

Supporting or Undermining the Self-Esteem
of People with Alzheimer's Disease

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- ◆ Neuropathology
- ◆ Person's reaction to effects of neuropathology
- ◆ Behavior of others
- ◆ Reaction to behavior of others

Others focus on what person can no longer do:

- ◆ "They don't know anything anymore"
- ◆ "Treating an Alzheimer's patient is like doing veterinary medicine."

Malignant Positioning

- * Wandering vs. Walking
- * No concept of time vs. planning ahead
- * Irrational hostility vs. righteous indignation
- * Who is “confused”?

Malignant Social Psychology

- Disempowerment
- Stigmatization
- Infantilization
- Outpacing
- Invalidation
- Ignoring
- Imposition

How to Support Self Esteem of Person with Alzheimer's disease:

- Decrease Malignant Positioning and Malignant Social Psychology and
- *Notice Indicators of Relative Well-Being—common ground shared by people with AD and those otherwise healthy*

- ◆ The assertion of desire or will
- ◆ The ability to experience and express a range of emotions
- ◆ Initiation of social contact
- ◆ Affectional warmth
- ◆ Social sensitivity
- ◆ Self-respect
- ◆ Acceptance of other dementia sufferers
- ◆ Humor
- ◆ Creativity and self-expression
- ◆ Showing evident pleasure
- ◆ Helpfulness
- ◆ Relaxation

- ◆ For any person – know his or her history—in what did he or she take pride? People are far more than their diagnostic category.
- ◆ What does the person like to do? Mrs. D volunteered to be in drug studies...was “the life of the party” at the day center.
- ◆ Dr. B as “scientific collaborator”—called the day center activities “filler”
- ◆ Mrs. R helped setting tables, assisting those in wheelchairs...

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