THE DUBIN CENTER
Where no one faces dementia alone.

ANOSOGNOSIA & DEMENTIA

What is Anosognosia?

Anosognosia (an-oh-sog-NOH-zee-uh) is a lack of awareness of changes or limitations caused by a medical condition. It is common in dementia.

A person with anosognosia may truly believe that they can drive, manage medications, live alone, handle finances, or complete other tasks safely, even when others can clearly see that they are having difficulty.

This is different from denial. The person is not simply refusing to admit there is a problem. Changes in the brain can make it difficult or impossible for them to recognize their own impairment.

5 Tips for Caregivers:

1. Don't argue or try to convince them.
Trying to prove that they have dementia or pointing out their mistakes is unlikely to create insight. It can instead cause frustration, anger, embarrassment, or mistrust.

2. Validate, then redirect.
Acknowledge how the person feels without arguing about whether they are right or wrong.
"I understand why you're frustrated. Let's figure this out together."

3. Change the reason—not the goal.
If they do not believe they need help, explain the change in a way that makes sense to them. Instead of "You can't live alone anymore," try "Let's try this place where meals and housekeeping are taken care of for you."

4. Offer simple choices.
Help the person maintain a sense of control. Rather than asking an open-ended question, offer two appropriate options: "Would you like to take your medicine before or after breakfast?"

5. Focus on safety, not agreement.
You may need to make changes even if the person does not understand why they are necessary. The goal is not to make them recognize or agree with their limitations; it is to support their safety, dignity, and quality of life.

Remember:
You cannot reason someone out of anosognosia. Adjusting how you communicate and approach difficult situations is often more effective than trying to convince the person that something is wrong.

www.DubinCenterSarasota.com | 941-275-2941
InfoSarasota@dubincenter.com