

# Module 9:

## Understanding and Working with Families



# How do families react to illness and terminal disease?



# What You'll Learn

- Identify 2 ways that Alzheimer's can affect a family
- Identify a common family concern
- Identify 2 ways to work better with families
- Identify 2 ways to take care of yourself and prevent burnout

# How Alzheimer's Affects the Family

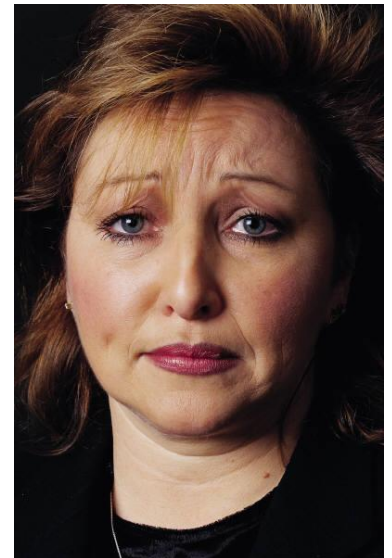
- They struggle to understand & accept
- Grief and loss:
  - Grieve the loss of the person day-by-day – *"the long good-bye"*
  - Roles change due to caregiving
- Guilt, shame and anger
- Tired or exhausted
- Family history



# A Common Family Concern

## Trusting others to provide care:

- Families worry about what they've heard or read
- Families may have had a bad experience before
- Families may worry if they are critical it will impact the care of their loved one



# Ways to Build Trust with Families

- Be consistent
- Keep families informed
- Show you are part of a capable team



# Work Better with Families

## **Help them to be part of the care team:**

- Ask them questions about their loved one
- Involve the family
- Provide regular updates
- Refer families to a Supervisor or another staff member if necessary

# Working with Families Who are Upset or Angry

- Remain calm and be professional
- Acknowledge a family's concerns and emotions
  - “I’m sorry...” always helps. It doesn’t mean it was your fault.
- Don’t blame the person with dementia
- Remember:
  - If you can’t answer a question, let them know & connect them to someone who can help
  - If they are still upset, notify your Supervisor



# Taking Care of Yourself and Preventing Burnout

## What are the stresses?

- **Stress related to Alzheimer's or dementia**
  - The disease gets worse and is terminal
  - Families are grieving, upset or angry
  - You are trying to help but the person resists care
- **Stress related to job, family life and our own health**
  - So much to do and not enough time
  - Juggling work, family and health can be hard

# Taking Care of Stress and Preventing Burnout

## To take care of ourselves we can:

- Ask for help from your supervisor or coworker
- Help others – they'll help you
- Seek out education
- Take a deep breath, take a moment, count to 10
- Take time for the important people in your life
- Take time for yourself

# What helps you relax?



**What did we  
talk about today?**

Let's review...

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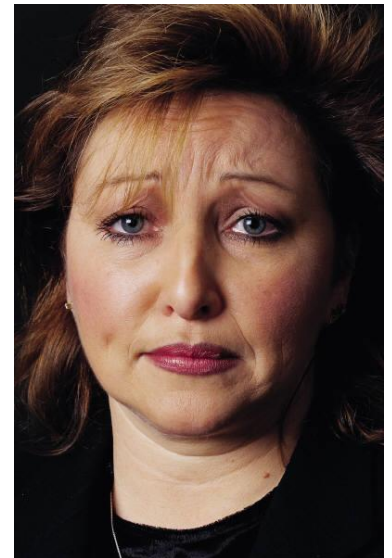
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**Let's see what  
you've learned**

Understanding and  
Working with Families Test