

# CATASTROPHIC REACTIONS & SUNDOWNING

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- Catastrophic reactions are sudden, unexpected responses that appear to be overreactions to what would normally be viewed as mild stimulation.
- Sundown Syndrome: increased agitation and aggressive behavior that occurs late in the day.

WHY does my loved one do that?

- ☐ Surroundings are too stimulating, confusing, new.
- ☐ Change in routine or caregiver.
- ☐ Caregiver is agitated, frustrated, impatient.
- ☐ Too many demands being made on the loved one.
- ☐ Brain damage from the disease causes misunderstanding of surroundings.
- ☐ Side effect of medication.

TRY to avoid or smooth out unwanted behavior.

- ☒ Simplify the surroundings.
- ☒ Maintain a steady routine and schedule.
- ☒ Maintain a positive matter-of-fact, calm approach.
- ☒ Simplify instructions and do not ask questions that require good memory.
- ☒ Do not argue. What seems real to your loved one is different than what is real to you.
- ☒ Suggest a medication review.