

Vascular Dementia and Dementia &

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How to enhance self-consciousness in Dementias

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Dementia provides a valuable field of research into impairment of the Self. Self-consciousness (SC) or reflective consciousness (Lechevalier, 1998), is the subject's ability to understand his own states of consciousness such as perceptions, attitudes, opinions and intentions of their actions, and it's dependence in the first instance on self-recognition. SC is the most sublime mental act of the person, the most distinctive feature of our human condition, which gives us the feeling of our uniqueness, of unrepeatable beings (Damasio, 2003). SC is multifaceted and it includes awareness of its body, of the perceptions, of our own projects or the future. It also includes a moral consciousness that allows human beings to make judgments about their thoughts and actions and to act in a complex social world with knowledge of himself and others. Finally, it is the awareness of each one's own history, of his autobiography and, consequently, is inseparable from memory, thanks to which the identity of each human is building. Thus, we can distinguish several aspects of self-consciousness, such as: Personal identity, Metacognition, Affective state, Body representation, Prospective memory, Introspection and Moral judgements. Self-consciousness alterations are manifested by changes in style of dressing, changes in social presentation

and changes in political ideology or religion. In this way, works that relate to the exaltation of the SC by music, taste, smell, the garden ... with the persistence of an emotional stimulation of an automatic type of the hippocampus (and thus, of memory), through of the amygdala, are hopeful in the devastating process of this disease, alleviating their loss of identity. These emotionally charged sensory stimulations could help to implement better intervention strategies.

Speaker Biography

Eva María Arroyo-Anlló, Professor of Clinical Neuropsychology at the University of Salamanca, Spain. She is a PhD teacher at Neuroscience Institute of Castilla y León (Spain) in aspects related to the profile of Neuropsychology and dementias. She has had a training in Clinical Neuropsychology at the University Hospital of Montreal (Canada) and at the Neurology and Neuropsychology Units of University Hospital of Poitiers (France). She created her own company "Memory Clinic", related to rehabilitation of damaged brain. Currently, she is working as a clinical neuropsychologist at "Alaejos Clinic" in Salamanca. She is Member of the Experts Panel in Neurosciences (Neuropsychology) in the XII Directorate-General for Research of the European Commission (Brussels, Belgium) from 2001. She received several awards Hilario Bravo Award, Caja Madrid, "Woman of the Year 2000" award from the American Biographical Institute and "Juan Huarte de San Juan" award.

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