

# Living at Home with Alzheimer's: Hacienda Series

## Creating a Stimulating Home Environment



# Dementia Explained

- Everyone with Alzheimer's disease has dementia.
- Not everyone with dementia has Alzheimer's disease (other types of dementia might be present).
- Dementia is the umbrella term for anything that causes confusion, memory loss, personality changes and cognitive decline.

# Types of Dementia

- TYPES:
  - Senile dementia of the Alzheimer's type (DAT)
  - Vascular dementia
  - General medical condition dementia
  - Substance-induced dementia

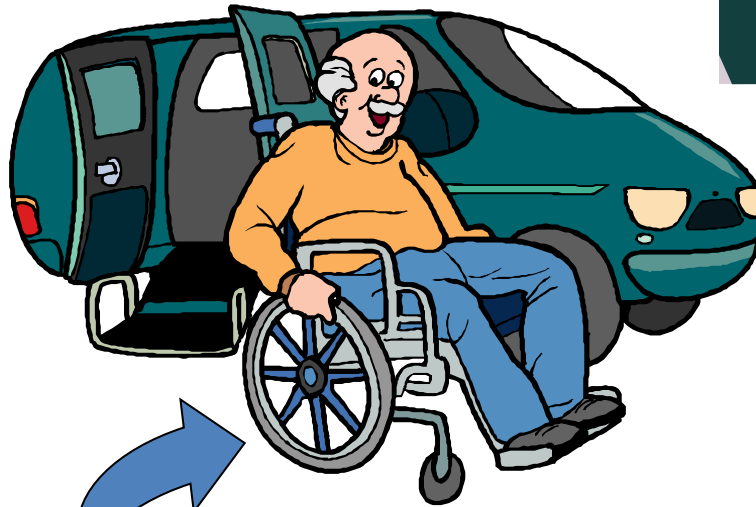
# Dementia Symptoms



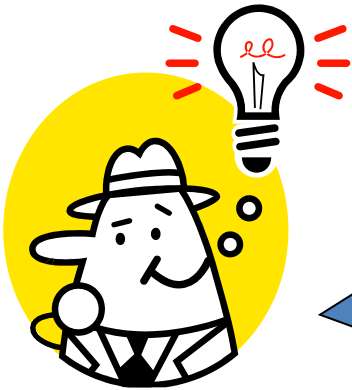
Identification  
Impairment



Memory  
Impairment



Motor Skill  
Impairment



Abstract Thinking Disturbance



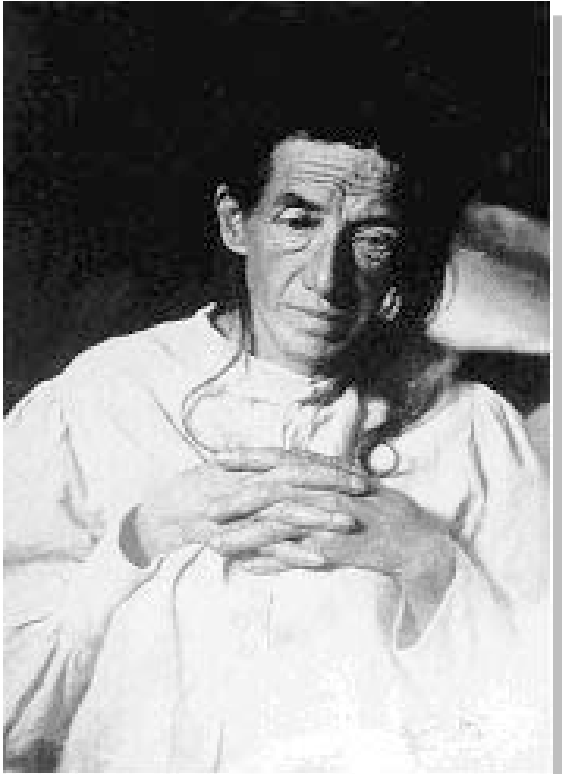
Language Difficulty

# Alois Alzheimer



Slide used courtesy of David Troxel – “Best Friends Approach”

# Auguste D



- November 25, 1901, 51 years old
- Problems with every day tasks
- Jealousy, delusions
- Memory
- “I have lost myself”

Slide used courtesy of David Troxel – “Best Friends Approach”

# Alzheimer's Disease

- Hallmark is decline in short-term memory.
- Judgment, reasoning and problem solving are affected.
- Person eventually needs significant support from caregivers.
- Alzheimer's is a type of dementia (others are mini-strokes, frontal lobe, etc.)

Slide used courtesy of David Troxel – “Best Friends Approach”

# Create A Therapeutic Environment



Slide used courtesy of David Troxel – “Best Friends Approach”



# The Best Care. . .

- Helping a person feel *safe, secure & valued*
- Creating a positive environment
- Encouraging families to learn as they travel the journey



Slide used courtesy of David Troxel – “Best Friends Approach”

# How to create a therapeutic environment?

**Creative activities**

Conversation

*Using the Life Story*

*Exercise*

**Music**

Being outside

Purposeful chores

*Learning & growth*

**Laughter**

***Animals***

# Home: Key Component of the Environment

## What is Home?

*“ ..... home is not just a place, but a concept of comfort and familiarity that nourishes body and soul and etches indelible memories in the mind.”*

**Elizabeth Brawley**

fisherman



golfer



# Therapeutic Goals

- Ensure safety & security
- Support functional ability through meaningful activity
- Maximize awareness & orientation
- Provide opportunities for stimulation & change
- Maximize autonomy & control
- Adapt to changing needs
- Establish links to the healthy & familiar
- Provide opportunities for socialization
- Protect the need for privacy

# Four Key Behaviors related to Alzheimer's Disease

1. Agitation
2. Wandering
3. Falling
4. Personal Care and Grooming/Functional Competence

# Agitation



# Reasons for Agitation

- Health related problems combined with cognitive impairment
- Inability to verbalize needs or distress
- Frustration caused by lack of familiarity with environment, companions, etc.
- Negative or unfamiliar environmental stress

# Caregivers' Frustration

- Can also influence the individual's behavioral response and emotional state.
- Emotions are contagious!





# Caregivers' Relationship with an Individual

- Knows the behavioral patterns and nostalgic history of the individual
- They can be used to influence a positive long-term memory connection and desired behavior response

# Way Finding and Cuing

Goals for way finding to prevent agitation:

1. Allow for the reading of surroundings
2. Know where they are
3. Make appropriate decisions
4. Reach destination



Huelat Parimucha

# Long Term Memory Cuing in the Home

- Important to create familiarity within the home environment and reinforce perceived control over the environment
- Items in a Memory Box may include:
  - Photographs of earlier life experiences
  - Nostalgic artifacts – i.e. Fishing poles, tennis rackets, etc.



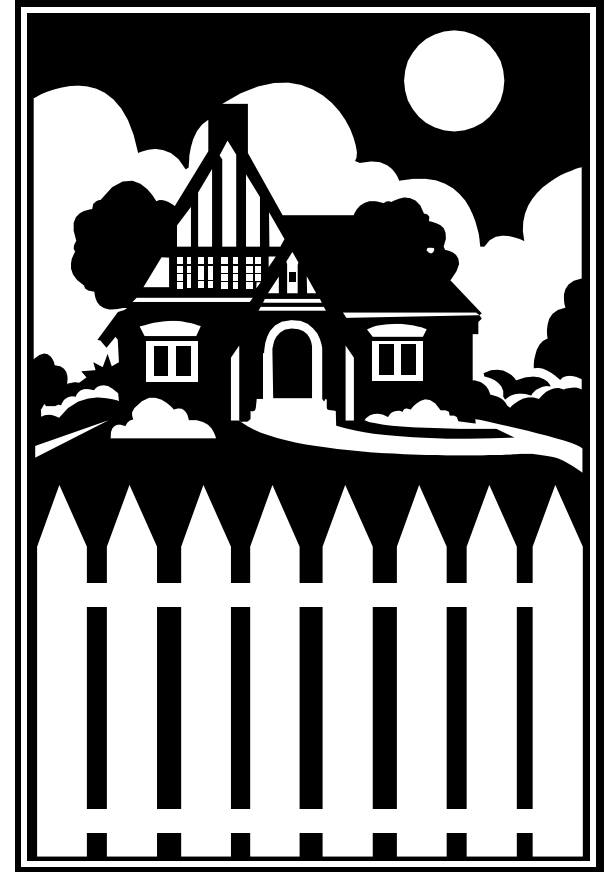
# Long Term Memory Cuing in the Home

- Small Memory Boxes could be used next to an individuals bedroom door in their home

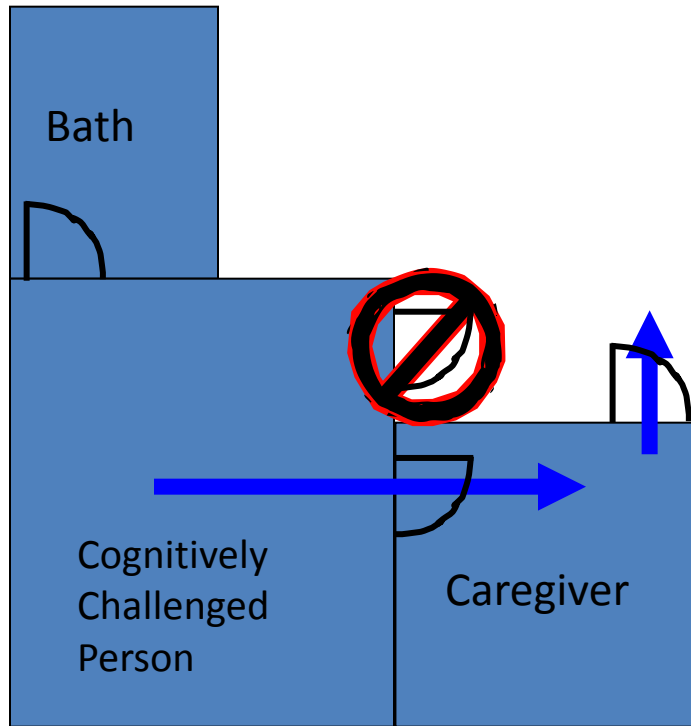


# Space Planning: Home

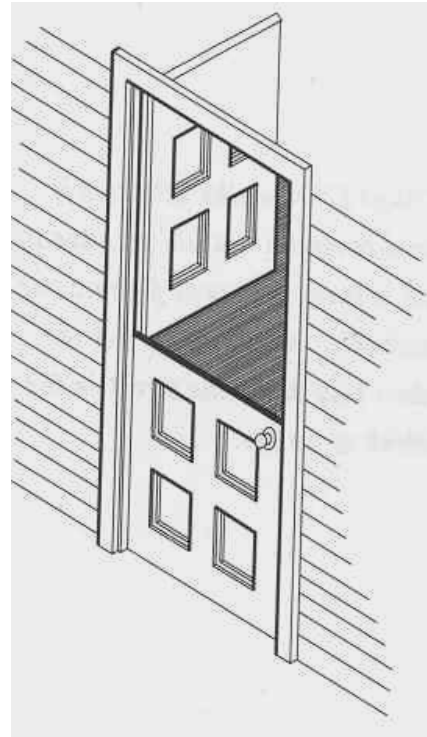
- Create a natural wandering path through the residence
- Redirect the means of egress from the individuals room through that of the caregiver
- Arrange furniture for reduced stress



# Home: Night Wandering

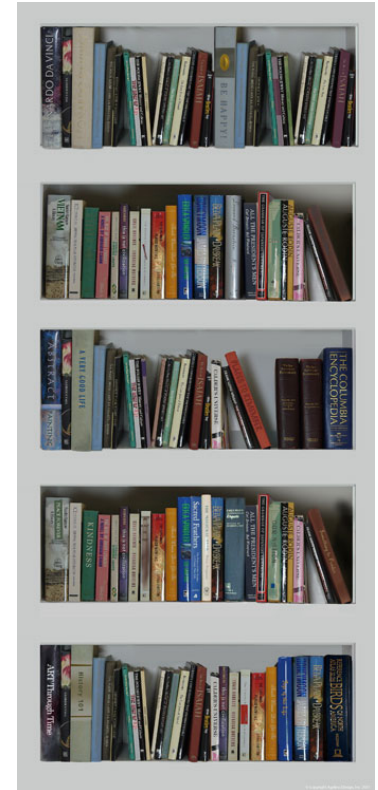


Night Wandering Space Plan



Dutch Door

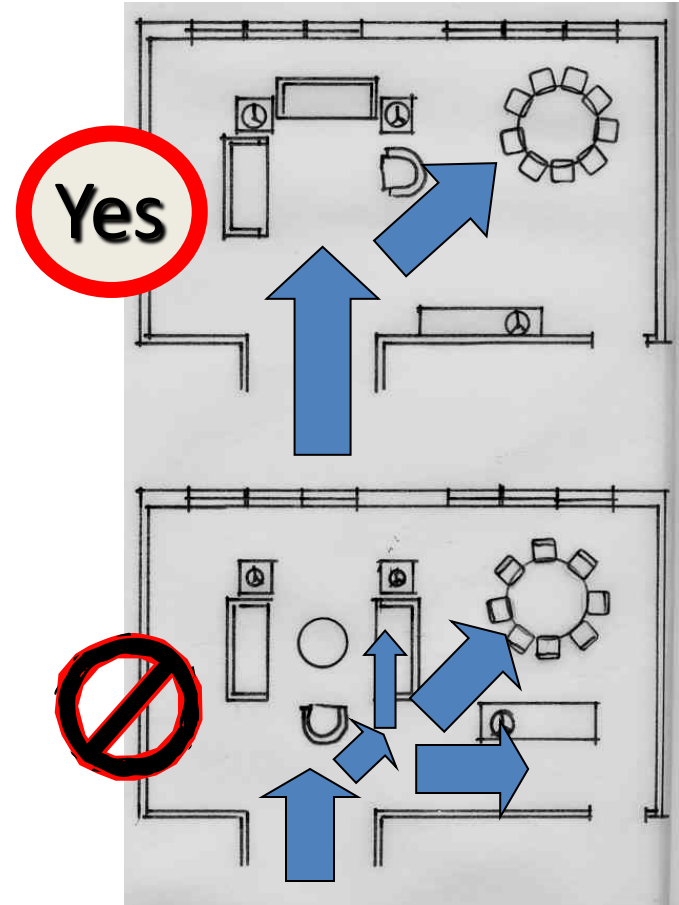
Hidden Door



# Furniture Arrangement

- Create a simple home or facility
- Furniture arrangement simplification is an example

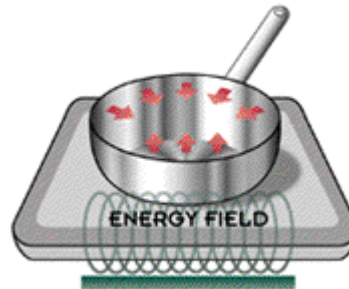
Note: Take care not to change TOO much--can cause more confusion than simplification





# Safety: Eliminating Dangerous Options

- Remove weapons from home/facility
- Dangerous items out of sight in visually integrated locked cabinets
- Appliances equipped with control lockout devices and magnetic induction cook tops





# Daylight Exposure



- Better sleep quality
- Promotes Vitamin D synthesis for healthy bones
- Prevents depression
- Reduces Agitation

Gardens  
bring  
million  
dollar  
smiles





# Program and Environment Connection





**A woman's  
work is never done!**

# Wandering

- Can be both positive and negative
- For some, it is not a problem behavior
- **Safe** wandering is the key
- Wandering paths are the primary sources of safe wandering



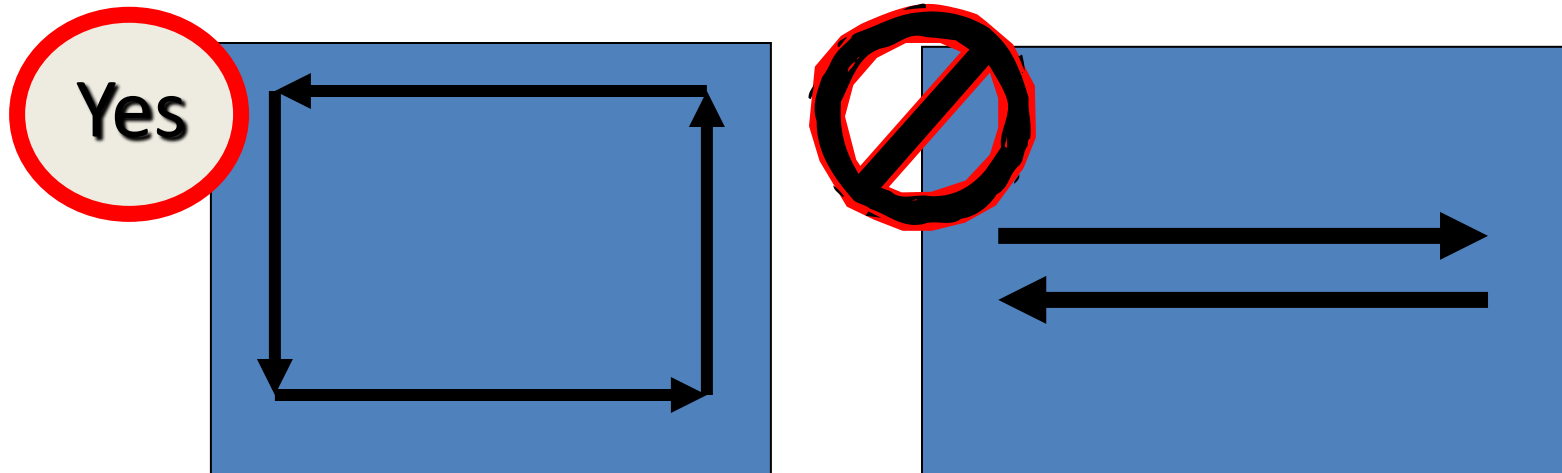
# Reasons for Wandering

- Disorientation to the environment - No new learning inhibits cognitive map.
- Stimulation – finding the level of environment stimulation, autonomy the individual requires to gratify his/her psychological needs
- Habitual, searching for something missing - mealtime and other past routines



# Facilitating Wandering

- Looping circulation
- Visible and obvious access
- Security and controlled access to undesirable spaces or exits



# Exercise and Wandering

- Exercise and falls
- Weight loss can be a problem
- Have ice cream bars readily available





# Falls



# Environmental Supports Encourage Mobility

- Effective Fall Prevention
  - Exercise
  - Higher light levels
  - Vision - Strong material contrast
  - Eliminate clutter
  - Handrails for support

# Exercise

- Exercise programs with balance and strength training for ALL elderly – frail or not – especially for age 75+
- Gait training with balance and strength training
- Gradual discontinuation of psychotropic drugs
- Modify the environment



# Higher Light Levels

*“...Put the pale, withering plant or human being into the sun, and if they are not too far gone, each will recover health and spirit.”*

Edwin Babbitt, MD



# Vision

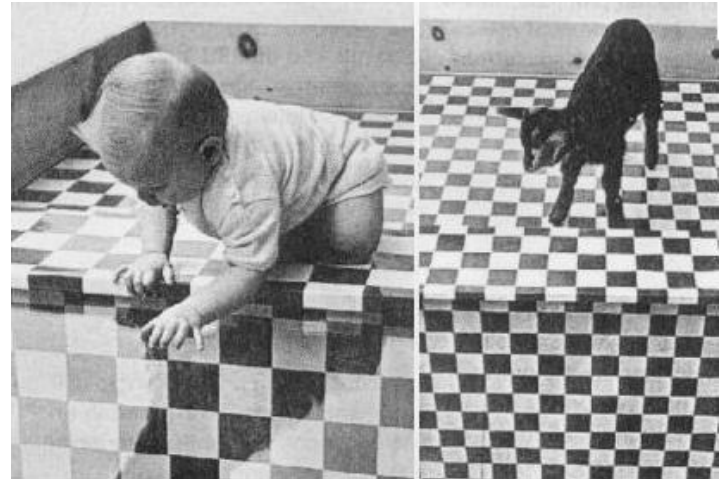
## Vertical Surfaces:

- Glare can be a problem on walls as well as floors



## Visual Cliffing:

- Stalling (walking and suddenly stopping)



# Vision

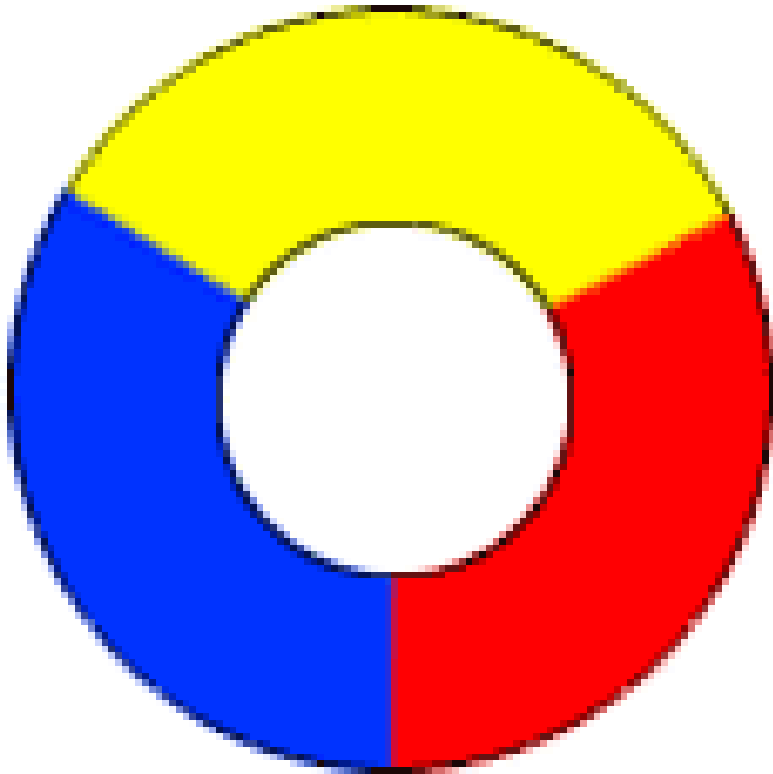
## Objects and Art:

- Lack of visual acuity can cause misinterpretation of objects - look for features that can be misinterpreted

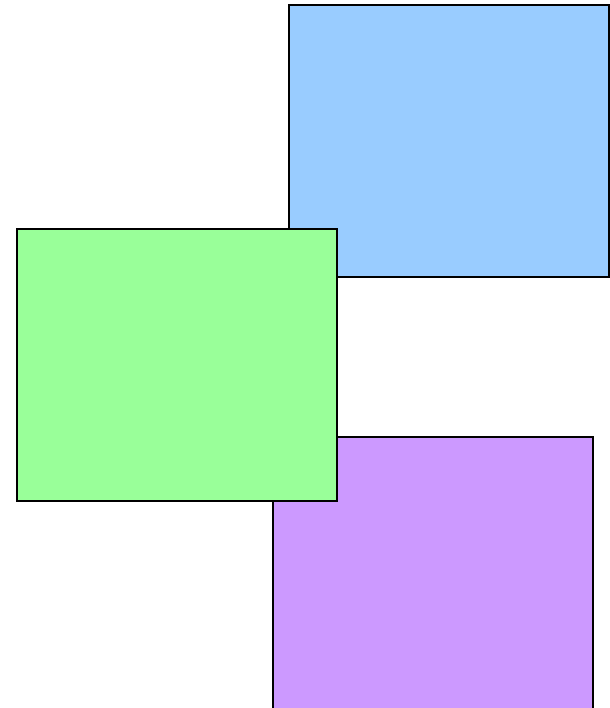




# Vision: Color



Clearer/highly saturated colors:  
easier to see



Cool pastel colors:  
more difficult to see

# Vision: Contrast



Toilets



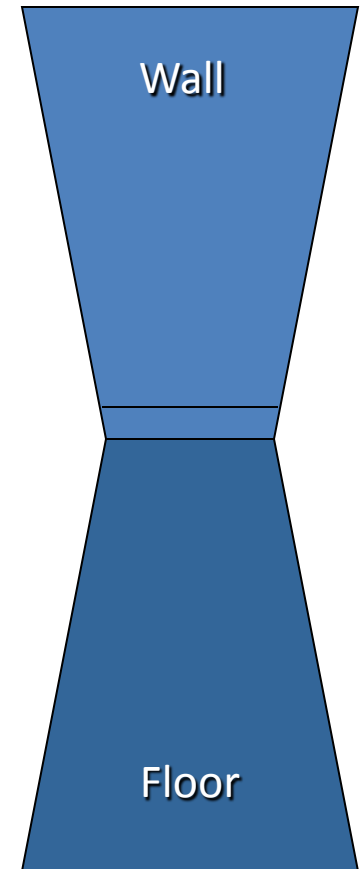
Furniture



Counter  
Tops



Stair Treads

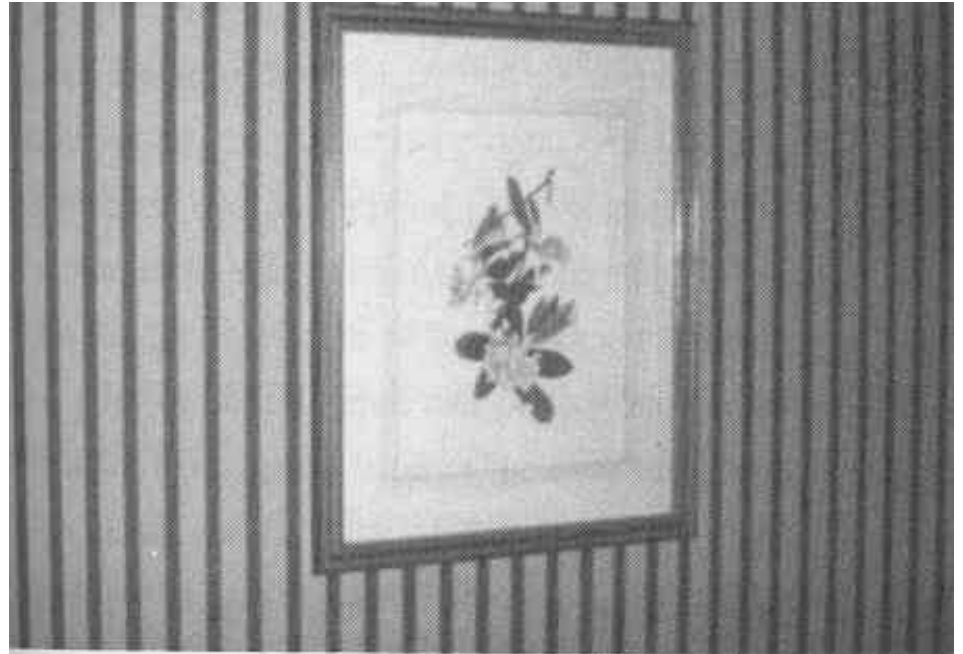




# Vision: Pattern



Flame Stitch = Movement



Stripes = Jail/Prison

# Maintenance and Housekeeping

- Repair damaged flooring conditions which can cause a risk
- Address clutter to remove trip hazards and avoid confusion



# Fabrics

- Instead of using under pads, plastic and towels reupholster furniture with “easy care” fabrics - reduces stress and frustration



# Prosthetic Environment

- Hand rails, grab bars in bathrooms and physical aid devices
- Does not have to look institutional
- Select a grab bars with a contrasting color to bathroom tile





# Prosthetic Environment



Great Grabz



Health Craft



# Supportive Environment at Home and in the Bathroom



# Perceptual Hazards

- Flooring material pattern and color can create an illusion of elevation change and cause falls





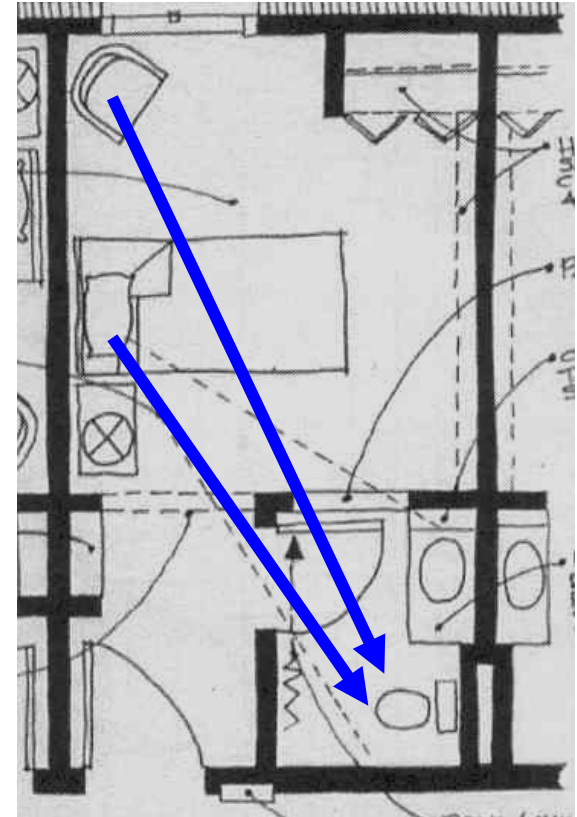
# Personal Care and Grooming Functional Competence

- Activities of Daily Living – Grooming, Bathing, etc.



# Toileting

- Maximize awareness of the toilet room
  - Memory cue – door not required, contrast toilet with flooring/walls
  - Fixture placement, keep the lid up
  - Warmth and comfortable feeling in bathing area

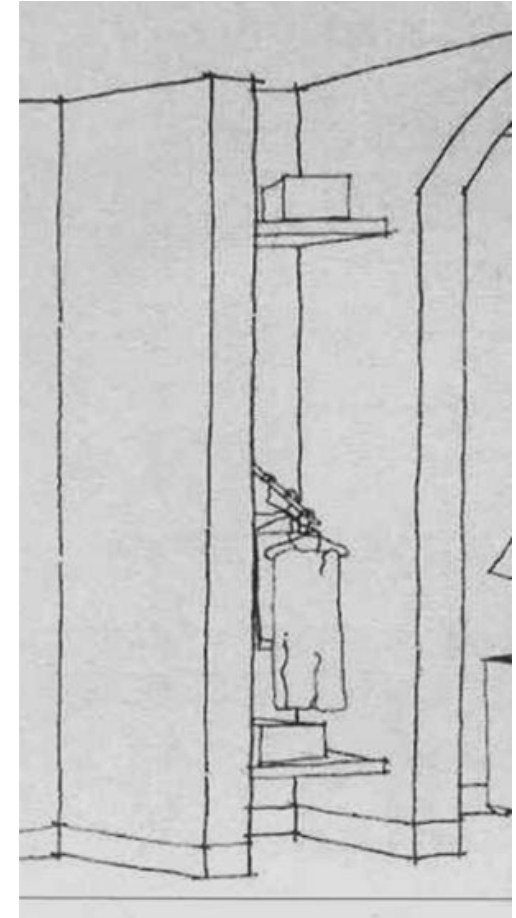
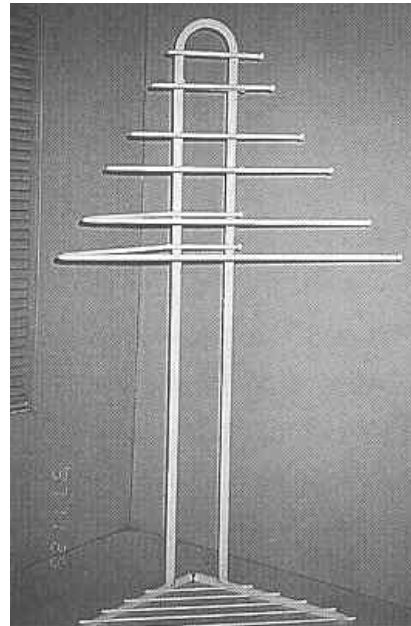
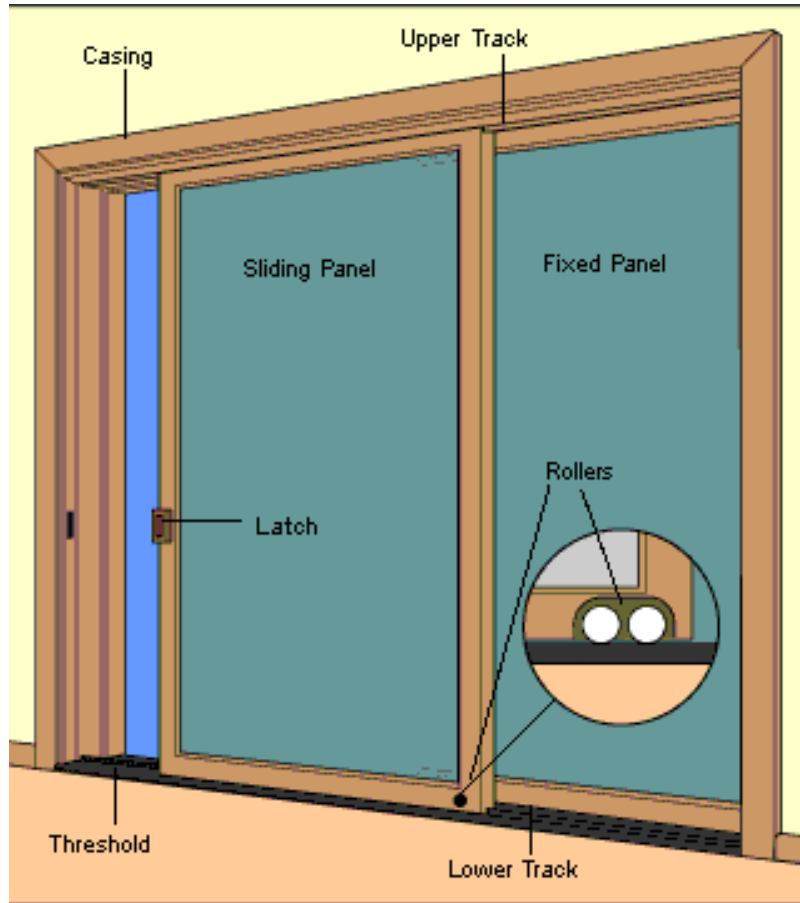


# Dressing

- Confronted with overwhelming choice in the wardrobe closet
- Present garments in sequence consistent with the individual
  - Sequential Dressing Closet
  - Retail Rack



# Dressing



# Dining

- Access to the Kitchen
  - Visible glass doors in the cabinetry and refrigerator
- Safety in the Kitchen
  - Smart switch energizing electric range, garbage disposal and oven (anything that an individual may be able to accidentally hurt themselves with)
  - No gas appliances

# Summary

- Create a therapeutic environment
- Less clutter, exposure to daylight and reminders of earlier life experiences in the home alleviate agitation
- Provide a looping circulation for the individual to wander **safely**
- Encourage exercise to prevent falls





# Questions And Conversation

Slide used courtesy of David Troxel – “Best Friends Approach”