

# Mindful Dementia Care

Nurturing Well-being for Staff and Residents



NCCDP In-service Toolkit



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# Stress

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“the physiological or psychological response to internal or external stressors...” which impacts “...nearly every system of the body, influencing how people feel and behave.”

Severe stress ... “affects mental and physical health, reducing quality of life.”

(APA, 2018, April 19)

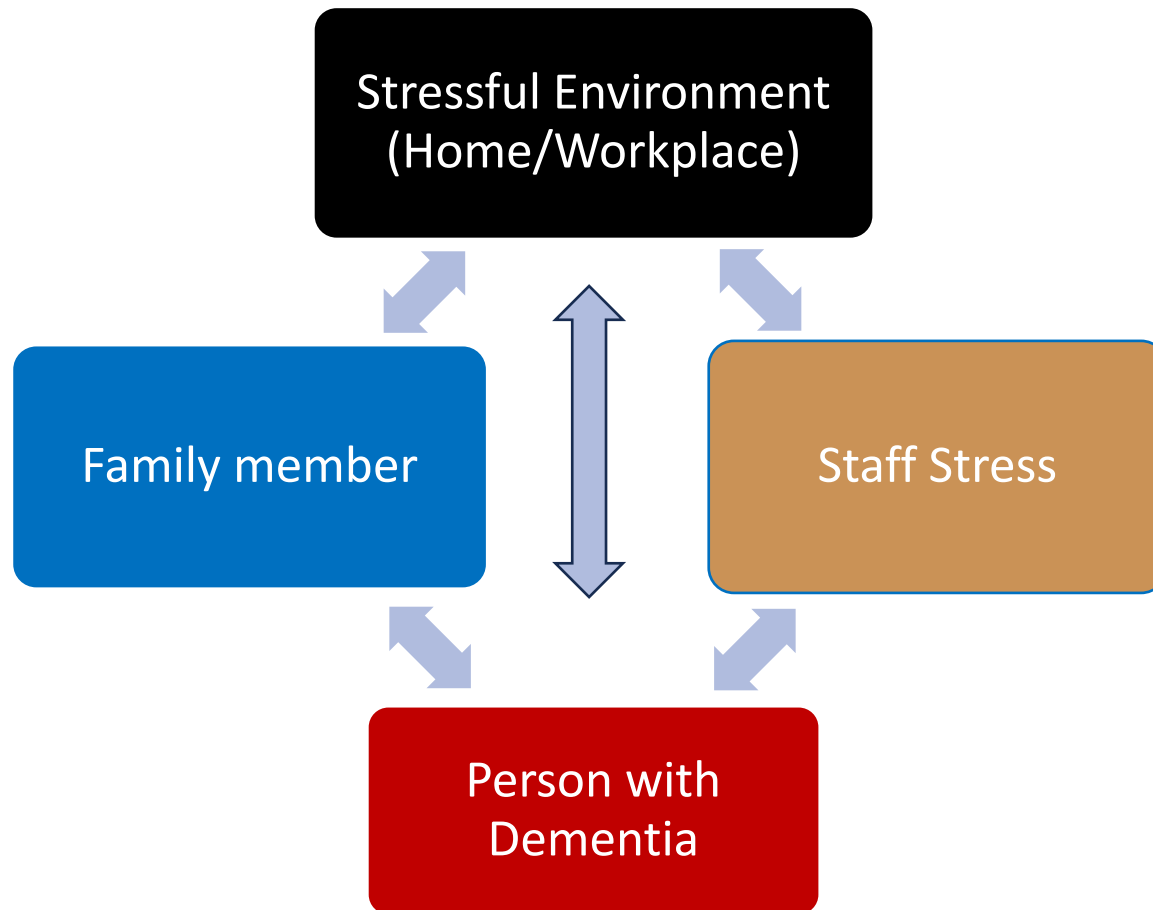


# Reflection

- How many of you address workplace stress and have programs and strategies in place to address staff stress?
- How many of you train your staff on the early warning signs of stress or distress in your clients/ residents with dementia?
- How many teach family members how to identify and address stress?
- How many of you conduct organizational stress risk assessments?

# Impact of Stress

# Stress Impacts Quality of Care, Quality of Life, and the Workplace



# Impact of Stress On Physical Health



(Cleveland Clinic, 2024; APA, 2020; Mayo Clinic, 2023)

# Impact of Stress on Mental Health and Mood



(Cleveland Clinic, 2024; APA, 2020; Mayo Clinic, 2023)

# Impact of Stress on Persons with Dementia

Increased  
agitation

Wandering

Over-eat/  
Under-eat

Angry  
outbursts/  
catastrophic  
reactions

Hoarding

Repetitive &  
Fidgeting

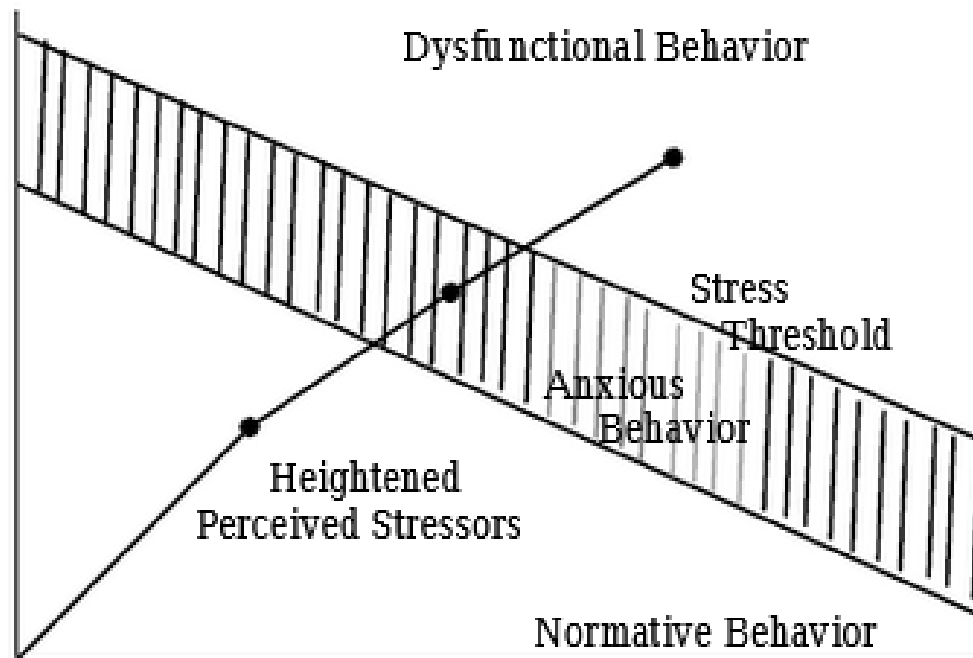
Social  
withdrawal

Disinterest

Anxiety

(Alzheimer's Scotland, 2018; Alzheimer's Society, 2024; Justice, 2018; Alzheimer's Society, n.d.)

# Persons with Dementia Experience a Lowered Stress Threshold



Source: Hall & Buckwalter (1987). p.403

(Pickering, C., et.al, 2022)

# Stress Can Lead to Distress

## STRESS

- ✓ Decline in short term memory
  - ✓ Reduced problem-solving ability
    - ✓ Changing emotional control
      - ✓ Reduced communication
        - ✓ Unable to fully express needs
          - ✓ Increase in anxiety
            - ✓ Change in behavior

## DISTRESS

# Impact of Stress on Staff

American Psychological Association 2023 Work in America Survey Results:

**77%** of workers reported experiencing work-related stress

**57%** reported experiencing the negative impact of work-related stress that is associated with burnout

(APA, 2023)

Dementia caregivers report more stressors due to providing more care and behavior expressions than non-dementia caregivers.

(Sheehan, 2021)

# Impact of Stress on Employees

Poor decision  
making

Drugs or alcohol  
use

Burnout

Decreased job  
satisfaction

Absenteeism

Job turnover

Reduced  
empathy toward  
persons with  
dementia

A decline in care  
quality

Lower quality of  
work- more  
mistakes &  
incomplete

(APA, 2023; APA, 2020; Baker, et.al., 2015; Maslach, 2017)

# Impact of Stress on the Organization



# Causes of Stress



# Stressors for Persons with Dementia

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- Poor relationship with staff and family
- Care provider communication style and approach
- Care provider stress/distress
- Caregiver interaction
- Care partner and family member lack of skills and knowledge

(Alzheimer's Scotland, 2018; Alzheimer's Society-Canada, n.d; James and Jackman 2017; Justin, 2018)

# Stressors for Persons with Dementia

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- Sensory deficits
- Mental health issues
- Inability to communicate needs
- Anxiety
- Overwhelmed
- Stereotypes impacting care

(Alzheimer's Scotland, 2018; Alzheimer's Society-Canada, n.d; James and Jackman 2017; Justin, 2018)





# Stressors for Persons with Dementia

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- Environment
- Cognition
- Confusion and fear
- Change in routine
- Unfamiliar people and environment
- Unmet need
- Disease Progression

(Alzheimer's Scotland, 2018; Alzheimer's Society- Canada, n.d; James and Jackman 2017; Justin, 2018)



# Staff Stressors

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- Workplace demands including task, role, physical, & interpersonal demands
- Demanding workload
- Long hours
- Staff shortages

(Case & Deaton, 2020; Kinder, 2020; WHO, 2017; Maulik, 2017)



# Staff Stressors

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- Exposure to dementia behaviors
- Lack of support and resources
- Fatigue
- Emotional exhaustion
- Burnout
- Lack of support from colleagues and supervisor

(Case & Deaton, 2020; Kinder, 2020; WHO, 2017; Maulik, 2017)

# Staff Stressors

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- Being asked to do things that exceed knowledge, abilities, and coping skills
- Unsatisfactory working conditions
- Inability to address needs, concerns, and issues with supervisor



(Case & Deaton, 2020; Kinder, 2020; WHO, 2017; Maulik, 2017)

# Staff Stressors

- Long commutes
- Unpredictable schedules
- Limited autonomy
- Hostile work environment
- Discrimination and harassment

(Case & Deaton, 2020; Kinder, 2020; WHO, 2017; Maulik, 2017)

# **Prevent and Manage Stress**

# Reduce and Respond to Staff Stress

## PREVENTATIVE AND PROACTIVE PROGRAMMING

- Promote employee wellbeing
- Remove risk factors for stress/ burnout

## REACTIVE PROGRAMMING

- Assist employees needing help coping with stress and burnout at home and on the job

# What Employees Want

According to the APA 2023 Work in America Survey

- 92% said it is very (57%) or somewhat (35%) important for an organization to **value their emotional and psychological well-being**
- 92% said it is very (52%) or somewhat (40%) important for the organization to **support employee mental health**
- 95% said it is very (66%) or somewhat (29%) **important to feel respected at work**

(APA, 2023)

# **The Surgeon General's 5 Tenets for Workplace Mental Health and Well-Being**

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**Protection from Harm**

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**Connection and Community**

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**Opportunity for Growth**

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**Mattering at Work**

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**Work-Life Harmony**

(U.S. Surgeon General, 2022)

# Surgeon General's Five Tenets of Workplace Wellness

## Protection from Harm

- Prioritize physical & psychological safety
- Enable adequate rest
- Normalize and support mental health
- Operationalize DEIA\* norms, policies, and programs

## Work-Life Harmony

- Provide more autonomy over how work is done
- Make schedules as flexible and predictable as possible
- Increase access to paid leave
- Respect boundaries between work and non-work time

(U.S. Surgeon General, 2022)

# Surgeon General's Five Tenets of Workplace Wellness

## Mattering at Work

- Provide a living wage
- Engage workers in workplace decisions
- Build a culture of gratitude and recognition
- Connect individual work with organizational mission

## Connection and Community

- Create cultures of inclusion and belonging
- Cultivate trusted relationships
- Foster collaboration and teamwork

(U.S. Surgeon General, 2022)

# Surgeon General's Five Tenets of Workplace Wellness

## Opportunity for Growth

- Offer quality training, education, and mentoring
- Foster clear, equitable pathways for career advancement
- Ensure relevant, reciprocal feedback

(U.S. Surgeon General, 2022)

# Prevent and Reduce Workplace Stress

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- Conduct an organization stress risk assessment
- Provide opportunities for fun
- Have a relaxing breakroom & lunch area
- Ensure staff get their breaks



# Prevent and Reduce Workplace Stress

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- Employee fitness program
- Utilize nature: outdoors break area for non-smokers
- Supervisors set a good example with stress management
- Offer stress management skills training for all staff, incl. mid managers



# Prevent and Reduce Workplace Stress

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- Teach how to use visualizations, positive affirmations, and deep breathing to control stress
- Aromatherapy
- New age sounds/music
- Offer calming computer screensavers
- Encourage journaling (Example: "Heartbeat and Healing: A Daily Reflective Journal for Nurses")



# Prevent and Reduce Workplace Stress



NovoPsych

## Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10)

### Instructions:

The questions in this scale ask you about your feelings and thoughts during the last month. In each case, you will be asked to indicate how often you felt or thought a certain way.

In the last month, how often have you...

		Never	Almost Never	Sometimes	Fairly Often	Very Often
1	been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly?	0	1	2	3	4
2	felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?	0	1	2	3	4
3	felt nervous and "stressed"?	0	1	2	3	4
4	felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems?	4	3	2	1	0
5	felt that things were going your way?	4	3	2	1	0
6	found that you could not cope with all the things that you had to do?	0	1	2	3	4
7	been able to control irritations in your life?	4	3	2	1	0
8	felt that you were on top of things?	4	3	2	1	0
9	been angered because of things that were outside of your control?	0	1	2	3	4
10	felt difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them?	0	1	2	3	4

### Developer Reference:

Cohen, S., & Williamson, G. (1988). Perceived stress in a probability sample of the United States. In S. Spacapan & S. Oskamp (Eds.), *The social psychology of health: Claremont Symposium on applied social psychology*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

- Help staff ID stress
  - Perceived Stress Scale
- Have staff on-site trained in mental health (i.e., Mental Health First Aid)
- Incentivize healthy habits (i.e., staff walking competition)

# Prevent and Reduce Workplace Stress

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- Conflict management training
- Hydration stations for staff
- Offer caregiver support for staff caring for family members
- Mindfulness-based stress reduction



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(Baker, et.al., 2015)

# Care Partners are Key to Addressing Stress in Persons with Dementia

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“Those providing care will be of key importance in identifying and responding to triggers within the social and physical environment and during caring interactions.”

(Alzheimer's Scotland, 2018)



# Stress Management and Prevention for Persons with Dementia

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- Use a caring person-centered approach
- Promote comfort, activity, and social connection
- Know the person & their life story regarding stress, trauma, and potential triggers for stress and distress
- Identify risk reduction and coping strategies



(Cammissuli, et.al., 2022; Solan, 2022; Cleveland Clinic, 2024; Cornell University, n.d.; Odell-Miller, 2021; Grouport, n.d.)

# Stress Management and Prevention for Persons with Dementia

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- Take deep breaths together
- Aromatherapy
- Pet therapy
- Music therapy
- Reminiscing
- Rocking in rocking chair/ glider
- Medication management

(Cammisuli , et.al., 2022; Solan, 2022; Cleveland Clinic, 2024; Cornell University, n.d.; Odell-Miller, 2021; Grouport, n.d.)

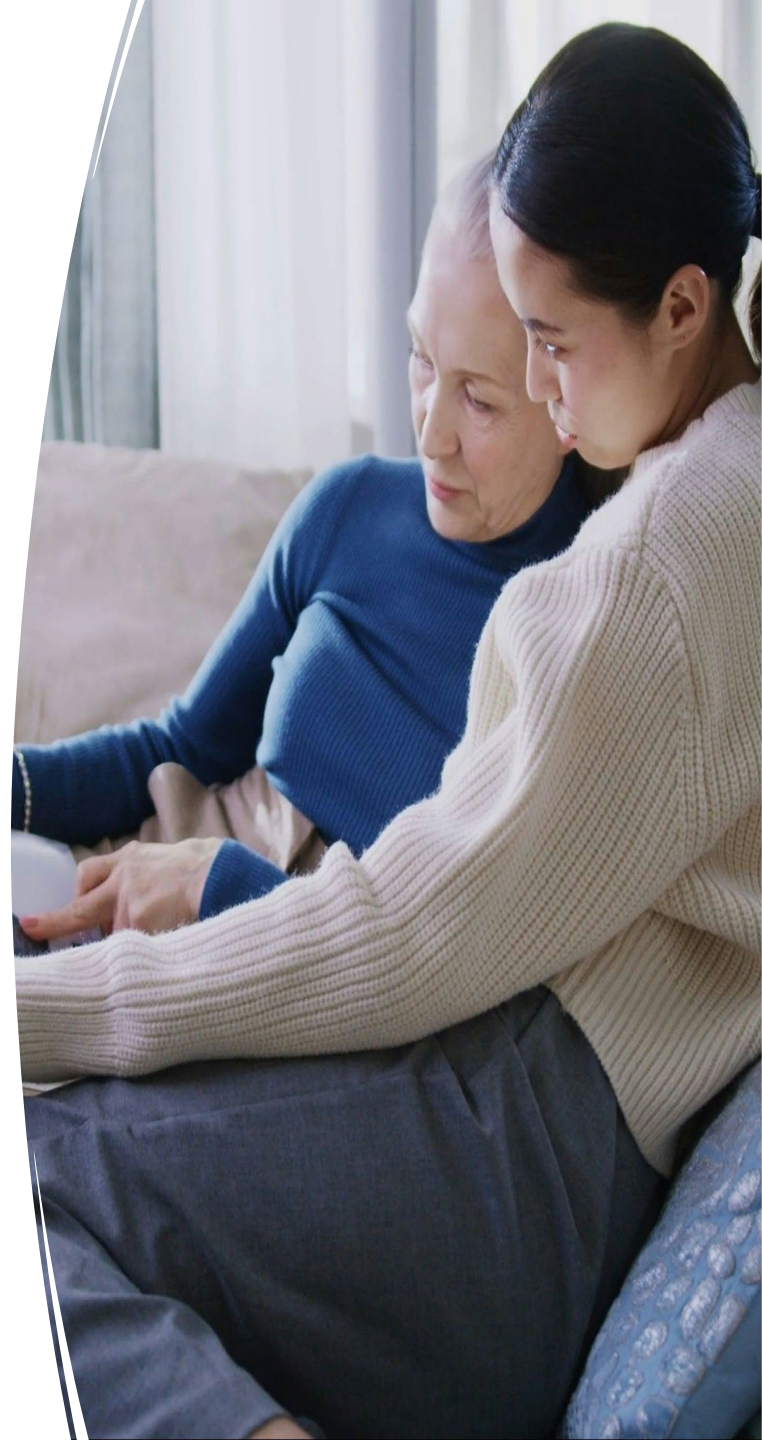


# Stress Management and Prevention for Persons with Dementia

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- Focus on moment-to-moment experiences
- Create a calm, safe, and supportive physical and social environment
- Educate family care partners about dementia and stress
- Exercise/movement/dance

(Trivedi, Bret, et.al., 2018)



# Stress Management and Prevention for Persons with Dementia

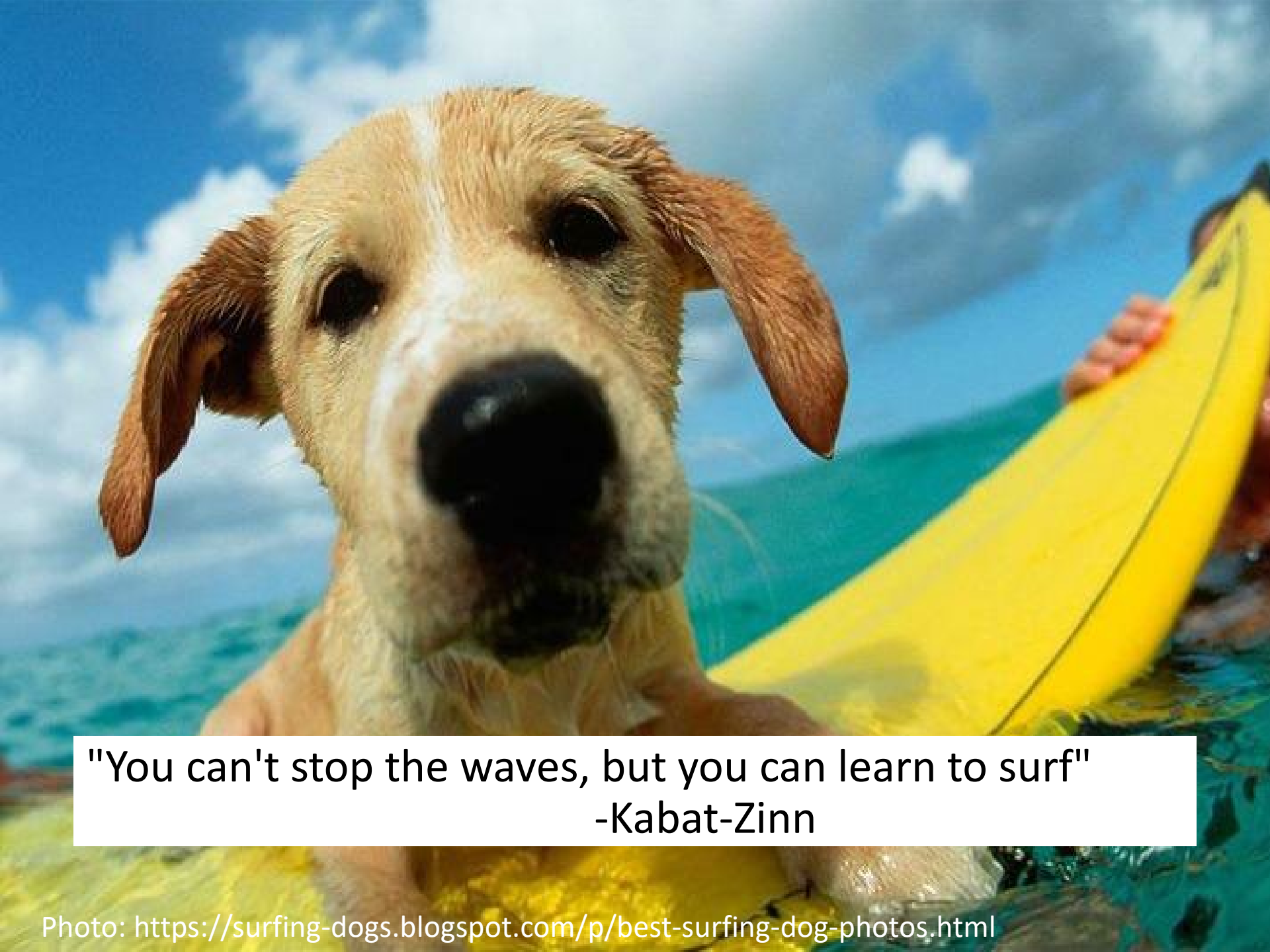
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- Provide emotional and practical support for family members/staff
- Use successful communication techniques to prevent/lessen stress
- Offer choices
- Nip stress in the bud
- Address needs proactively

(Trivedi et al 2018)



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"You can't stop the waves, but you can learn to surf"  
-Kabat-Zinn

**Call to Action**

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- **Alzheimer's Scotland.** (2018). *Understanding Stress and Distress In Dementia: The Importance Of A Person-centred Preventative Approach*. Retrieved September 1, 2024, from <https://www.alzscot.org/sites/default/files/2019-11/Understanding%20stress%20and%20distress%20in%20dementia.pdf>.
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# Resources

- NHS Sheffield Health and Social Care. Stress at Work Tool Kit. (individual stress test, Stress at Work Toolkit)  
<https://www.shsc.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/2022-01/Stress%20at%20Work%20Toolkit%20V6%20December%202021%20%281%29.pdf>
- Perceived Stress Questionnaire.  
[https://www.med.upenn.edu/cbti/assets/user-content/documents/Perceived%20Stress%20Questionnaire%20\(PSQ\).pdf](https://www.med.upenn.edu/cbti/assets/user-content/documents/Perceived%20Stress%20Questionnaire%20(PSQ).pdf)
- UK Health and Safety Executive, *Work-related Stress And How To Manage It*. (Talking toolkit to guide employee conversations and a stress risk assessment)  
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/print.htm>.

# Resources

- Compassion Fatigue Awareness Project. The Caregiver's Bill of Rights. (for professionals)  
<https://compassionfatigue.org/TheBillOfRights.pdf>
- Burnout Assessment Tool (for employees)  
<https://burnoutassessmenttool.be/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/BAT-English.pdf>
- Stress at Work Toolkit (for employees and managers)  
<https://www.shsc.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/2022-01/Stress%20at%20Work%20Toolkit%20V6%20December%202021%20%281%29.pdf>
- The Workplace Stress Scale <https://www.stress.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/The-Workplace-Stress-Scale.pdf>

- OSHA. Workplace Stress: Make Work Better- Mental Health Matters. <https://www.osha.gov/workplace-stress/understanding-the-problemc>
- OSHA. Stress Management Resources. <https://www.osha.gov/workplace-stress/outreach-materials>
- CDC. Risk Factors for Stress and Burnout. <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/healthcare/risk-factors/stress-burnout.html>

# Thank you! Questions?

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