



Dementia: Attachment Matters

Jan Beattie, Alzheimer Scotland

Making sure nobody faces dementia alone.

The headlines



47.5
million
people
live with
dementia
worldwide

Expected
to double
every
20
years

90,000+
A graphic of nine stylized human figures arranged in two rows (four in the front, five in the back).
people in
Scotland
live with
dementia

Most of
you will
have a
relative
or friends
affected by
dementia

Dementia is and isn't



Is an umbrella term for a set of symptoms caused by brain disease

It is not a natural result of ageing



Age

is the biggest risk factor

Starts
30-40
years before first signs

...and attachment?



- **Risk factor**
- **Living with dementia**
- **Family carers**

Attachment builds brains



- Brain building
 - Amygdala – fear and anxiety
 - Hippocampus – memory and everyday functioning
 - Pre-frontal cortex – decision making and social behavior
- ‘Brain reserves’ built through attachment
- Secure social base – lonely people are twice as likely to develop Alzheimers

Living with dementia



Need for attachment increases as cognitive ability declines

Searching for attachment



Dementia =
multiple loss,
seperation and
vulnerability

Family carers



- The most important resources for people living with dementia
- Brain reserves apply to family carers too
- Carers with secure attachment less stressed as carers

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Jan Beattie, 10/12/2019

Locality pathway



So...



Living well with dementia needs secure attachment:

- Safety
- Calmness
- Connectedness





Thank you

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