

THYMe

Think Health for Your Memory

Facilitator Manual Week Two

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Week 2 Session Plan

Time	Agenda	Flip Chart	Page
10mins	Recap	How Memory Works Types of memory Use the Senses Risk Factor Quiz 6 Pillars (x2) What is Self-Management?	3
30mins	Goal Follow Up	Questions to help you set a goal (hand written flips from last week) Our goal needs to be	3
35mins	Mentally Challenging your Brain Social Activity Group discussion Recap	What kind of things have you done in the past that have challenged your brain (handwritten) What can we do to begin to challenge our brains (handwritten)	4
15mins	Break		
30mins	Memory Problem Solving Process This Weeks Problem	Problem solving Cycle Memory Problems – Explore (handwritten) Memory Problems – Solutions (handwritten) Try it Out (handwritten)	7
30mins	Goal Setting Introduction Group Goal Setting Group Feedback	Our Goals Need to be Questions to help you set a goal (x2) Blank questions flip for facilitator goal (x2)	8
5mins	Next Week	Write on a white board and explain	10

Week 2 Session Detail

Recap of week one (ten minutes)

Refer to last week's flips

'At last week's group we talked about how memory works, the three stages - input, storage and retrieval. We identified that the input section is very important and encouraged you to pay attention because if information is not taken in in the first place we will not remember it. We also discussed the importance of using our senses.'

'We explained this is a self-management group, we did a quiz and identified all of these things that increase your risk of getting a dementia. This was positive because we introduced you to the six pillars of a healthy lifestyle for the brain. These are things you can do something about or you can influence.'

'This self- management group will give you the opportunity to make changes in the six pillars using goal setting.'

Also have a prepared white board in a central position with today's date and a list of the topics being covered in this session.....you can refer to this briefly.

Goal Follow Up (thirty minutes)

'Last week we all set goals that we felt we could achieve over the week and that were important to us. In the same way 'Facilitator 1' and I demonstrated setting a goal, we will now model reviewing our achievements, or not as the case may be this week.'

Recap the 'Questions to Help Set a Goal' and 'Our Goal Needs to be' flips

Questions to Help you Set a Goal
• What?
• How Much/How Often?

Questions to Help you Set a Goal
• What?
• How Much/How Often?

Last week's Handwritten Flips with Facilitators' Goals

• How Confident?

• How Confident?

Each facilitator models feedback using the 'Questions to help you set a goal' to recap what their goal last week was. Also recap why we set goals in such a structured way with these

questions (see week one) and give the reasons for the questions....use examples from both facilitator goals and when going around the room to highlight the benefit of the questions.

Ask for a volunteer to feedback first and go round the room giving everyone the opportunity to feedback – 2 minutes each. Use the goal record sheet from last week as a prompt.

*‘What was your goal last week?’
‘Tell us how you did with your goal’*

Get them to identify the benefits of what they achieved and ask which of the Six Pillars of a Healthy Lifestyle it relates to for some of the participants. Also relate goals not immediately relevant to Six Pillars to having to make space in our lives before we can make changes. If we have other priorities we may need to get them out of the way first. This will often relate to stress management well.

Facilitator who is not asking questions will be completing the goal record sheet and will prompt when respondent does not.

Challenging your brain: Group Activity

Refer to Six pillars flip on wall and give out Mentally Challenge your Brain handout.

‘Every session we are going to give you background information on the current evidence around areas of our lives that may help slow down the decline in our memory and improve our general well-being. This week we will look at social and mental stimulation.’

Give out hand out. Ask participants to remain quiet until everyone has finished reading because this helps concentration and helps us to remember what we have read.

‘We invite you to read the text as well as us listening and talking about it because the more senses we use the greater the chances of remembering. Once you have finished reading please put down the leaflet so we know everyone has finished’

‘So we now know that keeping our brains challenged and staying socially active are two things we can do that may help slow down the decline in our memory. But, most recently, emerging evidence indicates that doing them both together is even better for your brain and cognitive functioning.’

Mentally challenge your brain

Keeping your brain active is important to keep it functioning well.

Scientists have found that challenging the brain with new activities helps to build new brain cells and strengthen connections between them. This helps to give the brain more 'reserve' or 'backup' so that it can cope better and keep working properly if any brain cells are damaged or die.

Mental exercise may also protect against accumulation of damaging proteins in the brains of people with Alzheimer's disease.

As we grow older we tend to prefer doing the things we've always done, tasks that we are familiar with - and that's understandable - but the brain benefits by having to tackle something it doesn't know.

It could be trying a new recipe, planning how to plant some different flowers, walking a new route and taking notice of everything around you, learning a new language, taking up a new sport, doing a course in something you're always wanted to do - anything really, as long as it's learning something new..... and best if it's something you will enjoy. Challenge yourself often and keep learning new things throughout life.

Higher level associated decline and important in later life

Active mental activity

A4 Sheet

Studies also show that the more socially connected we are, the better we fare at tests of memory and cognition. Most of us do not thrive in isolation and neither do our brains. Many of us become more isolated as we get older for various reasons.

'It is great to carry on doing anything that uses your brain on a regular basis, such as cross words and reading and keeping in regular contact with family and friends. In addition, research indicates we should all do new things that challenge our brains.'

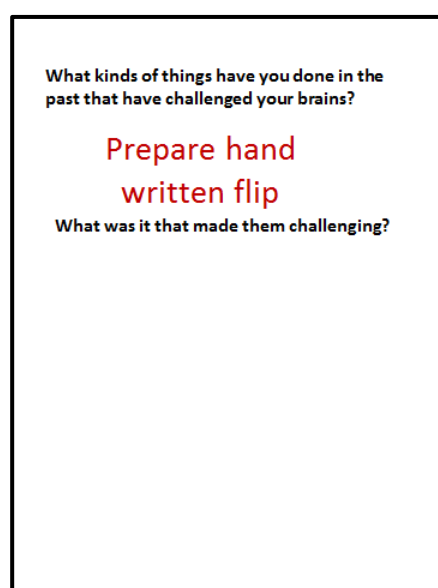
When you do new things, you are building up a reserve of pathways for information to flow along....a little bit like a diversion around road works, instead of being stuck in a traffic jam!

What kinds of things have you done in the past that have challenged your brains?

Facilitator to have a prepared example of something that has previously challenged their brain in daily life e.g. new hobby, travel arrangements - nothing too difficult.

Prompts:

- Hobbies....knitting, woodwork, canoeing, gardening
- Work....voluntary or paid
- Family gatherings....weddings
- Travel.....arrangements, new sights and information
- Learning.....new information, reading, listening
- Joining new groups, and meeting new people as well as new information
- DIY
- Writing all the Christmas cards
- Cooking new recipe.
- Brain games(crosswords, suduko)
- Walking in a new place and meeting and talking to new people...



As responses are given, ask them what was it that made these things challenging and add their answers to the lower section of the flip chart.

Prompts: (mixture of open and closed questions)

The point we are trying to get across by using examples from the discussion, is how when we challenge our brains we are using the cognitive skills of planning, sequencing, problem solving, hand eye co-ordination, timing. How you are having to think and concentrate more, it is not automatic.

- How does it feel when you do something that is more mentally challenging?...Tiring, takes more time, frustrating, hard work, headache.....
- What stops you from doing things that are more mentally challenging or that you have always done?..... In new social situations do you have difficulties with word finding, hearing problems, forgetting names of people?
- Do these things tend to be more complex and require more planning?
- Meeting new people?
- Having to remember information?

Explain that these things may be tiring and frustrating so they need to give themselves time. As its new or more challenging, it's not automatic, which means they'll probably find it tiring, it's harder work and it takes more time, so you will know you have challenged your brain.

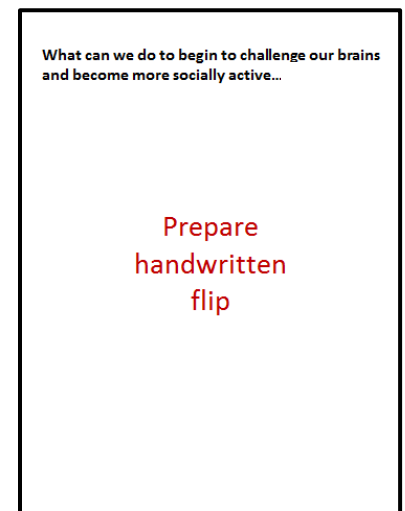
Finish on a positive e.g. how do you feel when you've achieved something that is more challenging?

'We have looked at the things we did in the past that challenged our brains and how we knew that they were challenging and the sense of achievement we felt once completed.'

'What can we do to begin to challenge our brains and become more socially active'

Prompts/suggestions:

- What would you like to try/learn?
- What have you not done for a while that you would like to get back to?
- Every day decide on something small you will do differently....dial phone with left hand.
- Can anyone relate to that feeling of know they should phone someone, but hasn't got around to it?
- Joining new groups is brilliant, but it's equally important to maintain you r existing social connections.
- Meet up/phone/email/skype someone you haven't seen for a while
- Be more inquisitive.....take more notice of things around you when you are out and about
- Develop a questioning mind.....how does that work? What's that for? What is it?
- Try to solve daily problems
- Explore things around us more
- Have a thirst for knowledge
- Do new things....Sudoku, crosswords, something you haven't done for a long time.
- Do things you have been putting off
- How can you do things you already do differently.....walk a different route, use a new recipe



For all the above try to find things they already do and identify how they can change them to be a bit more challenging.

Recap:

'It's great to keep doing anything that challenges your brain and research indicates we should all keep doing new things to do this. Keeping socially active is a good way to challenge our brains and is good for our mood too.'

BREAK (fifteen minutes) - Remind people about the resource table

Memory Problem Solving (thirty minutes)

'Last week you all shared your top four memory difficulties that you wanted to work on. From those, we've identified the group's top four. This week we will start with the most important one for most of you which was [put in the top memory problem here]'

'This week we're going to, as a group look at how we can try to overcome this problem or at least make it less of a problem and we'll do this each week for the other four problems.'

'Learning ways to help with memory problems and getting into good habits and routines now will not only help with the memory problems you are currently experiencing, but as your memory deteriorates in the future (all our memories do deteriorate with age) these habits, routines, tips and methods that you put into practice will help you to carry on doing things you want to do for yourself for longer, even if you do develop a Dementia.'

'It is important that you try to practice these methods and get into good habits and routines now, both to help you now, but also so that as your memory deteriorates it will enable you to carry on being as independent as possible for longer.'

'In our day to day lives we will all have experienced problems and attempted to solve them. Many of us are already good problem solvers.'

Problem Solving

'To solve our memory problems we are going to use the same method every week, which we will now describe.'

Go through the stages of problem solving, not in any great detail, just to explain the process we will be following.

When you get to the 'think of as many solutions as possible' section, let them know that the evidence shows that the most successful problem solvers are not those that come up with the correct solution, but those that come up with the most solutions, as then when one solution doesn't work, they have another to try.

Put up blank flips side by side to explore the memory problem and come up with solutions:

Act Now.....Keep Independent.

- Everyone's memory will get worse
- Learn Memory Strategies
- Practice them
- Get into good Habits NOW
- Keeps you doing things for longer

**Handwritten
Flip**

Problem Solving Process

1. Identify the problem
2. Explore it
3. Think of as many solutions as possible
4. Choose one to try
5. Try it out

If it doesn't work.....

6. Choose another solution
7. Try that one out

Memory Problem

Explore:

Prepare
handwritten
flip

Memory Problem.....

Solutions:

Prepare
handwritten
flip

If people come up with solutions while you are discussing the explore section, write their solutions on the ‘Solutions’ flip and say you’ll come back to them later.

Use prompt sheets in memory section at the end of this manual for the particular identified memory problem. There is one for facilitators to use with prompts for the ‘Explore and Solutions’ sections and one to be given out after the discussion which has just the solutions. If any others come up participants can write them onto this sheet.

Group Activity: Solving memory problems

Explore - start with open questions from the prompt list. Then if you get little response use closed questions and come back to open questions from their answers.

Exploring the problem helps to facilitate discussion and helps people to open up about the impact of their memory problems. This helps people in the group to realise they are not alone. It also shows the complexity of the problems.

Solutions: *‘What are you already doing to overcome the problems? What has helped?’*

When participants come up with solutions explore further

‘How does it help? It is more helpful to come from the participants as it has more of an impact from peers’

Have a prepared list of solutions and hand out. Give the group a few minutes (if time allows) to decide which one they will try and to write this one down. Ask participants to try one or several...remind about protective factors of habits, routines etc...



Goal Setting (thirty minutes)

You may want to introduce ‘Priorities for Change’ sheet sometime in this or next session, depending on if a suitable situation arises. (see sheet at end of session plan).

‘Last week we all set a goal and as we have seen we all faired differently in how we got on with that goal. As we said last week, goal setting is a skill that requires practice, but it can help us make changes in our lives. We are going to briefly recap some of the things we talked about last week that will help us to set a goal.’

Our Goals Need to Be....

Our choice: Other than what someone else is suggesting. That way you are more likely to put more effort into it

Important: In life generally there may be a lot of things that ideally you would like to change or do. It is unlikely any of us have the time or energy to change every think. Therefore it is important to make sure our goal is what is most important to us so we have the time and energy to put to that. If you try to do too much it is likely to result in not achieving anything.

Be a little bit difficult to achieve: If we set a goal that is too easy you are unlikely to benefit as it is not much of a change. Conversely if you set yourself too hard a challenge you may not achieve the goal and it may result in you giving up, and may be thinking what’s the point?

Each of the facilitators then models what their goal for the week is going to be. The facilitators ask each other the questions from the “Questions to help you set a goal” flip and writes down on a hand written flip the responses.

When modelling your own goals try to make the goals you choose real within your life. Relate them to the six pillars of a healthy lifestyle and explain how they benefit you personally. Explain that the evidence shows that if we identify a goal as ‘important or extremely important’ on the scale we are more likely to achieve it. Also ask the person to visualise doing their goal at the time specified and ask them to state how confident using the 0-10 confidence scale they are of achieving their goal. Again explain that the evidence shows that if we are seven or more on the confidence scale when asked these questions we are then more likely to achieve the goal.

Our Goals Need to be....

- Our Choice
- Important to you
- A little bit difficult to achieve
- Realistic

Questions to Help you Set a Goal

- **What?** What is it you’re going to be doing
e.g. walking
- **How Much/How Often?** e.g. 10 minutes, twice a week
- **How Important?**

Very Unimportant Unimportant Moderately Important Important Very Important

- **When?** When will you do this. Be Specific!
- **How Confident?** Visualise doing this goal. Are you 7 or more?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- **How Much/How Often?**
- **How Important?**
- **When?**
- **How Confident?**

Discuss how goal setting is our own choice and no one is going to think any the less of any of us if we come back next week and have not been able to achieve the goal. Talk about how life is often busy and this is a new skill that will take time to learn and develop.

Handwritten Flip for Facilitator Goals (x2)

Group Goal Setting

Remind the group about the Goal setting and the Goal Diary sheets in resource folder, allow five minutes for people to think about a goal and write it down using the Goal Setting Sheet. You are likely to have to go around the room and answer questions, especially if people come on their own.

The image displays two A4 sheets. The left sheet is a 'Goal Setting Sheet' with five 'Weekly Goal' boxes (1-5) and a central 'My Overall Goal' box. Each weekly goal box contains questions: 'What?', 'How much? How often?', 'How important is it to you?', 'When?', and 'How confident are you? ___/10'. The 'My Overall Goal' box includes a list of criteria: 'Important to me', 'My Choice', 'Well planned', 'A little bit difficult to achieve', 'Broken into 20-30-40' chunks (actions) to keep it realistic', and 'Keep reviewing and problem solve difficulties'. The right sheet is a 'Goal Diary' with a table for 'This week's goal:' with columns for 'Day' and 'Comments'. The days listed are Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, followed by an 'Overall Comments' section.

Feedback to the group

Feedback to the group - ask if anyone minds feeding back first and then go around the room in one direction. When people are feeding back, try to get them to answer all the questions...What, How Much, How important, When and How confident..... this will ensure people have thought about these things. How much you push for these answers is a subjective decision as every group and participant will be different.

The other facilitator records the goals to aid feedback of goals done in next session.

Next Week (five minutes):

Write up what you want people to bring next week, use a white board if available or flip chart if not.

- Topics will be stress management and sleep
- Let them know which memory problem we will be discussing.
- Bring back resource folder, goal sheet and diary, problem solving sheet and read correlating pages
- Ask people to bring details of any social groups in the area.

Goal Diary

This week's goal:

Day	Comments
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Overall Comments	

Mentally challenge your brain and keep socially active

Keeping your brain active is critical to keep it functioning well. Importantly, increased complex mental activity throughout and in later life is associated with a lower dementia risk.

Scientists have found that challenging the brain with new activities helps to maintain brain cells and strengthen connections between them. This helps to give the brain more 'reserve' or 'back up' so that it can cope better and keep working properly if any brain cells are damaged or die.

As we grow older we tend to prefer doing the things we've always done, tasks that we are familiar with - and that's understandable - but the brain benefits by having to tackle something it doesn't know, or hasn't done for a while.

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Studies also show that the more socially connected we are, the better we fare at tests of memory and cognition. Most of us do not thrive in isolation and neither do our brains. Many of us become more isolated as we get older for various reasons.

Most recently, emerging evidence indicates that doing something new in a social situation that is challenging your brain is even better for your brain and cognitive functioning.

Materials:

Resources

- Photocopy GAS sheets for all facilitators from last week's goals
- Problem solve prompts and solutions sheet (for this week's memory problem.....see back of the manual for these sheets)A4 Resource folders x8
- Mentally Challenge your Brain A4 hand-out x 20
- Blank Flip chart x2
- Printed flip charts
- Reflective book (Facilitators)
- Highlighters
- Flip chart pens
- Managing Mild Memory Problems booklet x8
- PAM client
- Register
- flip chart easels
- Local Resources relevant to location
- Tea/coffee, biscuits
- 3 clipboards
- Bullet point prompt sheets for each session
- Goal planning sheet 5 weeks x 20
- GAS scoring sheet for four weeks with names
- MCI booklet and the Alzheimer society copies
- Goal Diary sheets x 20
- Top four memory problem sheets x 20

Each week possible props for relevant memory problem – clock, memory box, whiteboard, memex, pivotel, blister pack, dossett box, diary, calendar, notebook

Put up various flip charts on the walls each week to act as a reminder from previous sessions. This week....Use the Senses, Six Pillars, How Memory Works, Physical Activity Guidelines.

