



## Defining Reality

Parkinson's

Parkinson's disease affects movement and cause tremors, but it can also affect thinking, mood and behavior as a result of chemical changes in the brain. Psychosis is common. Most often people experience visual hallucinations which are sensory in nature, but may also experience delusions, or false, fixed beliefs. It can be very difficult to handle the situation when the reality of your loved one does not match your own. But though it may not fit your reality, it is quite real to the person. Your calm reaction will likely lead to successful interactions.

### Avoid

- Correcting the person's belief in what they see or hear or think
- Presenting "other" evidence to the contrary
- Dismissing or minimizing their concerns
- Trying to orient them to your reality

## Tips

- Determine if it is really a problem if your person sees a cat in the house. If it is not distressing to him, let it go.
- Find the trigger, the television that is being misperceived or change in routine or environment that leads to symptoms.
- Provide gentle reassurance and support. Allow your person to talk about their experience.
- Be alert to safety issues, trip hazards, good lighting particularly at night and secure dangerous objects.

## Work within your person's reality

- Go along with it - suggest that the cat is fine in the house and you have set food out for her. If your person is upset or frightened, reassure them that you are protecting them from harm. Distract your person and give them something pleasurable to do. Make both of your realities work together.
- Delusions are beliefs that are very real to your person. Do not argue or challenge the person. Try distraction and reassurance. Keep a calm, supportive approach. Provide space and comfort.
- When all else fails, speak to your neurologist about medications that may be helpful. Keep a log of their symptoms so you can offer a clear report.



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