

AUDIOLOGY AND DEMENTIA

TRACY
BREWER
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FACTS ABOUT DEMENTIA

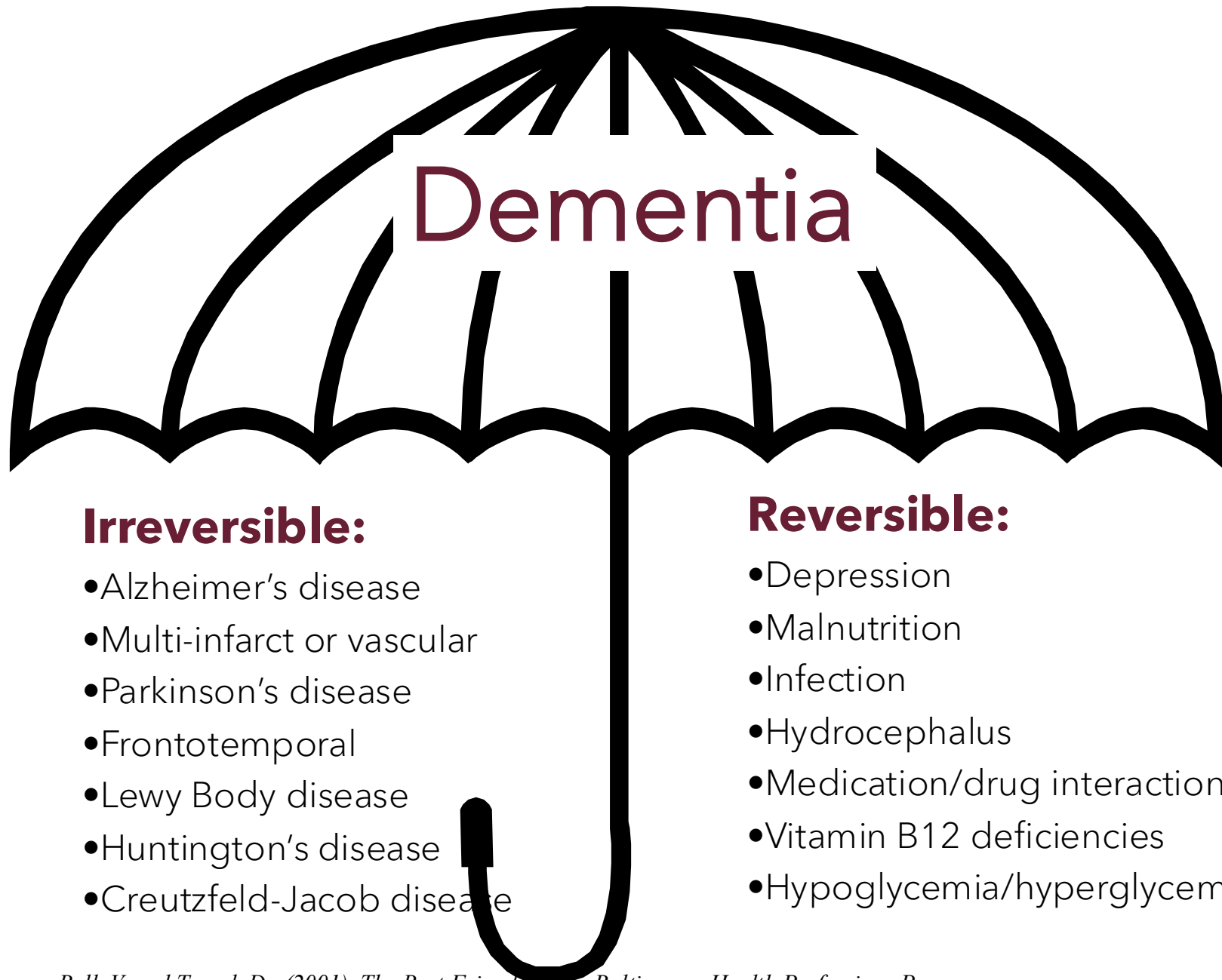
FACTS

- 5.8 million people in the United States are living with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia
- Dementia is NOT a normal part of aging- It is caused by diseases of the brain that influence memory, thinking, emotion and behavior
- Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia
- Alzheimer's is a disease that causes dementia





THE DEMENTIA UMBRELLA



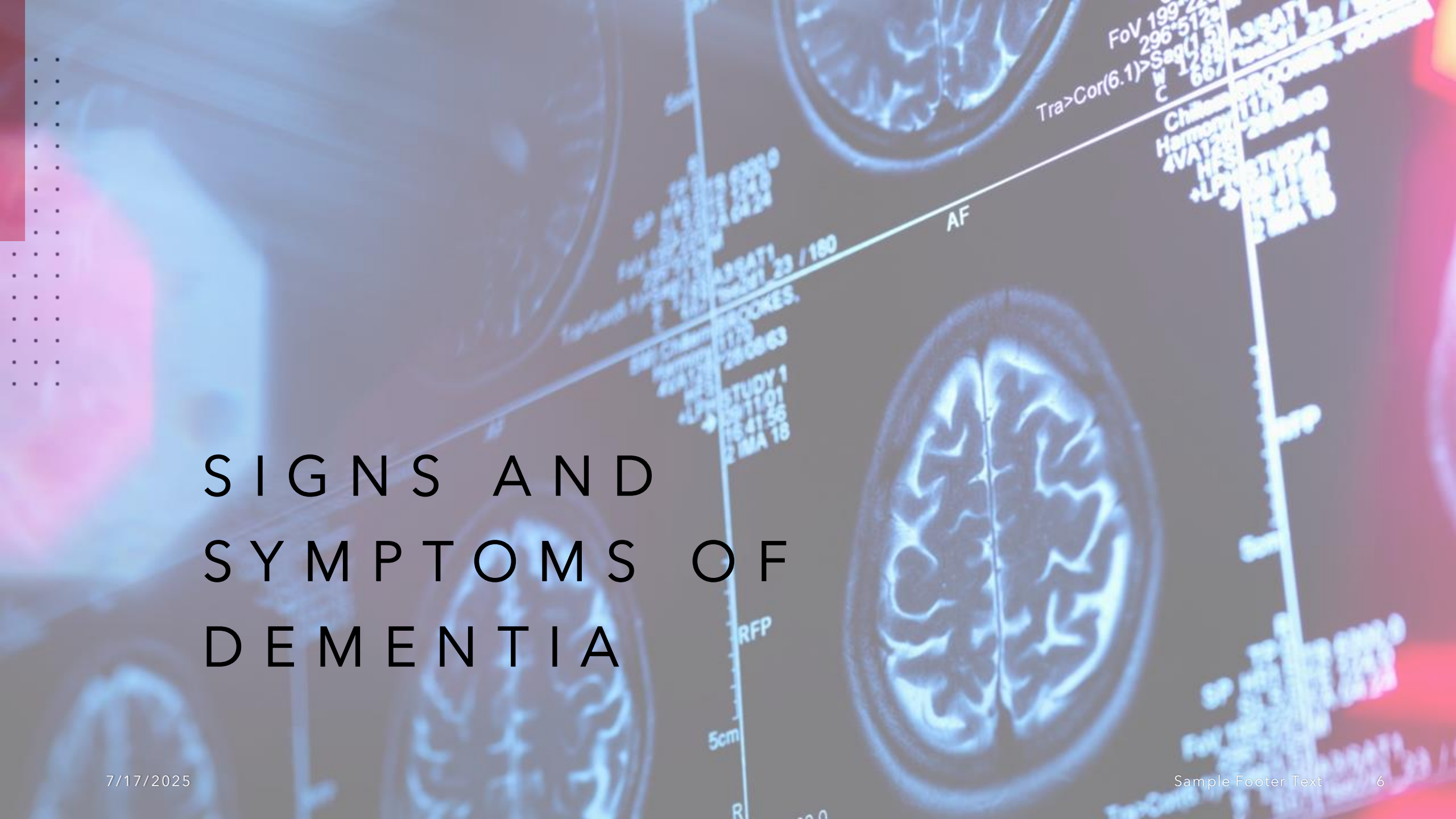
Dementia

Irreversible:

- Alzheimer's disease
- Multi-infarct or vascular
- Parkinson's disease
- Frontotemporal
- Lewy Body disease
- Huntington's disease
- Creutzfeld-Jacob disease

Reversible:

- Depression
- Malnutrition
- Infection
- Hydrocephalus
- Medication/drug interaction
- Vitamin B12 deficiencies
- Hypoglycemia/hyperglycemia



SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF DEMENTIA

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Memory loss that disrupts daily life
- Challenges in planning or solving problems
- Difficulty completing familiar tasks
- Confusion with time or place
- Trouble with visual or spatial relations
- New problems with words in speaking or writing
- Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps
- Decreased or poor judgment
- Withdrawal from work or social activities
- Changes in mood or personality





COMMUNICATING AND RELATING

FEELINGS ASSOCIATED WITH DEMENTIA

- Loss
- Isolation and Loneliness
- Sadness
- Confusion
- Worry and Anxiety
- Frustration
- Fear and Paranoia
- Anger
- Embarrassment



TIPS TO TURN THESE FEELINGS AROUND

- Turn paranoia into a trusting relationship
- Listen
- Help fill in the blanks without stepping on their toes
- Do not assume a supervisory role
- Pay attention to non-verbal communication
- Encourage participation in communication- do not just speak to their caregiver
- Share a compliment
- Ask for their opinion



TURN AROUND TIPS CONT...

- If something goes wrong, take the blame
- Keep your language simple
- Watch *your* body language
- Watch *their* body language
- Do not try to argue or correct them
- Do not give orders
- Do not try to explain too much too far in advance
- Ask easily answered questions, but not too many





REACTIVE BEHAVIORS

Reactive behaviors in persons with dementia are a form of expression. It is their way of telling us something

We cause 90% of behaviors and spend 90% of our time trying to find the cause

To provide the best care, we need to determine what they are trying to tell us



POSSIBLE REASONS FOR BEHAVIORS

- Health
- Environment
- Task-related
- Communication difficulties
- Perception of reality



HEALTH REASONS

1. Impaired hearing
2. Impaired vision
3. Illness (UTI, cold, flu, Covid)
4. Toothache
5. Constipation
6. Dehydration
7. Depression
8. Other underlying chronic illness



ENVIRONMENTAL REASONS

- Space too big
- Lighting
- Poor visual orientation
- Sounds
- Temperature
- Lack of structured routine



TASK-RELATED REASONS

- The task is now too complicated
- Instructions are not given in a way that works for the person at the time
- The person is not familiar with the task and fears doing something new
- A familiar task is now confusing



COMMUNICATION RELATED REASONS

- Talking too fast
- Arguing or confronting
- Not talking to the person directly
- Speaking too loud or too soft



PERCEPTION OF REALITY

- Delusions
- Hallucinations

Is it a problem?

Who's problem is it?





HOW TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

TIPS

- Know the persons life story
- Weave bits of their life story into conversation
- If there is a specific staff member they connect with, have them involved in care
- Brainstorm approaches. Look at what has worked and what has not in the past
- Avoid labeling
- Avoid Overmedicating





TAKEAWAYS

DEMENTIA AND AUDIOLOGY

TRY TO REMEMBER...

- HAVE EMPATHY- How would you feel if...
- When you know ONE person with dementia, you know ONE person with dementia
- Keep in mind, we don't know how much they are processing, so chose your language accordingly

BOTTOM LINE:

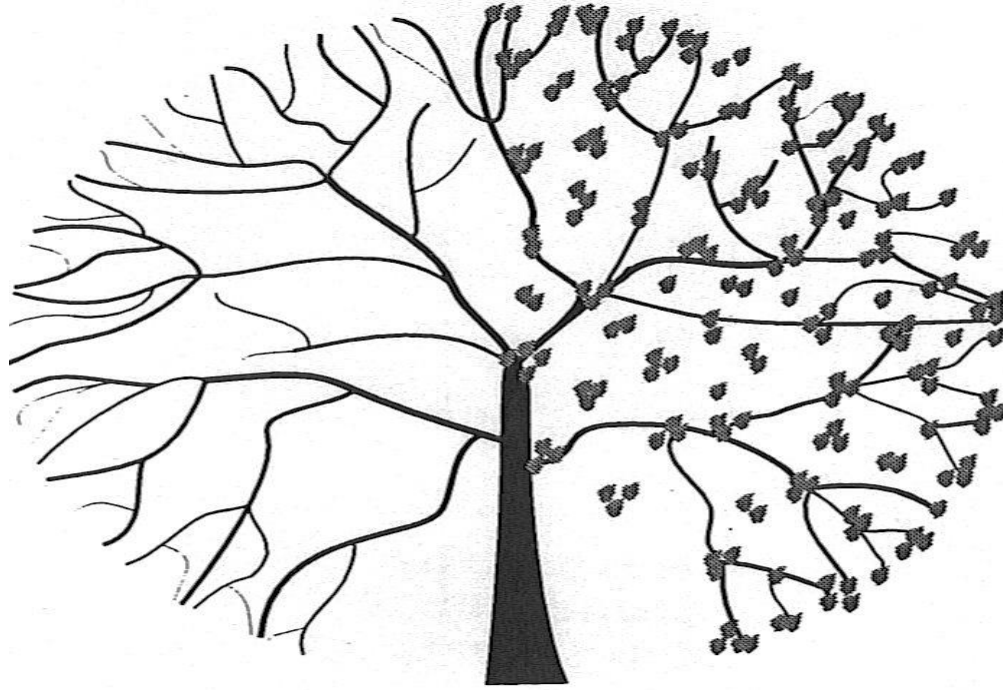
They are a person with a life story

The disease does not define them

Maintain their dignity

Make them feel valued





The Other Side

**It's not all about what they have lost, it's about what
they have left!**

The Best Friends Approach to Alzheimer's Care, by Virginia Bell and David Troxel.
Copyright 1997, by Health Professions Press, Inc., Baltimore

REFERENCES

- Alzheimer's Association
- Alzheimer's Disease International
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Bell, V., Troxel, D. (2012). *A Dignified Life; The Best Friends Approach to Alzheimer's Care*. Health Communications, Inc.

*"It is better to know the patient who has the disease
than to know the patient's disease" Hippocrates*

