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Reviewing the BDA

Time/ Date/ Day of week	BEFORE	DURING	AFTER

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Changing Challenging Behavior

We will now discuss the different ways we can change behaviors. These include the following:

- Changing the **BEFORE** or *trigger*
- Changing what comes **AFTER** or our *reactions*
- Changing the *trigger* and our *reactions*

Remember the key point discussed earlier?

A person with memory problems has a lot of difficulty learning new information.

The only things you as a caregiver have control over are triggers and reactions.

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Rule Outs

Before we begin with a new example, we need to discuss ruling out medical problems. Before trying to change the person you are caring for's challenging behaviors, it is important to make sure that their behavior changes are not related to a medical problem.

Some common medical problems that can affect behavior include:

Medical conditions (e.g., urinary tract infection, constipation, pain, fever)

Medication side effects (have they started a new medication?)

Sensory impairments (e.g., hearing loss, poor vision)

It is important that these conditions, as well as others, be adequately diagnosed and treated by your physician, as there may be underlying sources of their behavior problems.

Important Note: *Always* contact your loved one's physician if there is any sudden change in the person you are caring for's functioning.

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Remember Betty & Jane?

Time/ Date/ Day of week	BEFORE	DURING	AFTER
Almost every night around 3am	Betty wakes at 3am Jane is sleeping	Betty doesn't go back to sleep Betty wanders around the house	Jane tells her Mom to go to sleep Jane yells Betty cries

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Making Room for Change

Time/ Date/ Day of week	BEFORE	DURING	AFTER	Strategy
				Current What happened?
				Proposed What could you do different?
				Result What changed?

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Proposed Changes for Before

Time/ Date/ Day of week	BEFORE	DURING	AFTER	Strategy
Almost every night around 3am	Betty wakes at 3am Jane is sleeping	Betty doesn't go back to sleep Betty wanders around the house	Jane tells her Mom to go to sleep Jane yells Betty cries	Current What happened?
	No naps Keep her busy Exercise Bedtime routine No caffeine Talk to doc: rule out/ meds			Proposed What could you do different?
				Result What changed?

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Proposed Changes for After

Time/ Date/ Day of week	BEFORE	DURING	AFTER	Strategy
Almost every night around 3am	Betty wakes at 3am Jane is sleeping	Betty doesn't go back to sleep Betty wanders around the house	Jane tells her Mom to go to sleep Jane yells Betty cries	Current What happened?
	No naps Keep her busy Exercise Bedtime routine No caffeine Talk to doc – meds		Gently say: it's dark out, time to sleep Play soothing music Focus on the task; Stay calm Thirsty? Hungry? Bathroom?	Proposed What could you do different?
				Result What changed?

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What Happened?

Regardless of which behavior and strategies you choose, the most important thing to remember is to be **consistent**.

Problem solving is a process of trial and error.

Once this problem is solved, another one may develop.

It's possible that the strategy that you produced may work at sometimes and not others.

Be flexible, patient and creative!

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Behavioral Log Reminders: Before

To figure out possible **triggers**:

Was the environment quiet or noisy?
Dark or bright?

Were they alone or was someone present?
If so, who?

Was an event occurring, such as bathing, or administering medications?

Do they want something, such as food, a beverage, or keys?

Do they appear to be seeking attention?
If so why? Are they in pain?



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Behavioral Log Reminders: After

To figure out your **reaction**:

Did you stop the event?
Such as bathing, administering medications

What kind of feelings did you experience?
Did your level of stress increase or decrease?

What did you actually do?



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Behavioral Log Reminders: Strategies

Reminders for **strategy**:

Could there be a medical problem?
Have you called the doctor?

Be creative
Exercise instead of sleeping pills
Music instead of a sedative



Do you need a break?
Can you ask someone to give you some time to recharge?

Remember to look for both **trigger** and **response** strategies.

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Time to Try Your Challenging Behavior

Every morning at 8 am, Jim and his wife Sue have breakfast. After breakfast, Jim sees car keys on the key hook by the breakfast table, and tells his wife, Sue, "I am going out for a drive." Sue reminds him that he no longer has a driver's license and is not permitted to drive. Jim responds by yelling, "I don't know what you are talking about," and angrily walks toward the driveway. Sue feels helpless and frustrated.

Time/ Date/ Day of week	BEFORE	DURING	AFTER	Strategy
				Current What happened?
				Proposed What could you do different?
				Result What changed?

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Challenging Behaviors: General Strategies

- See the behavior as a means of communication
 - Why is this happening right now?
- Be conscious of verbal tone & non-verbal signals you are sending
- Avoid punishment, blame, or ridicule
- Remain calm, walk away for a moment if you need to
- Respond to the emotion over the words
- Use distraction when possible
- Reduce caffeine
- Always check in with the doctor for sudden onset of new behaviors
- Don't rush – allow plenty of time
- Use a visual cue, show on your body what you want to do before you touch them
- Take a time out when you need it

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Challenging Behaviors: Agitation & Aggression

Physically Non-aggressive	Verbally Non-aggressive	Physically Aggressive	Verbally Aggressive
general restlessness repetitive mannerisms	constant requests interrupting	hitting, kicking biting	screaming, cursing outbursts

Why it happens: fatigue, an over-stimulating environment, making too many demands, asking them to do something beyond their abilities, failure at a simple task, uncontrolled pain, untreated depression, side effect of meds, infection

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Challenging Behaviors: Agitation & Aggression

Repetitive Mannerism

What you can try:

- Have a daily routine
- Daily walks
- Give them something to fidget with
- Distraction

Hitting

What you can try:

- Do not confront or try to talk about it
- Do not try to touch them
- Look for patterns/ triggers
- Talk to doctor

Constant Requests

What you can try:

- Stay calm
- Not seeking information, looking for reassurance
- Use a white board for common questions

Outbursts, Screaming

What you can try:

- Don't ignore or talk over them
- Avoid topics / change topic
- Calm the environment / play music
- Look for patterns/ triggers

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Challenging Behaviors: Wandering

What it is: Shadowing, repeated looking for cg, aimlessly walking, repeated attempts to leave the house, usually a combo of disorientation and restlessness

Why it happens: an attempt to leave, following someone out the door, bored or lack of stimulation, restlessness due to meds

What you can try:

- Keep coats/keys/purse out of sight
- Have a safe place and time to walk
- ID bracelet/dog tags
- Escape proof the house
- Exercise
- Redirect wandering to a new activity
- Reduce noise and confusion
- Keep a recent photo handy in case

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Challenging Behaviors: Losing Inhibitions

What it is: impulsive and inappropriate behavior – euphoria, self-harm, intrusiveness, sexual inappropriate behavior

Why it happens: an exaggeration of a life-long pattern, thinking someone is their partner, misinterpreting personal care, long for intimacy

What you can try:

- Don't over-react – it's part of the disease
- Respond with patience and a gentle matter-of-fact manner
- Reassure and comfort anxious person
- Provide more comfortable clothing
- Distraction

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Challenging Behaviors: Sundowning

What it is: It's a group of symptoms that occurring in the late afternoon and early evening. These symptoms, are confusion, anxiety, aggression, ignoring directions, pacing or wandering

Why it happens: fatigue, low lighting, increased shadows, disruption of the body's "internal clock", difficulty separating reality from dreams

What you can try:

- Predictable routine for bedtime, waking, meals and activities.
- Limit daytime napping.
- Limit caffeine and sugar to morning hours.
- Keep the house well lit to reduce shadows
- Play familiar gentle music or relaxing sounds of nature, such as the sound of waves.
- If sundowning develops quickly – talk with the doctor

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Challenging Behaviors: Sleep Disturbances

What it is: wakefulness, disorientation or confusion at night, difficulty returning to sleep

Why it happens: confusion, over-stimulation, and fatigue during the day, fear of the dark, maybe seeking safety/security

What you can try:

- Check bed comfort – too hot? Cold?
- Reduce light and noise
- Add a night light
- Provide a reflective strip to bathroom
- Keep a regular sleep schedule
- Same nighttime routine
- No naps after 2pm
- Reduce caffeine and/or alcohol
- Daily exercise
- Soft music
- Dementia clock showing night/day
- Offer a soft stuff animal

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Challenging Behaviors: Hoarding

What it is: hoarding, hiding, losing things

Why it happens: trying to have some control over their situation, paranoia – someone is trying to take things away, protecting their property

What you can try:

- Create a hoarding box/drawer for them
- Figure out where they tend to hide things
- Don't leave anything important out
- Keep a spare set of keys or glasses
- If hiding food, check their hiding place regularly
- Use locks to keep meds safe
- Have mail delivered out of reach
- Restrict access to trash cans
- Prevent access to firearms, power tools, sharp knives, anything dangerous

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Challenging Behaviors: Paranoia / Accusing

What it is: suspicious of those around them, accusations of theft and betrayal

Why it happens: confusion and loss of memory can cause suspicion, watching violent movies or TV can also contribute

What you can try:

- Don't argue
- Offer simple answers
- Distract with another activity
- Keep duplicates of favored item
- Let them carry small amounts of money
- Explain to others that paranoia is part of the disease
- Help to look for missing item
- Don't take it personally
- Talk to their doctor as medications may help

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Take Away

- It is important to rule out medical conditions by speaking with their doctor as a possible change of the challenging behavior, especially if the behavior is new and onset was sudden.
- The only things you as a caregiver have control over are triggers and reactions.
- It is important to keep track of what happened to your proposed strategies, so you have a record of what worked AND what didn't.
- Problem solving is a process of trial and error. Be flexible, patient and creative! Give yourself the gift of time, and permission to fail.

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Making This Work for You

Pick One

Pick two or three different strategies to try when trying to work with a challenging behavior. Keep a log to track which one worked best.



Try identifying the different parts of the challenging behaviors you are struggling with. Note the triggers that occur in the before and note the reactions that happen after.



Set a Deadline	Why this one?	What will you pair it with?	Break it Down	Smaller Steps	Start Date and End Date	Reminders
Be realistic in your deadline.	How will this help you?	Do it with something you already do.	Take a large task and break it into step.	Make large steps into smaller steps.	For each step small or large, use a calendar	Use your computer or phone.