

DUKE DEMENTIA FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM

Caregiver Connections

An Educational Webinar Series With The Experts

**The presentation will begin shortly.
Thank you for your patience!**

**dukefamilysupport.org
919-660-7510**

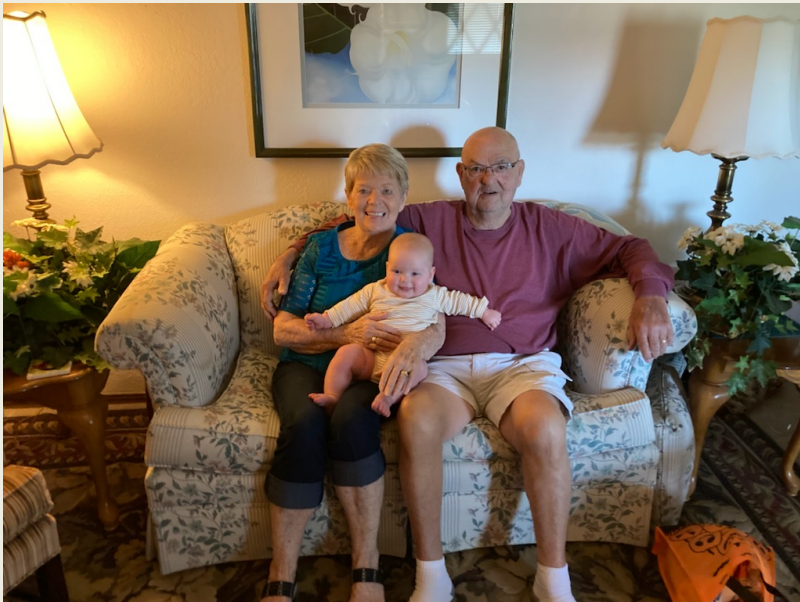
INNOVATIVE TOOLS AND STRATEGIES TO REDUCE STRESS EXPERIENCED BY PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA

Presented by
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PhD, RN
Postdoctoral
Research Fellow



MY BACKGROUND

- Geriatric-psych nurse
- Nurse researcher focused on dementia care
- Distanced caregiver





TOPICS TO REVIEW

- Concept of stress and why its important
- Stress experienced by people living with dementia and their caregivers
- Strategies to reduce stress
- Tools to reduce stress
- Wrap up
- Links to stress management tools

WHAT DOES SHE MEAN BY “STRESS”?

- Stress is how our body and mind react to what is happening around us
- Stress is a continuum
- Stress vs. distress

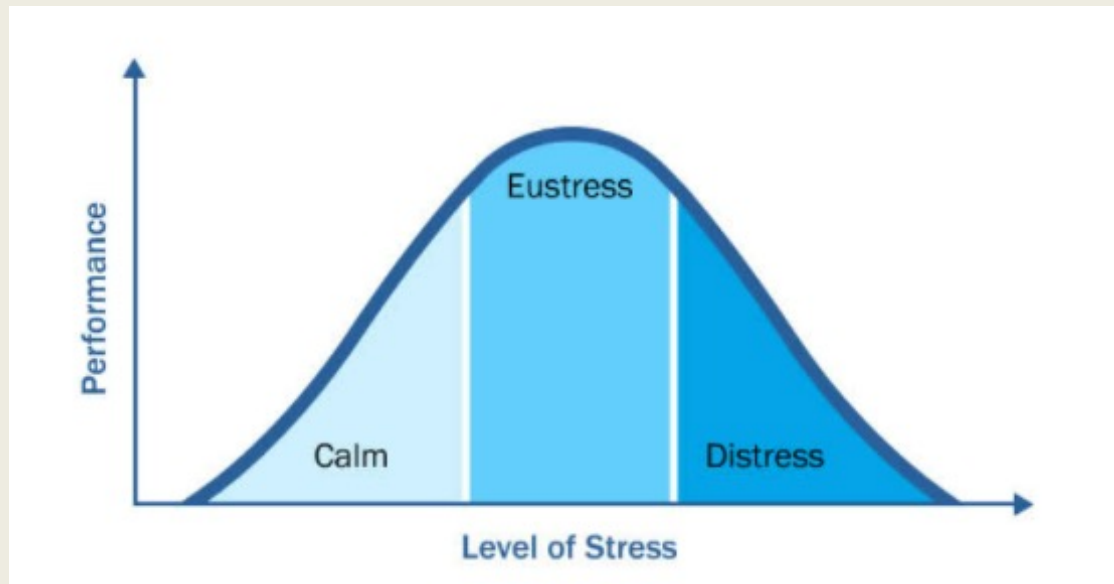
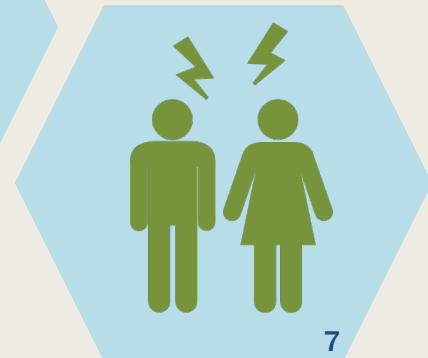


Image from The American Institute of stress <https://www.stress.org/daily-life>

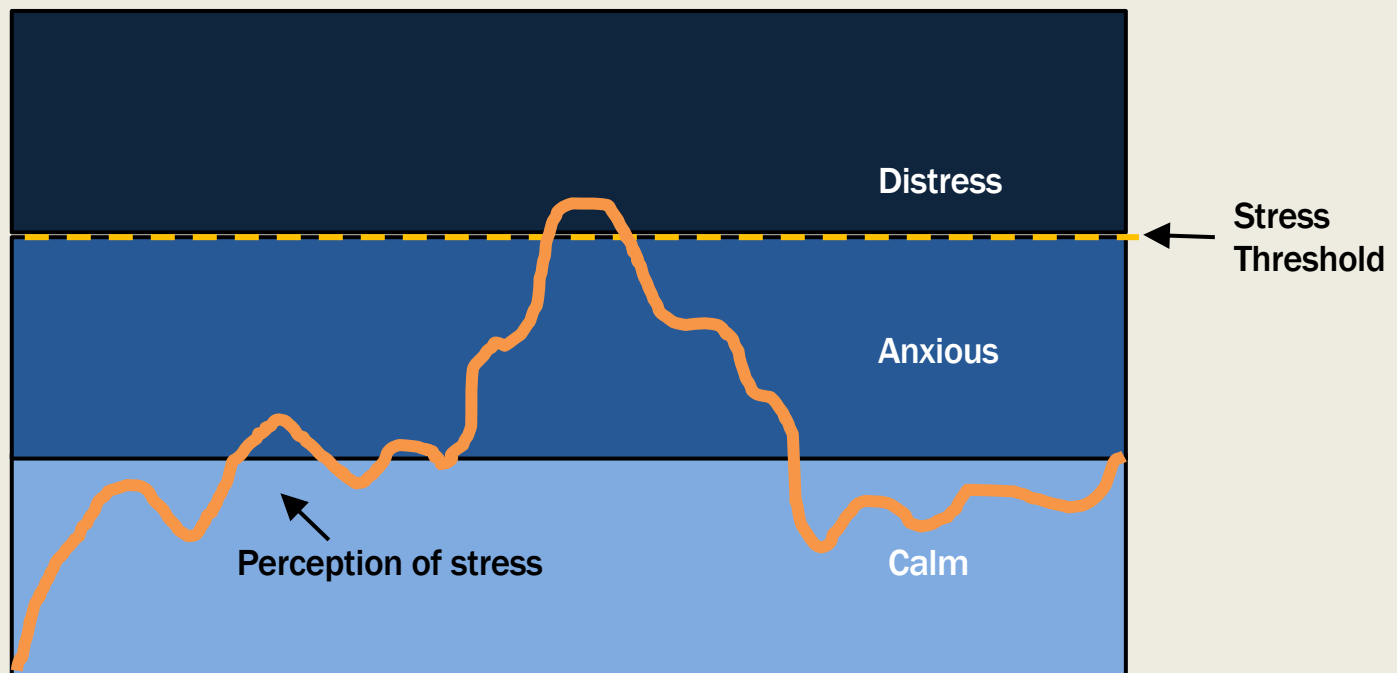
WHY CARE ABOUT STRESS?

- We all have it
- It impacts our:
 - Health (short and long-term)
 - Relationships
 - Ability to care for others
- Pandemic compounded stress we already had

**There are ways to
reduce stress**



STRESS THRESHOLD



STRESS THRESHOLD IN DEMENTIA

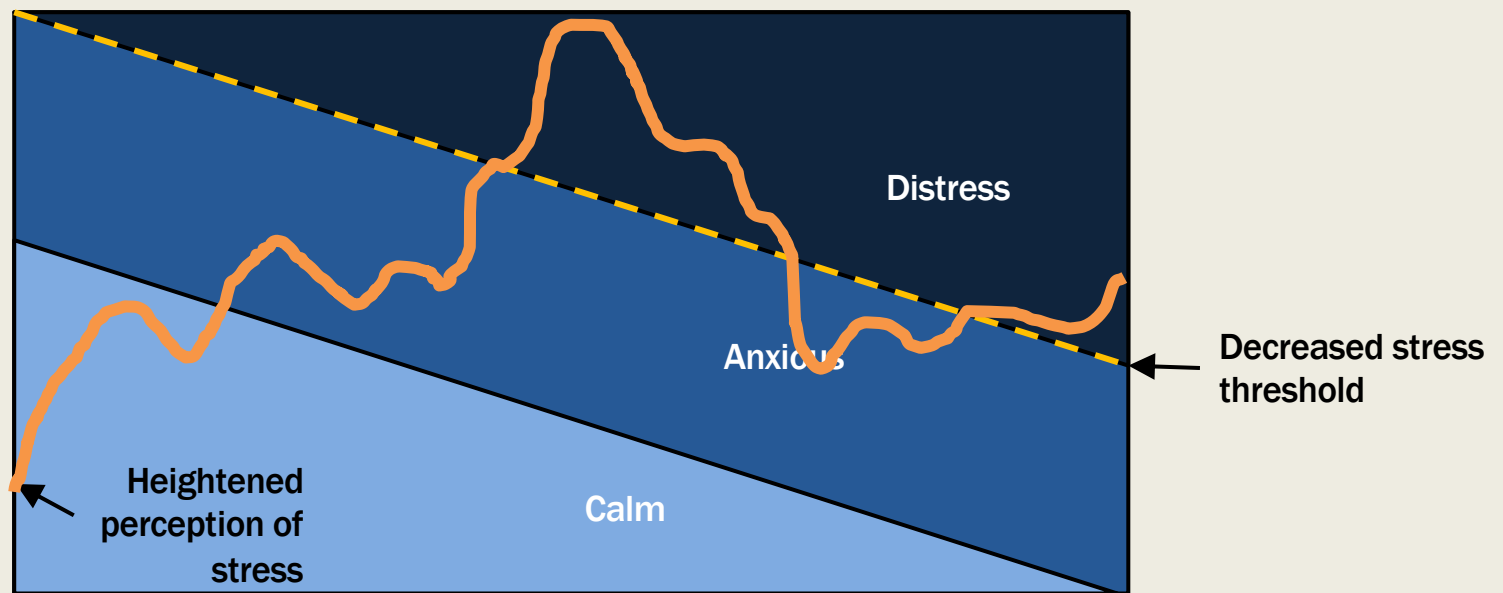


Image adapted from Smith et al. (2004)

CAREGIVER STRESS PROCESS

- Caregiver stress is linked to the person with dementia's stress
- Health effects caused by stress are linked



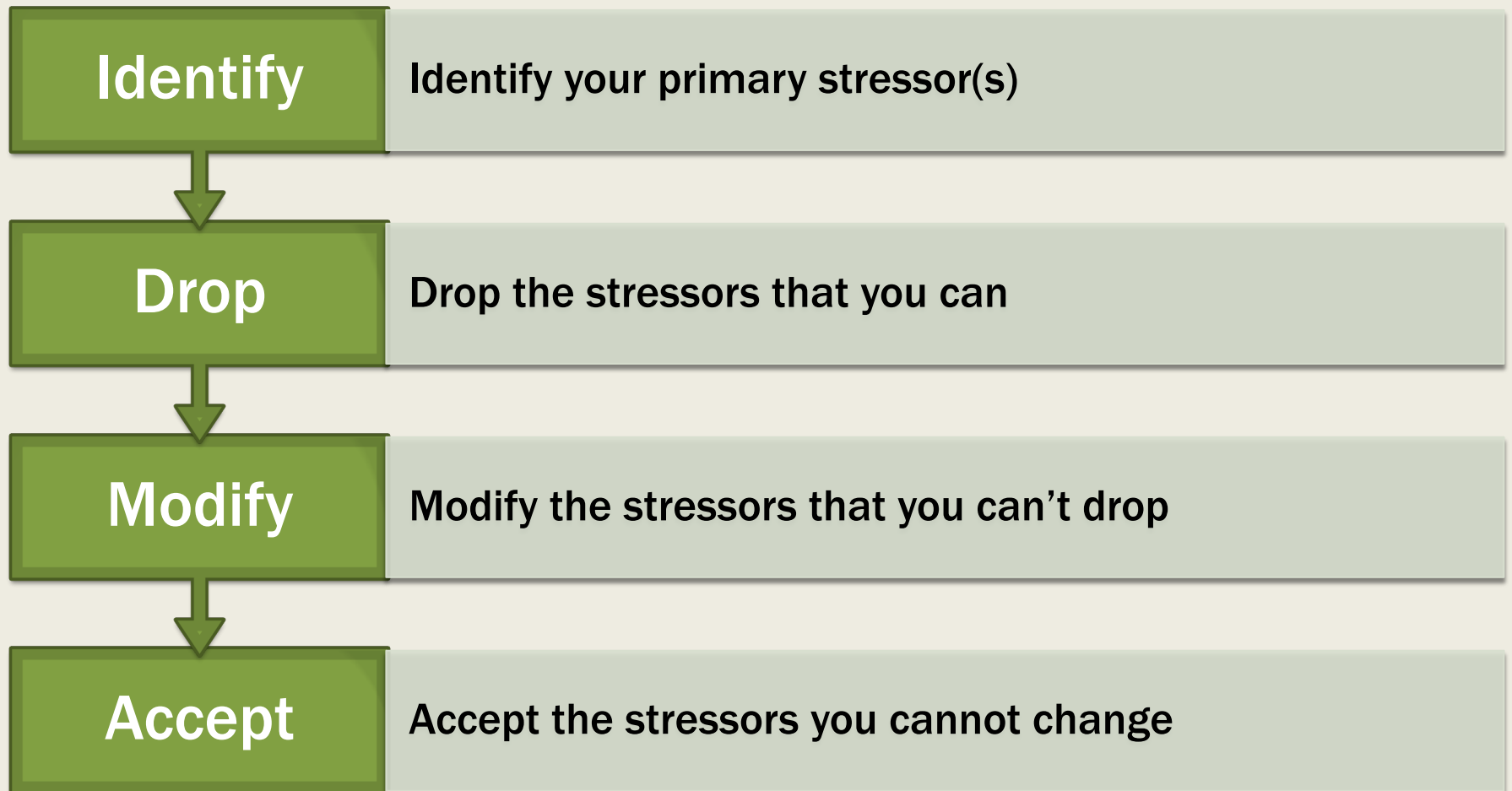
STRESS MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND TOOLS

Strategies = Things you can do to reduce stress

Tools = Things you can use to help you reduce stress

Both are important for the caregiver and the person with dementia

STRATEGIES



DROP THE STRESSORS THAT YOU CAN

- Practice and take pride in saying no
- Take things off your to do list
- Delegate to others when possible
- Avoid stressful situations (or people)
- Give yourself grace

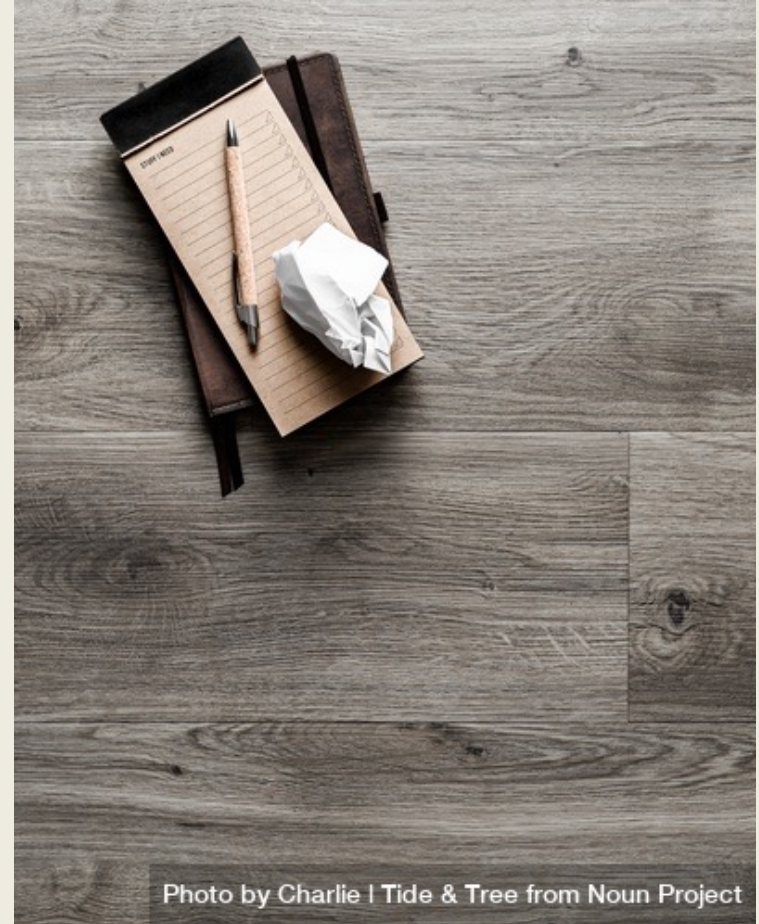


Photo by Charlie I Tide & Tree from Noun Project

MODIFY STRESSORS THAT YOU CANNOT DROP

- Reduce or reallocate time spent on stressful tasks
- Identify your “prime” time of day, do the most stressful tasks then
- Identify your “stress free” time
- Alter your routine if necessary



Photo by Lana Ferovic from Nou

ACCEPT STRESSORS YOU CAN'T MODIFY

Recognize not everything is in your control

Add new activities and habits to compensate

- Stretching/yoga/tai chi/walking
- Deep breathing
- Meditation
- Prayer
- Do at least 1 activity a day that:
 - **Fulfills you**
 - **Brings you joy**
 - **Relaxes you**
- Schedule daily naps and/or “alone time”
- Schedule social activities

OTHER STRATEGIES FOR PERSON WITH DEMENTIA

- Maintain a daily routine
- Incorporate physical activity and more rest breaks
- Find creative ways to “engage with life”
- Lower environmental stimulation
 - Dim the lights
 - Lower the volume
 - Limit exposure to unfamiliar environments
 - Limit number of people
 - Limit number of activities

TOOLS

**Dementia
friendly music
devices**

**Activity aprons
and busy
boards**

**Weighted
blankets**

**Bright light
therapy**

**Acupressure
and massage
tools**

Aromatherapy

**Animatronic
pets and baby
dolls**

**Guided
journals**



DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY MUSIC DEVICES

Music is one of the **most** beneficial strategies to reduce stress among people with dementia

Simply designed

- 1-2 buttons

- One time setup

- Looks like a radio

- Durable

ACTIVITY APRONS AND BUSY BOARDS

- Stimulates the senses
- Provides entertainment and distraction
- Can promote relaxation and engagement, reduce anxiety



WEIGHTED BLANKETS AND GARMENTS

- Weigh between 10-12 pounds
- Easy to use
- Feels “like a gentle hug”
- Can be used during the day or overnight



BRIGHT LIGHT THERAPY DEVICES

- Mimics natural light from the sun
- Used during the day
- Helps regulate sleep-wake cycle
- Reduces daytime fatigue and improves overnight sleep



ACUPRESSURE AND MASSAGE TOOLS

- Applies direct stimulation to “acupoints”
- Less invasive than needle acupuncture
- Can reduce stress and pain



AROMATHERAPY

- Use of plant oils and fragrances to improve emotional and physical well-being
- Lavender – Sleep and relaxation
- Sweet orange – Anxiety
- Peppermint oil – Headache
- Ginger - Nausea

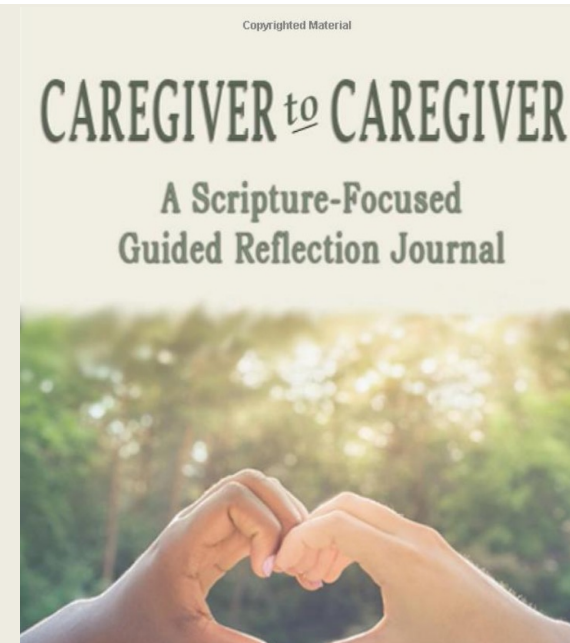


SOCIAL ROBOT PETS AND BABY DOLLS

- Highly accepted by people with dementia and their caregivers
- Provide social engagement, joy, comfort, and reduce anxiety



GUIDED JOURNALS





Mind Full, or Mindful?

WHAT DO THESE TOOLS HAVE IN COMMON?

Mindfulness tools

Provide an anchor to current situation/reality

Stimulate the senses and provide meaningful engagement

SAFE!

Don't require a prescription

Easy to use

Widely available

WRAP UP

- Stress management is like a puzzle
- There is no magic pill, not one size fits all
- Multiple strategies are likely needed
- Tools and strategies used to complement medical management and emotional/social supports (not replace!)
- Person with dementia and caregiver each have their own "puzzle" to solve



Photo by Scpio from Noun P

**COMMENTS OR
QUESTIONS?**

Thank you for
your time and
attention!

LINKS TO PRODUCTS

■ Simple music devices

- https://www.alzstore.com/simple-music-player-dementia-alzheimers-p/2115.htm?utm_source=google&utm_campaign=Campaign%20-%20PLA%20Shopping&utm_medium=pla
- <https://www.amazon.com/One-Touch-Audiobooks-Quality-Sound-Nostalgic-Technical/dp/B01B9THLUW?th=1>

■ Activity aprons and busy boards

- https://www.alzstore.com/activity-apron-p/0191.htm?utm_source=google&utm_campaign=Campaign%20-%20PLA%20Shopping&utm_medium=pla
- https://www.amazon.com/s?k=busy+boards+dementia&ref=nb_sb_noss_2

LINKS TO PRODUCTS

■ Weighted blankets

- https://www.amazon.com/s?k=weighted+blankets&ref=nb_sb_noss_2
- <https://www.alzstore.com/sensory-weighted-blanket-adult-anxiety-alzheimers-p/m006.htm>

■ Bright light therapy

- https://www.amazon.com/Therapy-Adjustable-Brightness-Function-Rotatable/dp/B08HV89TVQ/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=bright+light+therapy&qid=1639315741&sr=8-1
- https://www.amazon.com/Miracle-Morning-Replaces-Natural-Energy/dp/B01KZB295C/ref=sr_1_6?keywords=bright+light+therapy+bulbs&qid=1639315809&sr=8-6

LINKS TO PRODUCTS

■ Acupressure and massage tools

- https://www.amazon.com/s?k=acupressure+mat&ref=nb_sb_noss_2
- https://www.amazon.com/Fasciitis-Reflexology-Massager-Acupressure-Recovery/dp/B074XPWMQN/ref=sr_1_35?keywords=acupressure+tool&qid=1639318600&sr=8-35

■ Aromatherapy

- https://www.amazon.com/Neck-Shoulder-Wrap-Penetrating-Aromatherapy/dp/B07KKHCGPZ/ref=sr_1_18_sspa?keywords=aromatherapy&qid=1639316996&sr=8-18-spons&psc=1&spLa=ZW5jcnlwdGVkUXVhbGlmaWVyPUFRUIMOVVo0V0pKVU0mZW5jcnlwdGVkSWQ9QTAyMDUzODMyUjVFUkhBTtQdQSIRUJmVuY3J5cHRIZEFkSWQ9QTA4NzM4MzkzMEITTEICOFRJNEINJndpZGdldE5hbWU9c3BfbXRmJmFjdGljbG1ja1JlZGlyZWNOJmRvTm90TG9nQ2xpY2s9dHJ1ZQ==
- https://www.amazon.com/Bedtime-Essential-Oil-Shower-Steamer/dp/B08FDCLXNP/ref=sr_1_10?keywords=aromatherapy&qid=1639316996&sr=8-10

LINKS TO PRODUCTS

■ Animatronic pets and baby dolls

- https://www.amazon.com/Ageless-Innovation-Companion-Lifelike-Realistic/dp/B01L9B5JYU/ref=sr_1_5?keywords=robot+dog+companion&qid=1639317247&sr=8-5
- <https://www.alzstore.com/alzheimers-baby-doll-therapy-kayla-p/0530.htm>

■ Guided journals

- https://www.amazon.com/Memories-Keepsake-Memoirs-Alzheimers-Dementia/dp/1799147428/ref=sr_1_18?keywords=guided+caregiver+journal&qid=1639317945&sr=8-18
- https://www.amazon.com/s?k=guided+caregiver+journal&ref=nb_sb_noss
- https://www.amazon.com/Self-Care-Caregivers-60-Day-Accountability-Journal/dp/B091WGHCF5/ref=sr_1_3?keywords=self-care+caregiver+journal&qid=1639318509&sr=8-3

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