

## Progressive Declines of Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias: Physical Changes That Affect Perception of the Environment

**Sensory Overload** – too much information coming at the person for them to process it and make sense of it – can cause catastrophic reaction

**Out of Sight, Out of Mind** – things outside the person's visual field are not perceived as present or in the person's awareness

**Tunnel Vision** – narrowing of the perimeters of the visual field (peripheral vision)

**Depth Perception Problems** – items that don't have much contrast are perceived as being continuous; patterns or color contrasts are perceived as having different depths even when they don't

**Preoccupation with Small or Busy Patterns** – small prints may seem to resemble a lint or bugs, person may try to remove them from the fabric.

**Visual Cliffs** – dark or black surfaces are perceived as cliffs or holes

**Loss of Reading Skills** – unable to read sentences first, then eventually words

**Visual Cues** – when items are in the person's line of sight, they trigger the person's attention, and association with a particular response or activity

**Repetitive Themes** – subjects or situations that the person tends to return to frequently through questioning, talking about, searching for, or rummaging for, etc. They usually relate to important people, emotionally charged events, fears, occupations, habits/routines or things that provide/provided the person with a sense of security or importance

**Heightened Intuition** – loss of reasoning ability to navigate the environment leads to heightened sensitivity to others' emotions and non-verbal communication