

# Can people with dementia live alone?

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CATHOLIC CHARITIES  
HAWAII  
CIRCLE OF CARE FOR DEMENTIA



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None have  
directed this  
talk.

## Current Clients

- Nevada Senior Services
  - Alzheimer's Disease International
  - Alzheimer's Association (National Public Health office)
  - Great Lakes Intertribal Council
  - International Association for Indigenous Aging (IA<sup>2</sup>)
  - International Psychogeriatric Association
  - Neighbor Network Northern Nevada (N4)
  - Aging and In-Home Services of Northeast Indiana, Inc.
  - Woolsey Pharmaceuticals
  - Consumer Voice/National Ombudsman Resource Center
  - UCSF, UMBC, Emory University, JHMI, UMASS, NWU, MSSM
  - Owner: Managing Partner, Recruitment Partners LLC, Owner, Splaine Consulting and Cognitive Solutions LLC
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Is it possible?





1/5 with ADRD  
in the US live in  
a single person  
household

A single person  
living alone is  
the fastest  
growing type of  
US household



# Diagnosis headwinds


40 % of all people  
with AD get a formal  
diagnosis

- *Of those, 30%  
Dx is not  
disclosed*





It's driven by  
demographics.

- Spouses and partners die.
  - Younger aged persons in 55+ communities get old.
  - It's a function of wealth and how we live—non multigenerational lives
  - 40% boomer divorce rate
  - Never marrieds
  - LGBTQ community
- 

A large orange circle on the left side of the slide, partially cut off by the edge.

## Other marginalized persons

- Former prisoners.
- Persons with lifelong mental illness.
- Likely many (male) veterans.



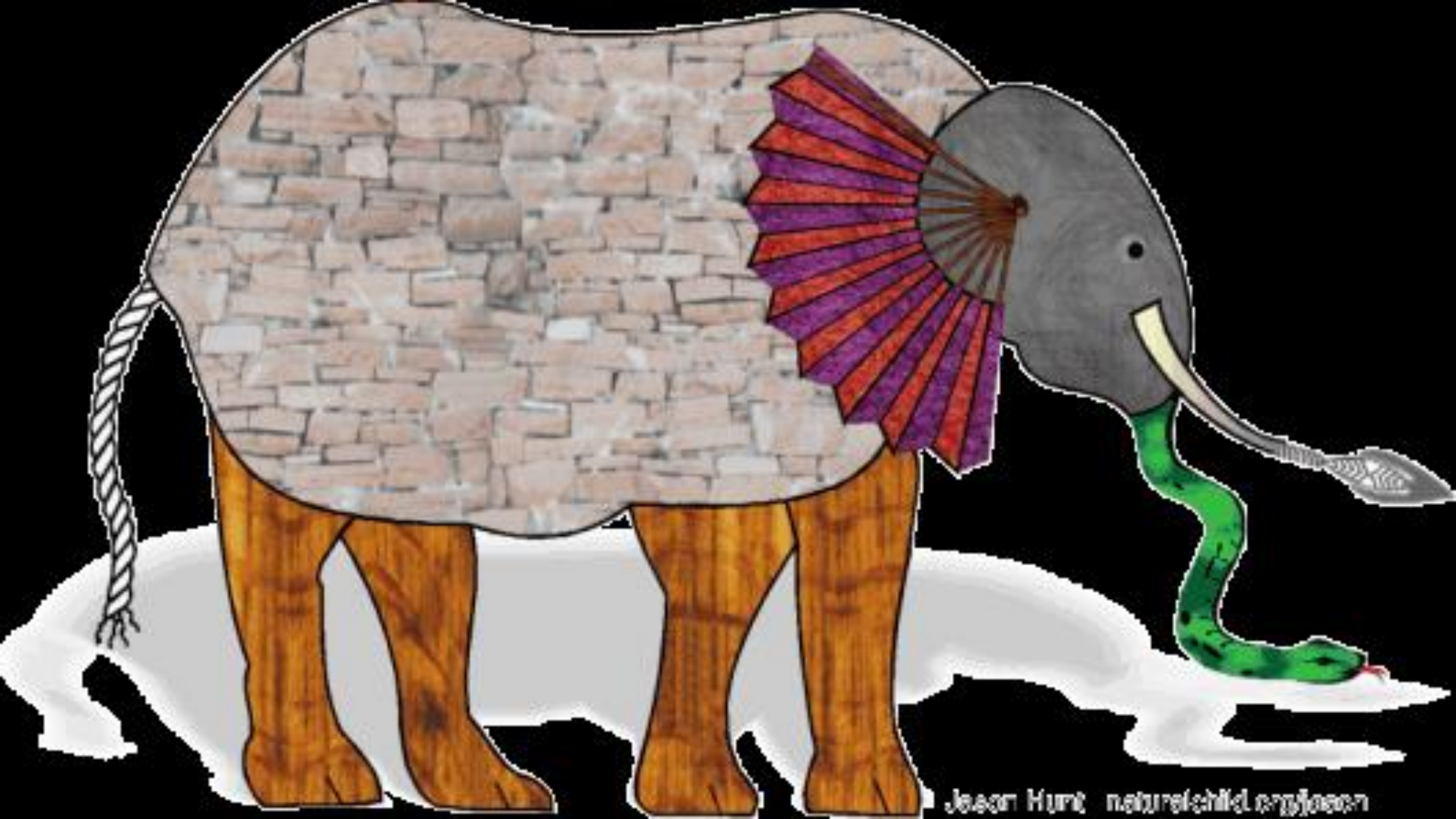







# What can I do?

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- Be a friend.
  - Coach planning.





What are the risks? How are they expressed?

- Distress managing their cognitive illness
  - **Compromised health**
  - Victim of fraud or poor judgment
  - Depression and Anxiety
  - **Inability to navigate health issues/hospitalization**
  - Loss of rights/Societal attitudes
  - **Poverty and low socio-economic status generally**
- 

Distress  
managing  
their  
cognitive  
illness

**I'm afraid my thinking problems  
will take over my life.**

# Compromised health

- 
- **I have diabetes and sometimes with memory and judgement issues I make mistakes with my insulin.**



Victim of  
fraud or  
poor  
judgment

- 
- **I don't want to lose my nest egg but I need to trust someone.**

# Depression, Anxiety

- 
- I'm so lonely and alone inside my home and my head.
  - I'm anxious all the time and sleep poorly.

Inability to navigate  
health  
issues/hospitalization

- 
- **If I ever go to the hospital will I get home?**
  - **How can someone get my medical record?**
  - **Does anyone know who to call to be my advocate in an emergency?**
  - **Will my advance care wishes be known or honored?**

# Loss of rights/Societal attitudes

- 
- **I still have good judgement.**
  - **I have rights to self determination.**
  - **I don't need protecting.**
  - **Everyone with dementia is different;  
we're not all totally disabled/end stages.**

Who's living  
alone well with  
dementia?

Care mappers

Intentional community builders

Shared housing

Shared living arrangements

# Promising Community Level Responses

- Summits/coalitional approaches
- Case tables/APS collaboration
- Action planning
- New ways to find persons living alone with dementia
- ADPI grantees  
<https://nadrc.acl.gov/details?search1=157#result>
- Living alone and connected group and page
- Link to housing
- Emergency medical care and support
- Indigenous persons living alone with dementia in September



# What is a case table?



# References

- <https://atlasofcaregiving.com/caremap/>
- **Dignity for Deeply Forgetful People: How Caregivers Can Meet the Challenges of Alzheimer's Disease Paperback; Stephen Post**
- Health Affairs, 31, no.8 (2012):1786-1795, A Discharge Panel At Denver Health, Focused On Complex Patients, May Have Influenced Decline In Length-Of-Stay, Hirsh, Kathy A. Boyle, Allison I. Sabel and Philip S. Mehler, Thomas Mackenzie
- Gerontologist. 2019 Mar 14;59(2):271-280
- The Precarity of Older Adults Living Alone With Cognitive Impairment
  - Elena Portacolone, Robert L Rubinstein, Kenneth E Covinsky, Jodi Halpern, and Julene K Johnson



# Hawaii Resources

- Hawaii Statewide Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC)
  - Website: <https://www.hawaiiadrc.org>
  - Voice: (808) 643-ADRC (2372)
  - TTY (808) 643-0889
- Alzheimer's Association – Hawaii
  - Website: <https://www.alz.org/hawaii>
  - 24/7 Helpline: (800) 272-3900
- Catholic Charities Hawaii
  - Senior Services Intake Line on Oahu: (808) 527-4777
  - Website: <https://www.catholiccharitieshawaii.org/programs-services/seniors/>
  - Catholic Charities Hawaii *Circle of Care for Dementia* archived webinars:  
<https://www.catholiccharitieshawaii.org/dementia/dementia-trainings-workshops/>

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