsh, 1983)



Teaching the problem solving process offers caregivers a skill to use when new situations occur after occupational therapy service or training is complete.

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### **RESOURCES**

**AARP**, [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org). Information about benefits and entitlement information, caregiver and older adult education (including older drivers, grandparents, and choosing a living environment), activities, and advocacy.

**Administration on Aging**, [www.aoa.gov](http://www.aoa.gov). Government agency concerned with issues affecting older Americans. This site offers information about older Americans, legislation, and programs.

**Alzheimer's Association**, [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org). Information about cognitive issues, problems and solutions, research and medical advances, public policy issues, caregiver support, and resources.

**Alzheimer's Disease Education and Referral Service (ADEAR)**, a service of the National Institute on Aging, [www.nia.nih.gov/alzheimers](http://www.nia.nih.gov/alzheimers). Information and referrals, publications, database and resources about dementia.

**Alzheimer's Navigator**,  
[www.alzheimersnavigator.org/?utm\\_source=DM&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=navigator](http://www.alzheimersnavigator.org/?utm_source=DM&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=navigator). Guide to answer questions by creating a personalized action plan and linking to information, support, and local resources.

**Alzheimer's Store**, [www.alzstore.com](http://www.alzstore.com). Wide variety of products for people with dementia and their caregivers.

**American Geriatrics Society**,  
[www.geriatricpain.org/Content/Education/Patient/Documents/Pain%20in%20Dementia.pdf](http://www.geriatricpain.org/Content/Education/Patient/Documents/Pain%20in%20Dementia.pdf). Resource on assessing pain in a person with dementia who may not be able to communicate effectively.

**Assisted Living Facilities**, [www.assistedlivingfacilities.org/](http://www.assistedlivingfacilities.org/). Listing by zip code.

**Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)**, [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov). Overview of Medicare and Medicaid policy and regulations, and consumer literature about health-related services and benefits.

**Children of Aging Parents**, [www.caps4caregivers.org](http://www.caps4caregivers.org). Information and materials for adult children caring for older parents.

**Choosing Skilled Nursing Facilities**,  
[www.helpguide.org/elder/nursing\\_homes\\_skilled\\_nursing\\_facilities.htm](http://www.helpguide.org/elder/nursing_homes_skilled_nursing_facilities.htm). Listing by city and state.

**Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs)**,  
[www.seniorliving.net/TypesOfCare/ContinuingCareRetirementCommunity](http://www.seniorliving.net/TypesOfCare/ContinuingCareRetirementCommunity). Listing by city and state.

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**Eldercare Locator**, [www.eldercare.gov](http://www.eldercare.gov) . Connection to local services for older adults anywhere in the US.

**Family Caregiver Alliance**, [www.caregiver.org](http://www.caregiver.org). Support services for those caring for people with Alzheimer's disease and other neurocognitive disorders, as well as other conditions.

**Friend's Health Connection**, [friendshealthconnection.org](http://friendshealthconnection.org). Support network and motivational programs.

**MedicAlert + Safe Return** [www.alz.org/care/dementia-medic-alert-safe-return.asp](http://www.alz.org/care/dementia-medic-alert-safe-return.asp) . 24-hour nationwide emergency response service for individuals with Alzheimer's or a related dementia.

**Mind Start**, [www.mind-start.com/](http://www.mind-start.com/). Activities and products for people with cognitive loss.

**Caregiver Action Network**, [caregiveraction.org/](http://caregiveraction.org/). Education, peer support and resources free of charge.

**National Institutes on Aging**, [www.nia.nih.gov](http://www.nia.nih.gov). Reliable health and resource information for consumers and professionals. Relevant topics include changes in intimacy and sexuality, wandering, bathing, grooming and dressing, and incontinence.

**National Resource Center on Supportive Housing and Home Modification**, [www.homemods.org](http://www.homemods.org). Information and strategies about home modifications and their importance in supporting safety and independence.

**The National Institute on Aging Information Center**, [www.nia.nih.gov/HealthInformation](http://www.nia.nih.gov/HealthInformation). Information about health and aging.

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