

# DEMENTIA CAREGIVING 101

A GUIDE TO CARING FOR SOMEONE WITH ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AND RELATED DISORDERS

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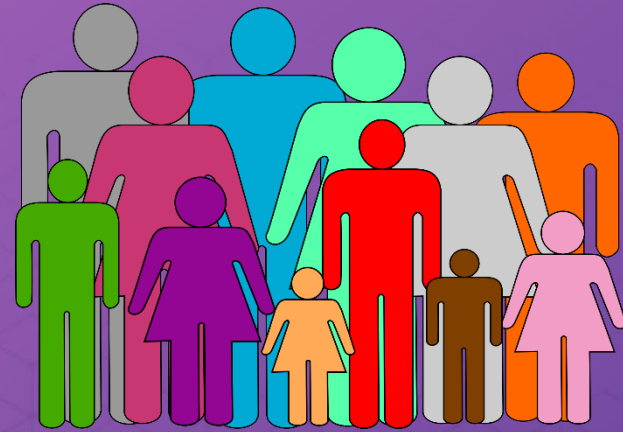


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## Session 4

# Working with families



## Objectives:

1. Better understanding of the loss experienced by caring for a person with Alzheimer's or related disorders
2. Teaching family how they can help



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# Who are the family members?

- Spouse
- Siblings
- Adult children
- Sons-and-daughters-in-laws
- Grandchildren
- Long distance caregivers
- Extended family
- Friends



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Source: National Institute on Aging

# Stages of Family Experience

## Denial:

- the initial response that nothing is wrong and no assistance is needed
- Can create family conflict
- Can prevent a family from seeking help
- Do not assume the person is in denial; it may be lack of knowledge
- Recognize that you cannot make someone accept the realities of the disease



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Source: National Institute on Aging

# Stages of Family Experience

## Over-Involvement:

- Trying to do everything themselves
- Can create barrier to getting help
- Encourage the caregiver to express feelings such as guilt, loss and anger



## • Anger:

- A result of the physical, emotional, financial and social burden of providing care
- May be directed at the person with memory loss, themselves, and others
- May stem from frustration and exhaustion
- Can cause guilt
- Encourage the caregiver to take time for himself/herself
- Encourage interaction with other families going through the disease



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# Stages of Family Experience

## Guilt:

- A feeling which comes from a sense of wrongdoing in words, actions, or thought
- Guilt may result from:
  - Old conflicts
  - A wish for the individual to die
  - Feel like you are not doing enough
  - Tough decisions
  - If the guilt persists, recommend counseling
- Acceptance
  - Full understanding of the disease and its effects on the person and their caregiver
  - Offer love and support to the caregiver



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# What can families do to cope?

- Learn about Alzheimer's disease and related disorders as much as possible
- Become aware of mental and physical reactions to stress
- Accept that it's normal to have feelings of anger or frustration towards the person with the disease or disorder
- Develop realistic expectations
- The person with Alzheimer's disease and related disorders will NOT get better



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# Ask the Experts Caregiver Panel



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