

Summary of Naomi Feil's Four Stages Model* (Adapted by Dementia Care Matters)

1 Early Experience : Orientation

The person is experiencing:

- Awareness of losses
- Appears to be orientated
- Frightened of becoming “crazy”
- Frightened of losing control and independence
- Defensive in body posturing
- Confabulating to fill in the gaps
- Maintaining good social façade to hide short-term memory loss

2 Different Realities : Feeling based

The person is experiencing:

- More diffuse brain damage
- Visible disorientation
- Loss of sense of chronological time
- Disinhibition becoming very noticeable
- Learned social rules not being used
- Appearing to be more relaxed as less aware of losses
- Inability to confabulate (fill in the gaps) anymore

3 Repetitive Emotions : Sensory Needs

The person is experiencing:

- Frequent movements and words/sounds/phrases repeated
- Language functions greatly deteriorated (word salad)
- Very poor vision and eye contact
- Usually seated or in bed throughout the day
- Repetitive motions indicating stuck feelings

4 Late Experience : Intense Needs

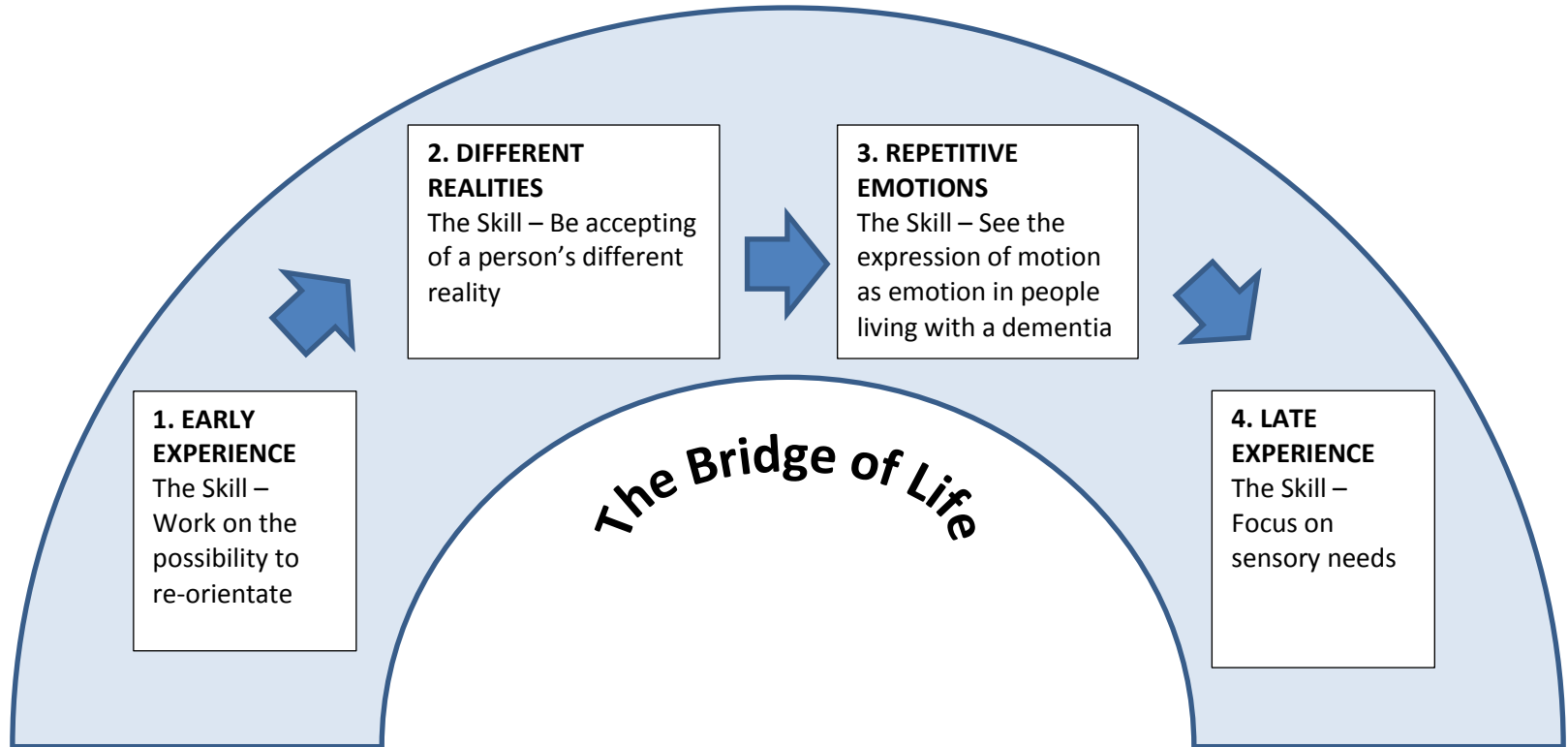
The person is experiencing:

- Appears to have shut out the outside world
- Eyes often closed
- Little movement or vocalisation
- Still responsive to positive stimulation i.e. nurturing voice, touch.

*For more information about Naomi Feil's work go to:
vfvalidation.org

Crossing the Bridge

The experience of living with a dementia – Moving from one reality to another



Supporting someone living with a dementia involves understanding where the person is in their experience of a dementia and being able to adapt your approach to fit with that point ‘on the bridge’

Connecting to a person living with a dementia involves crossing the bridge with them. It also involves supporting families to cross this bridge with the person living with a dementia and not trying to pull the person living with a dementia inappropriately back to our side of the bridge