

Better Together

Social Connection and Cognitive Health



Dr Hilton Koppe, Dementia Training Australia.



Dementia Training Australia is supported by funding from the Australian Government under the Dementia Training Program.



Dementia
Training
Australia[®]

Domains of Dementia

Cognitive Decline

Functional Decline

Mental Health Symptoms

Behaviour Changes

Physical Decline

V-REALMS of Cognition

Visuospatial

Recall/Memory

Executive function

Attention

Language

Motor function

Social



Stages of Dementia Framework

Stage 1 – Still at Home

- Short-term memory loss with repetitive questions
- Loss of interest in hobbies and previously enjoyable activities
- Impaired function

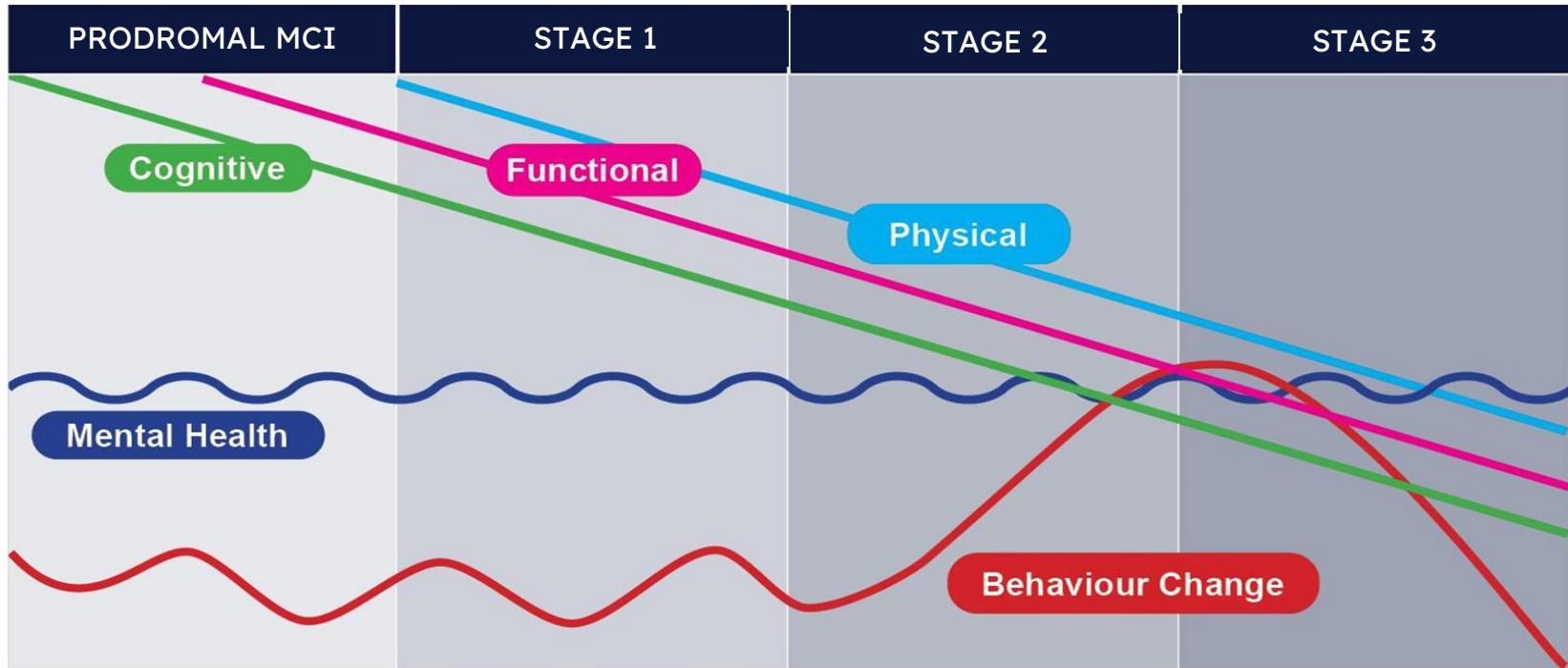
Stage 2 – Escalating Care Needs, Transitioning to 24-Hour Care

- Progression of cognitive deficits
- Declining function
- Behaviour changes

Stage 3 – Diminishing Quality of Life

- Increasing loss of independence: dressing, feeding, bathing
- Changed Behaviour
- Physical decline

Trajectory of Alzheimer's Dementia¹



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The Spectrum of Cognitive Change¹

Normal
Ageing

- Slight slowing of processing. Function intact.

Subjective
Cognitive
Impairment

- Changes in cognition noticed by the individual but not objectively seen. Function intact.

Mild
Cognitive
Impairment

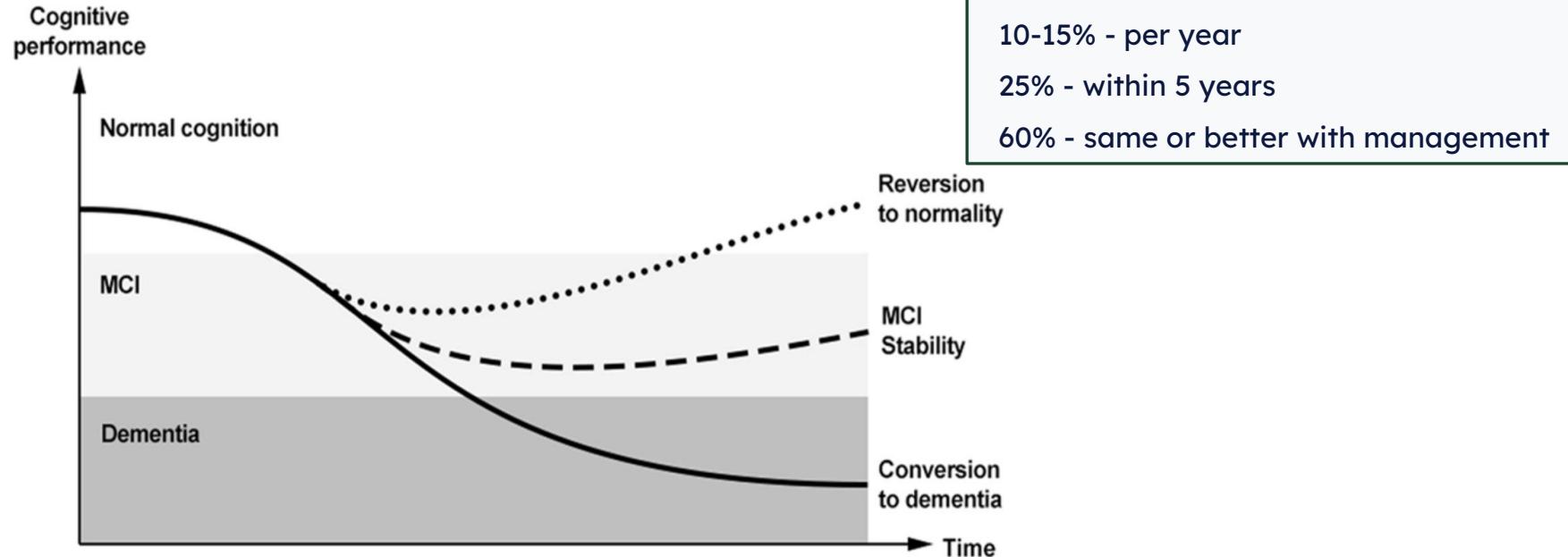
- Objective and subjective changes in memory and thinking. Function maintained.

Dementia

- Cognition and function are impaired.

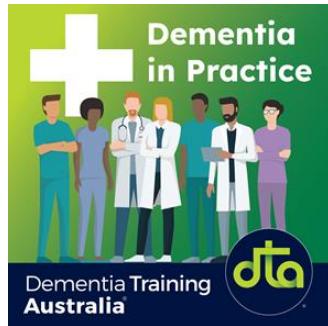
1. Smid J, Studart-Neto A, Cesar-Freitas K et al Subjective Cognitive Impairment, mild cognitive impairment and dementia syndromic approach – recommendations of the Scientific Department of Cognitive Neurology, *Dementia Neuropsychologica*, 2022.

MCI Increases Dementia Risk¹



1. Canevelli M et al. *Front Med (Lausanne)* 2017;4:184.

Check This Out!



Dementia in Practice Podcast

Selection of Episodes from Season 4

- Being a doctor and a daughter for a parent with dementia.
- Social isolation and loneliness increase our risk of dementia – but what can we do about it?
- Modifiable risk factors for dementia.

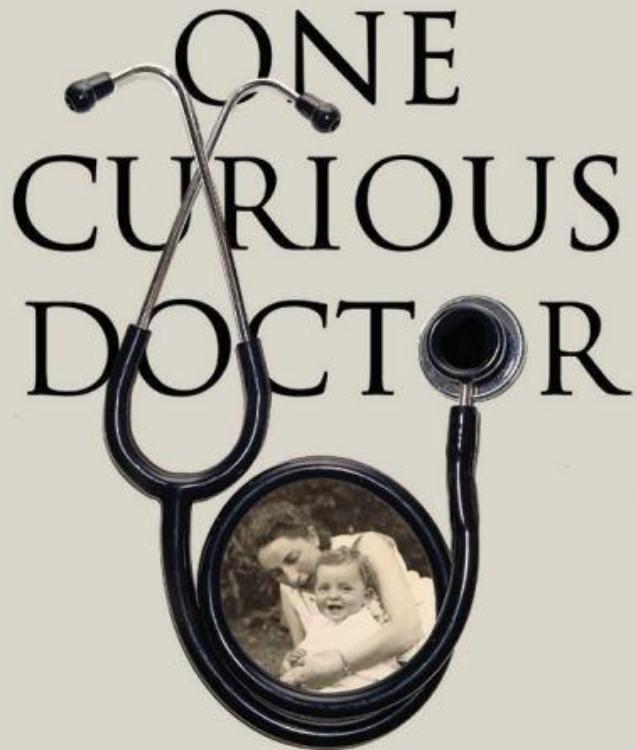
And Check This Out!

One Curious Doctor: A Memoir of Medicine, Migration and Mortality

~~RRP \$34.95~~

Symposium special \$30.00

A Memoir of Medicine,
Migration and Mortality



A gift... allow yourself to be enchanted. ARNOLD ZABLE

Jodie – 45 years old

Lives in Ballina

Widowed 5 years

Daughters 15 and 17 live at home with her

Jodie – 45 years old

Jodie's mother Ruth has Alzheimer's Disease
Dementia

Ruth has just moved in to live with Jodie

Jodie now main carer for Ruth

Jodie works as “freelance” bookkeeper, working part-time from home

Medical History

Hypertension

Overweight – increase in weight over last 5 years

Drinks 3 glasses wine per day

DASS score – moderate stress and depression, low anxiety

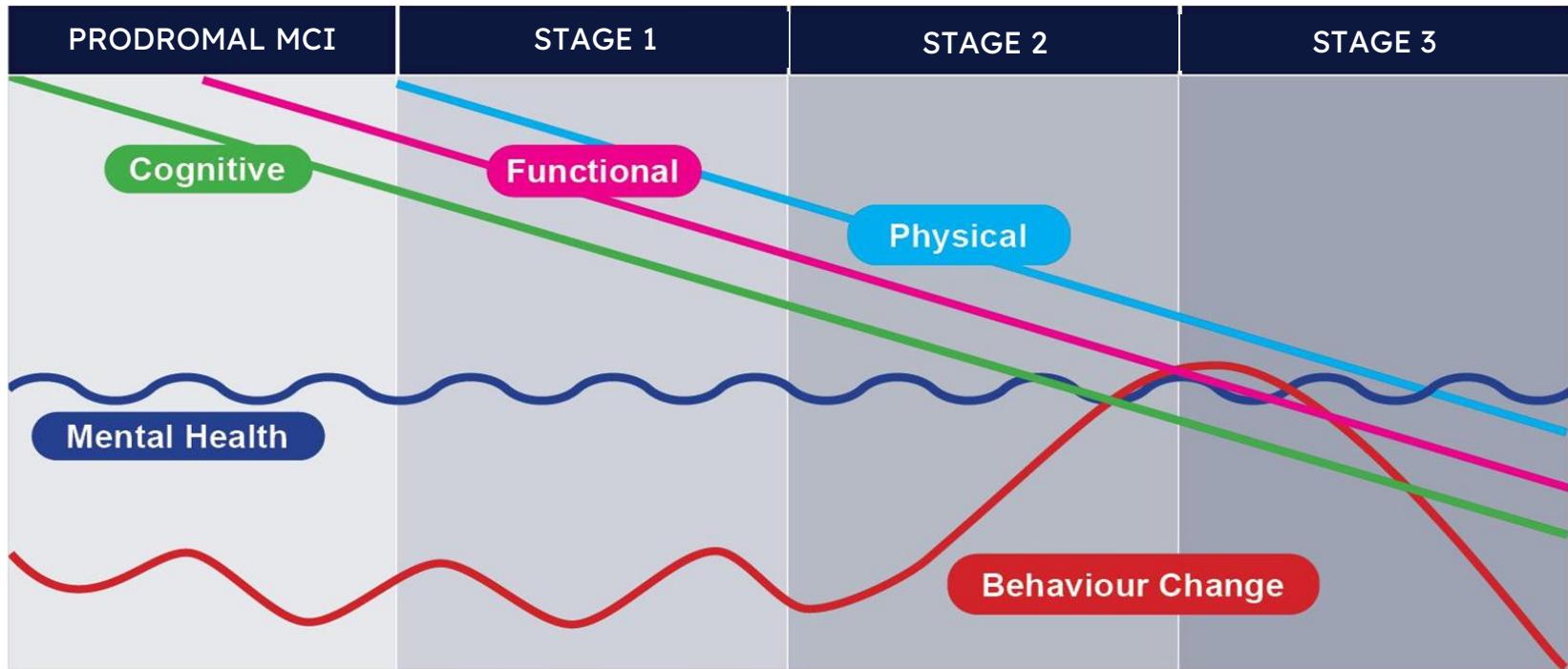
Family History

Mother with Alzheimer's Disease Dementia at age 70

Maternal aunt with younger onset Alzheimer's Disease Dementia at age 55

Brother with Bipolar Affective Disorder

Trajectory of Alzheimer's Dementia¹



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Social History

Previously employed full time

Transitioned to “freelance” work at home

Fits in work between caring for mother and daughters

Previously enjoyed playing squash running

Enjoys cooking and gardening

Previously grew and preserved vegetables

Social History

Used to socialise around her daughter's activities

Husband's death was by suicide

Jodie feels everyone she knew from that time is
“weird” around her now.

Part 2 – Ruth, Jodie's mother

75 years old, dementia for 5 years

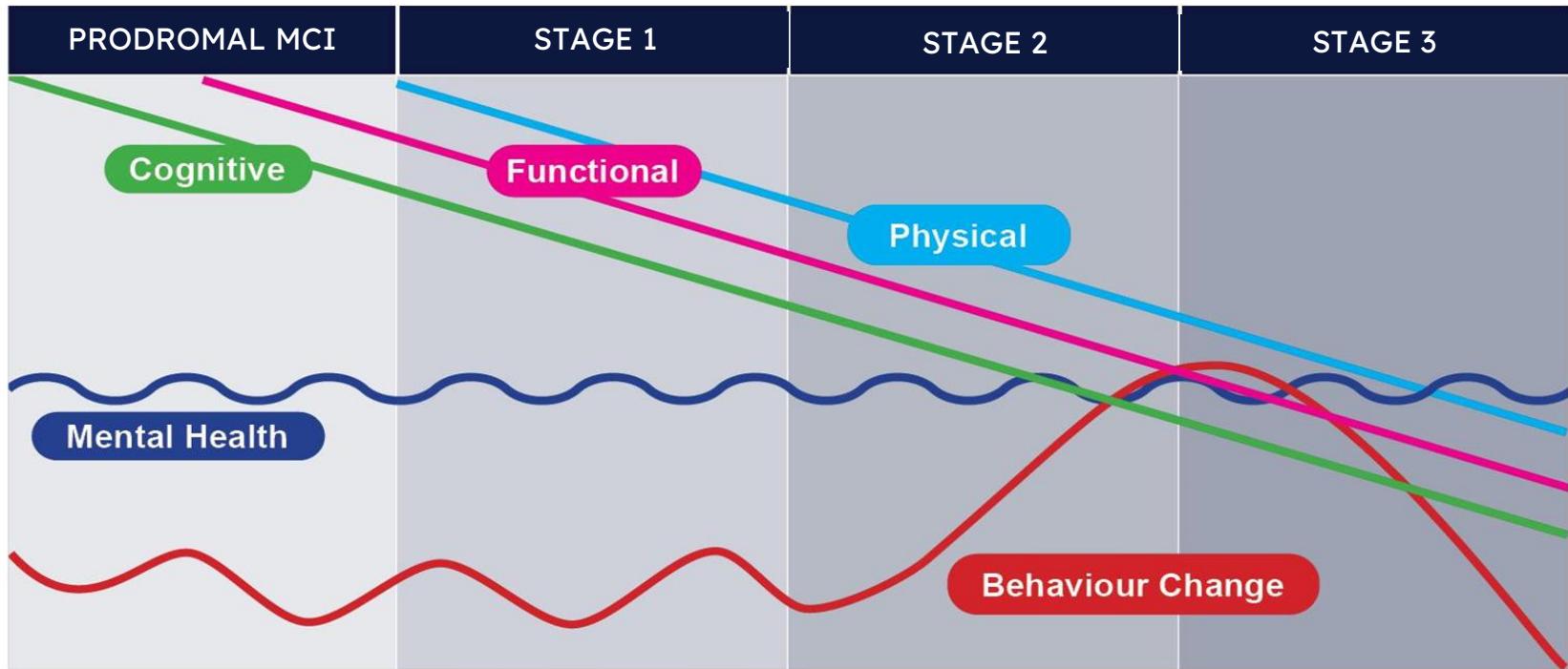
No longer able to care for herself

Lived in Tweed area prior to moving in with Jodie

Very socially active prior to moving – volunteer at Vinnies, community choir, community garden

Now spends all her time at Jodie's home with family.

Trajectory of Alzheimer's Dementia¹



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Part 3 – Jodie’s “free time”

Ruth’s home care package now gives Jodie the opportunity to have 2 half-days free from caring responsibilities for her mum.

She currently uses this time to do weekly shopping for the family (a chore) and to spend time in her garden (a joy)

Part 4 – Jodie is now 55

Ruth is living in a residential aged care facility.

Jodie's daughters have both left home.

Jodie developed Type 2 diabetes 5 years ago.

Over last 6 months, her diabetes control has deteriorated significantly.

Part 4 – Jodie is now 55

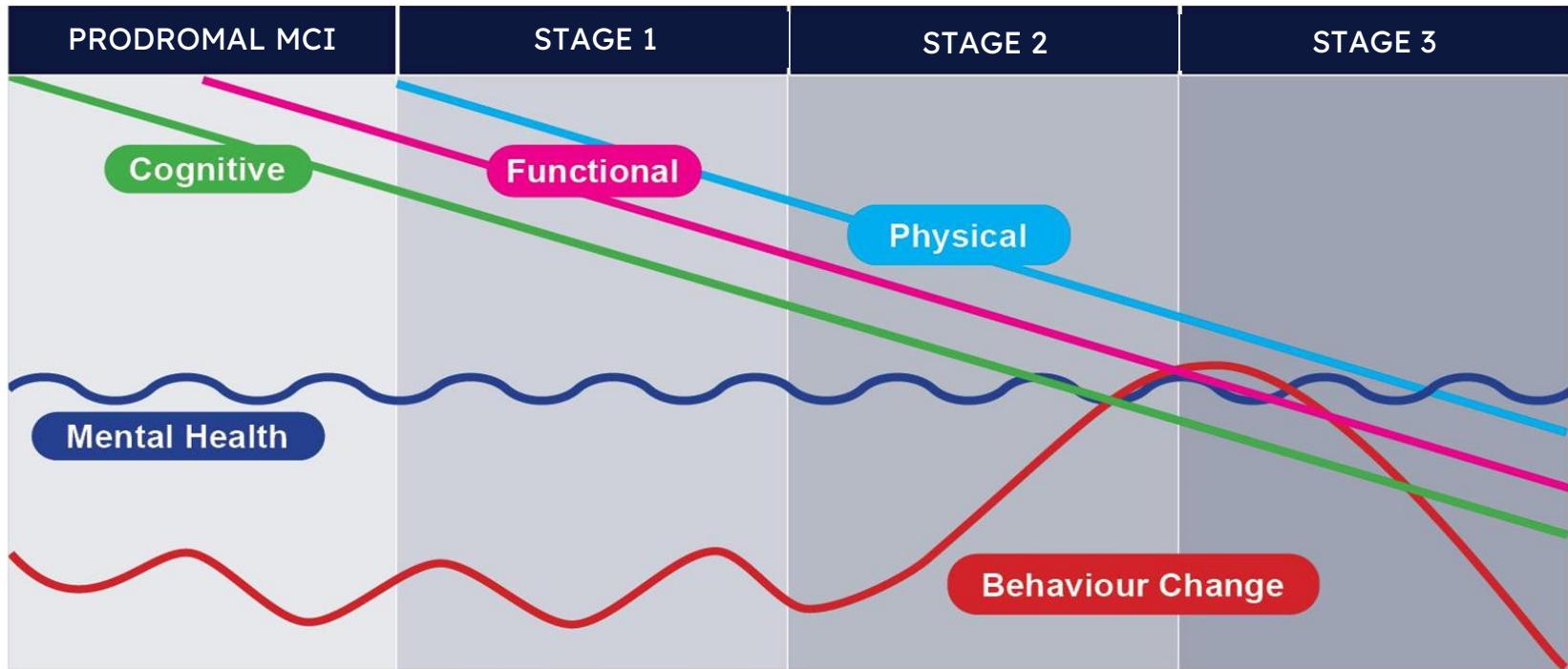
Jodie returned to work at her previous accounting job when her mum moved into RACF.

Currently working in the office 3 days per week

Thinking about retiring because she is finding the work increasingly stressful:

- concerned about making mistakes
- spending longer doing previously routine tasks
- double-checking all her work
- some staff members have been complaining that Jodie is not pulling her weight and that they are needing to cover for her

Trajectory of Alzheimer's Dementia¹



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Part 5 – Jodie is diagnosed with Mild Cognitive Impairment

Because of her family history, Jodie is concerned she may have prodromal Alzheimer's Disease Dementia

Your turn to do some work!

De Jong Gierveld Loneliness Scale

Scale
2

Length: 6 Questions

Language: Mixes positive and negative wording

Initially developed for: Researchers

Does it mention loneliness? No

This scale is for you if: you want an
academically rigorous tool that distinguishes
between different causes of loneliness.

The UCLA Loneliness Scale

Scale
3

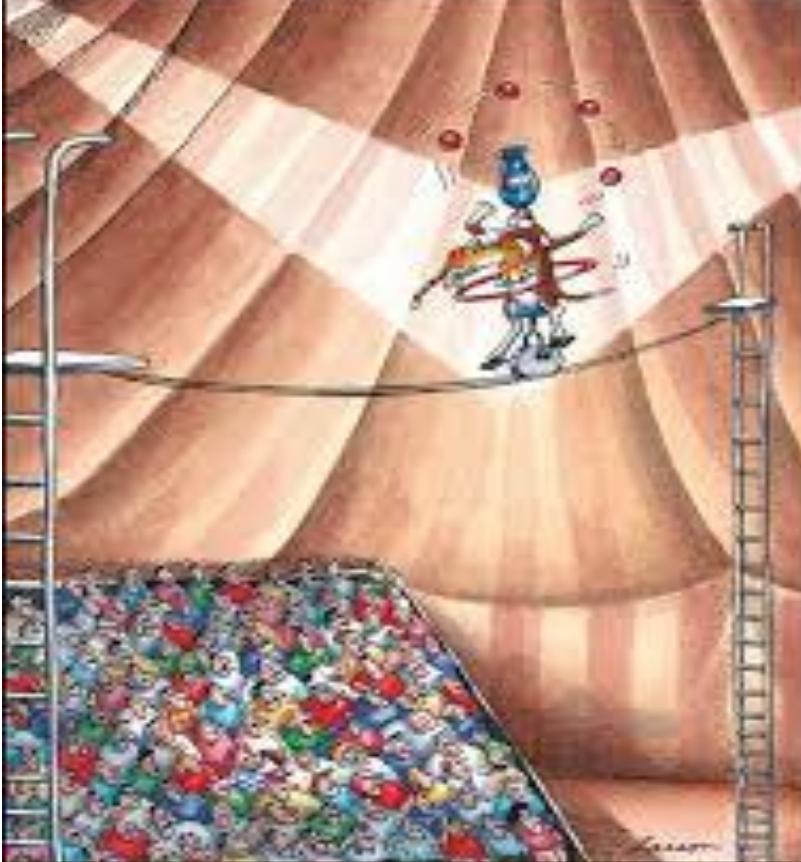
Length: 3 Questions

Language: Negative wording

Initially developed for: Service providers

Does it mention loneliness? No

This scale is for you if: you want a short and
academically rigorous tool, with a simple
scoring system.



High above the hushed crowd, Rex tried to remain focused.
Still, he couldn't shake one nagging thought:
He was an old dog and this was a new trick.

Dementia Training for Australia's Workforce

To find out more visit
dta.com.au

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