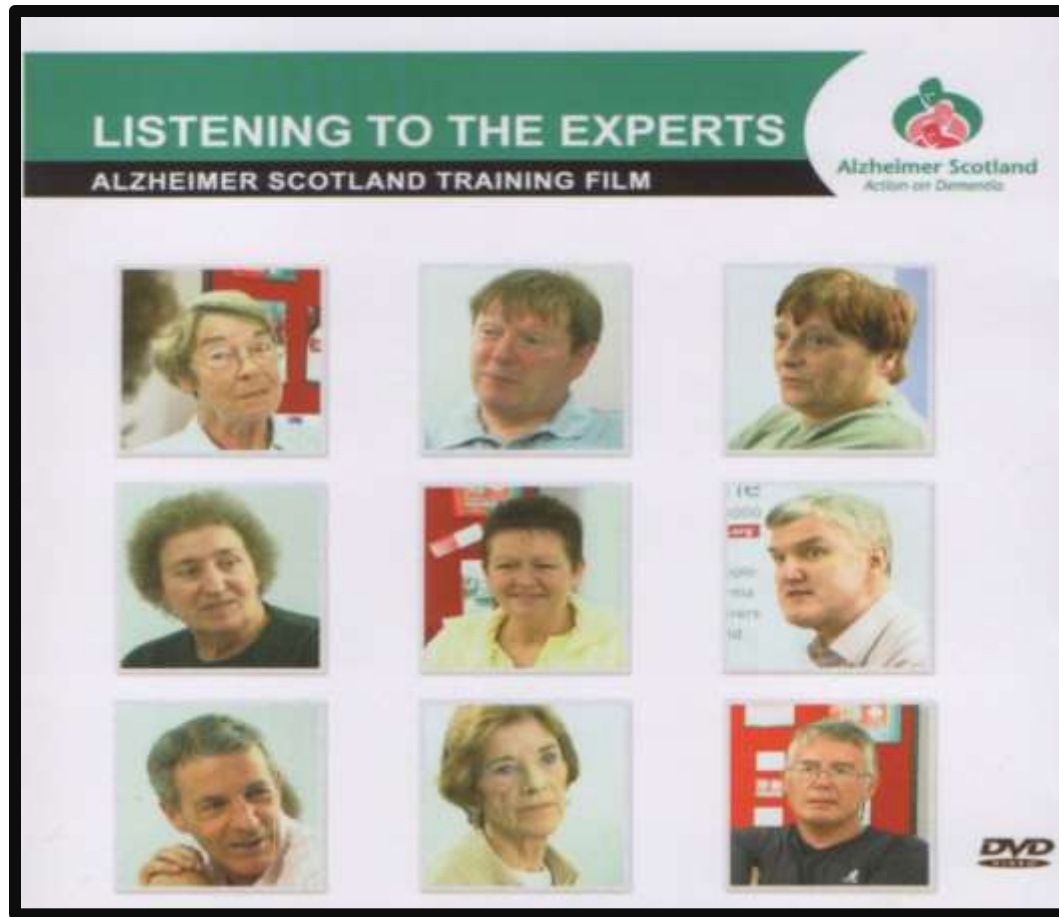


# Exploring stress as experienced by people with dementia: a contribution to understanding the potential for recovery.

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# Why this area of research?



# Methodology

## Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

- Persons – making sense of experience
- Subjective domain
- Understanding the particular
- Systematic, depth and rigour

Smith, Flowers, et al. (2009)

# Method

- 5 focus groups
- across Scotland
- 21 participants with dementia



# Themes

- Something's torn – your life's torn.
- Families can bring stress.
- The stress of living with dementia.
- A whole new set of rules.
- It's our lives and we're going to get under control ourselves.

# 'Something's torn – your life's torn'

*'I'm not able so far to accept ... that I'm not the person that I was – because I'm not.'*

Sandra

# 'Families can bring stress'

*'I know in there (points to head) she means well, I know she does what she does for my benefit... a lot of people try to tell me she's just trying to help - which she is...'*

Marie

# 'The stress of living with dementia'

*"We all experience it.  
It's like shutters  
going down"*

Arlene

*'Not knowing is  
worse than  
knowing'*

Ian



# A whole new set of rules

*'I think I can go a wee bit further and I don't see any time that I would be told start again - everything will be alright.'*

Fred

It's our lives and we are going to  
get it under control ourselves

*'I think you've got to look for  
a balance in yourself ...  
having your carer's fine ...  
but you've still got to  
find your own answers.'*

Ian

# Conclusions

- Grief experienced by people with dementia is poorly understood and misinterpretation may prolong stress and undermine recovery potential.
- Attention to stress and coping can play a positive part in supporting the person with dementia to exercise control over key aspects on their lives.

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