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**OBJECTIVE:** By asking care partner (CP)'s and people with dementia (PWD) to report on their own emotion regulation and the CP to report on the PwD's neuropsychiatric symptoms, we study:

- Whether there is any self-awareness of the PwD's emotional behaviors;
- Whether CP's emotion regulation relates to the PwD's neuropsychiatric symptoms, potentially revealing bias or interpersonal effects.



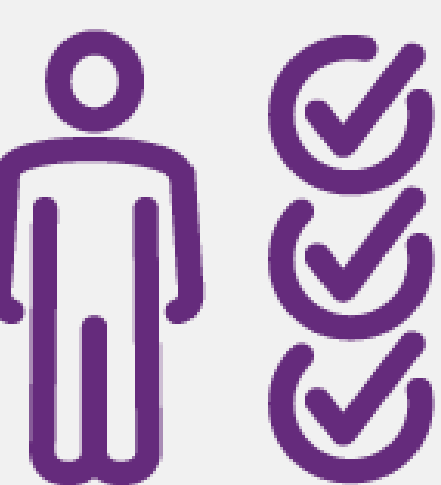
### DESIGN, SETTING, AND PARTICIPANTS:

- Wish Outcome Obstacle Plan (WOOP) Study, a pilot behavioral intervention to reduce stress among couples coping with early-stage dementia.
- The study population is couples coping with early-stage dementia.
- A sample of 45 PwD and their spousal CP (n = 90 individuals).



### RESULTS:

- Increasing numbers of neuropsychiatric symptoms were associated with higher difficulties in emotion regulation in PwD ( $\beta = 2.78$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), but not with CP's perceived difficulties in emotion regulation.
- PwD reported particular difficulties in accepting emotions, controlling impulses, and accessing emotion regulation strategies, but not in emotion awareness and clarification, when CP reported more neuropsychiatric symptoms.
- Proxy-report hyperactivity and psychosis subsyndromes are most significantly related to PwD's perceived difficulties in emotion regulation.



**RELEVANCE:** Dyadic measures in dementia research can inform research to study 1) lived experiences of PwD and 2) potential reporting bias or accuracy of CP-reported measures.

- PwD may be aware of their difficulties in emotion regulation at the early stage of dementia.
- Proxy-report neuropsychiatric symptoms may capture PwD's emotion regulation capability and not be biased by CP's emotion regulation difficulties.



### MEASURES:

#### Self-reported Difficulties in Emotion Regulation:

- Both PwD and CP were asked.
- Total score: Higher numbers indicate greater difficulties in emotion regulation.
- Subscales: 1. nonacceptance of emotion response, 2. difficulties engaging in goal-directed behaviors, 3. impulse control difficulties, 4. lack of emotion awareness, 5. limited access to emotion regulation strategies, and 6. lack of emotion clarity.

#### Neuropsychiatric Symptoms:

- Total score: 0-12; higher number indicates more numbers of symptoms.
- Subscales: 1. hyperactivity - aggression, disinhibition, irritability, motor disturbance, and euphoria; 2. psychosis - hallucinations, delusions, and nighttime behaviors; 3. affective - depression & anxiety; 4. apathy - apathy & appetite.