

THYMe

Think Health for Your Memory

Facilitator Manual Week Three

Debbie Burnell and Simon Ridley, Occupational Therapists

Devon Partnership 
NHS Trust



Week 3 Session Plan

Time	Agenda	Flip Chart	Page
5mins	Recap	Recap (handwritten)	3
25mins	Goal Follow Up	Questions to help you set a goal (hand written flips from last week) Our goal needs to be	3
5mins	Relaxation breathing exercise		4
35mins	Stress Management and Sleep Discussion Sleep (if appropriate)	What things make you stressed/anxious (handwritten) What do you do to help yourself relax/feel less stressed – hand written flip Stress Management Tips (handwritten) (Physical Activity Guidelines if appropriate)	5
15mins	Break		
25mins	Memory Problem Solving This Weeks Problem	Problem solving Cycle Memory Problems – Explore (handwritten) Memory Problems – Solutions (handwritten) Try it Out (handwritten)	9
40mins	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)	10
	Next Week	Write on a white board and explain	11

Week 3 Session Detail

Recap (five minutes)

'Last week we talked about things that we had previously done that had challenged your brain.'

'We mentioned how it is good to continue to do these things that challenge your brain but how the evidence indicates it is even better to do new things that challenge your brains.'

'We also spoke about how, as we get older and especially if we have memory problems, we can become less socially active and discussed how important it is to maintain or increase social activity. This may just be keeping in regular touch with close friends and family. It is a good idea to make it part of your daily life.'

Recap

- Challenge your brain
- Keep trying and learning new things
- Keep Socially active

Handwritten Flip

Goal follow up (twenty five minutes)

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

Each facilitator models feedback using the 'Questions to help you set a goal' to recap what their goal last week was.

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

When...

- How Confident?

When...

- How Confident?

Go round the room and give 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'

If they were unsuccessful with the goal what stopped them achieving it? Can they think of any ideas/suggestions that could help them overcome this? If there are any unsolved problems ask if it's okay to come back to it later.

Get them to identify the benefits of what they did and ask which of the Six Pillars of a Healthy Lifestyle it relates to and how this links to reducing the risk of dementia both in the immediate term and in the future. 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.

Relaxation breathing exercise (five minutes)

Choose one of the breathing exercises that can be found at the end of this session's notes and demonstrate and encourage the group to participate. Obviously it is everyone's choice, they can just sit and listen/watch if they prefer. Also worth mentioning that if anyone has any medical conditions (especially if connected to breathing/heart) they should not do anything that makes them feel uncomfortable.

Start off by asking people to put one hand on their stomach and one hand on their chest and ask them to observe which of their hands is rising/falling, often it is not the one on the stomach, indicating shallow breathing...not best for relaxation. Then go onto the relaxation.

At the end of the breathing practice ask people what they thought - did it help them relax, does anyone already use breathing exercises? If people do use breathing exercises already ask them how it benefits them. You could mention it can be used at any time, for example; Dr's/dentist's waiting room...anywhere you are feeling a little stressed. Mention that it is best to practice this a few times a day for short periods when you are not stressed so it becomes a natural/easy thing to do at the time it is needed. This will also help to lower your overall stress levels for regular maintenance.

Stress Management (thirty five minutes)

Give out this A4 handout and give five minutes to read. 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'

Recap what has just been read

'There is some evidence that stress is a risk factor for Dementia. This is linked to the increases in hormones in the body, such as cortisol, that are released when we are stressed.'

'When we are sleeping our brain removes proteins that can increase our risk of getting a dementia from our brain. Therefore if we don't get a good nights' sleep, this cannot happen so well.'

'Memory problems can lead to us feeling stressed and when we are stressed; generally our memory tends to get worse. One reason is that we tend to pay less attention when we are stressed'

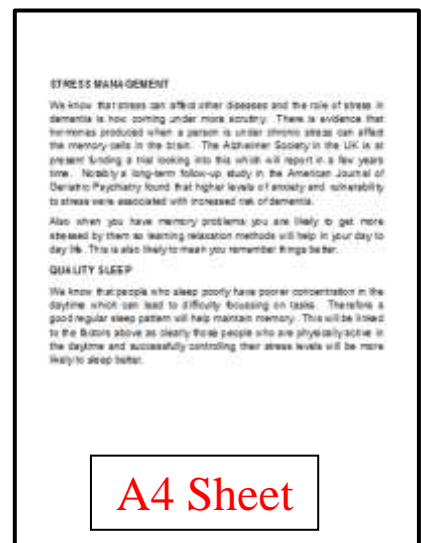
Remind people of the input stage of the memory process and how important paying attention is to this.

'So learning to relax on a regular basis is likely to both help with your memory in the short term (day to day) and may well help slow the decline in your memory.'

Sleep

'When we are stressed it can also impact on our sleep. Getting a good night's sleep is very important because recent research has shown that sleep seems to have several functions in helping people maintain normal brain activity.'

- *'During sleep the spaces between the brain cells open up to help the brain wash proteins that are linked to dementia out. This may reduce our risk of developing a dementia over time.'*
- *'During sleep the brain replays the days' events and forms new connections between brain cells to promote memory formation, therefore helping our memory on a day to day basis.'*
- *'Also a lack of good sleep may stop us from concentrating on things so well, which in turn means we are less likely to remember things well'*



Refer back to input part of the memory process.

Discussion

The purpose of this discussion is to enable people to identify what makes them stressed, and the impact this has on them physically/mentally and emotionally, and how it affects their behaviour. You can then go on to identify what they can do to help themselves.

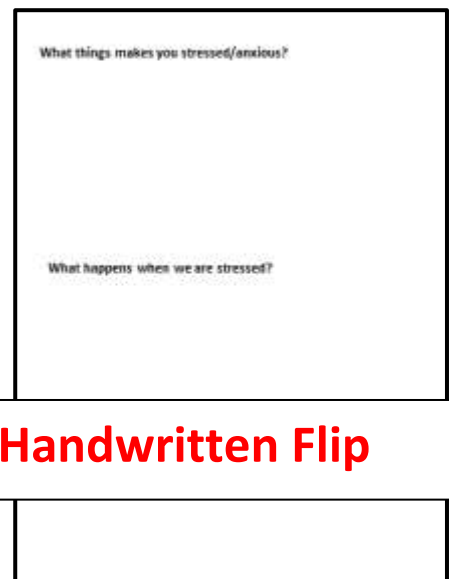
Ask the group

'What things make you stressed/anxious?'

Record their answers on a flip.

Prompts:

- On a day to day basis or one offs
- Big life changes
- Family/friends
- Memory problems
- Work
- Driving
- Illness
- Feeling out of control
- Building – straw that broke the camel's back
- The telephone/social situations
- Filling out forms
- Being late
- Juggling many roles or tasks at the same time
- Not knowing what is happening/lack of communication



What happens when we are stressed?

Ask open questions and use prompts below to open up the discussion if needed:

What impact does stress have on the things you do in your daily life?

- **What physical signs do you notice when you are stressed?**
Poor sleep, Feeling sweaty, Heart beating fast, Dry mouth, Frequent headaches, Nervous twitches/restlessness, Loss of appetite...weight gain weight loss, Tight knotty feeling in stomach, Needing the toilet more than usual, Tiredness, Odd aches and pains
- **How does it affect you emotionally when you are stressed?**
Upset, crying, loss of control, fearful/worried, irritable, aggressive/angry, tearful, isolated from people around you, lost sense of humour, lost sense of interest in life, hopelessness, scared/frightened

- **How do you behave differently when you are stressed?**

Smoke/drink more, comfort eat, struggle to laugh at anything, forget things, shy away from making decisions, difficulty concentrating, start tasks and do not finish them, regularly work until you are completely exhausted, withdraw from relationships/social situations, clench jaw/grind teeth.

Ask the group what they do to help themselves relax/feel less stressed. Record their answers on a blank flip.

Prompts:

- Keep a stress diary
- Identify your stressors
- Relaxation techniques such as deep breathing
- Exercise
- Walking
- Listen to music, Dancing/singing
- Nature
- Talk to friends/family
- Sleep....
- Spiritual
- Laughter/humour

What do you do to relax?

Handwritten Flip

Ask explorative questions. These help to model good practice in others to the whole group. People take more notice of what others find helps than what facilitators are saying works.

Example Questions:

So tell me how does that help?

Ah that's interesting what is it about doing this that you find relaxing?

How long have you be doing that? Is it something you do regularly?

Do you do these things only when stressed or are they part of your daily life?

Do you cut out the things that make you stressed?

Do you stop doing the things that relax you?

Move onto the summary/key points below. Make a note that all these are things that should be done regularly and not as crisis management. Advise them to make it a regular part of their lives, to practice and find out what works for them. Mention that it is directly linked to your memory and word

Stress Management Tips

- Identify your stressors
- Take regular exercise
- Eat and sleep well
- Take time out to do things you enjoy with family and friends.
- Do one thing at a time
- Learn relaxation techniques
- Try to accept things you cannot change.
- Use 'Coping with Stress' Booklet

finding on a day to day basis. A good night's sleep also helps with memory storage -short to long term.

Stress Management Tips

Use this flip chart to help with summary, but include the group's personal examples.

You may want to refer to the government guidelines on physical activity. But only if you have the group's attention and they are not restless for the break.



Handwritten Flip

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

Memory Problem Solving (twenty five minutes)

Recap

'Last week's memory problem was.....'

'How did you get on with trying the solutions? What worked? What didn't?'

Recap solutions from last week if you get little response. Put up last week's memory problem solutions flip if needed after discussion.

'Today's memory problem is..... again as a group we're going to look at how we can try to overcome this problem or at least make it less of a problem.'

'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.'

This Weeks Problem Solving

This week's memory Problem is.....

Put up blank flips side by side:



If people come up with solutions while you are discussion 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 (forty minutes)

Each of the facilitators models what their goal for the week is going to be. The facilitators ask each other the questions on the "Questions to help you set a goal" flip and write down on a handwritten flip the responses. If you are short on time and the group is already good at setting goals you may decide to only have one facilitator set a goal. If the group are still setting goals that are not realistic then you may need to explain how to set a goal using your goal/s as an example.

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?

0 10
▲
as confident as possible

My Goal for This week

- What?
- How Much/How Often?

My Goal for This week

- What?
- How Much/How Often?

Handwritten Flips for Facilitator Goals

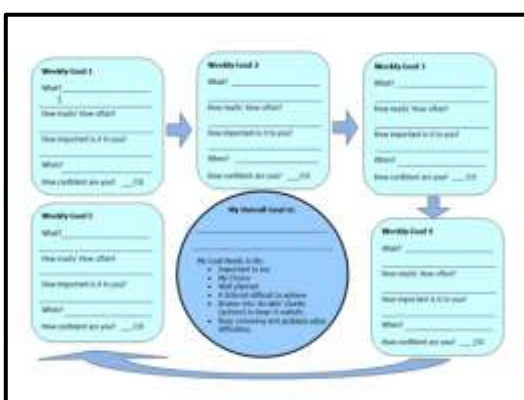
- When?
- How Confident?

- When?
- How Confident?

Group Goal Setting

Introduce 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.



Goal Diary
This week's goal:

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

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.

Write onto white board:

Next week: Diet, next week's memory problem, bring folder, bring a healthy snack.

STRESS MANAGEMENT and SLEEP

There is some evidence that stress is a risk factor for developing a dementia. This is linked to the increases in hormones in the body, such as cortisol, that are released when we are stressed.

Memory problems can lead to us feeling stressed and when we are stressed; generally our memory tends to get worse. So learning to relax on a regular basis is likely to both help with your memory in the short term (day to day) and may well help to prevent your memory from getting worse.

Sleep:

When we are stressed it can also impact on our sleep. Getting a good nights' sleep is very important because recent research has shown that sleep seems to have several functions in helping people maintain normal brain activity:

- During sleep the spaces between the brain cells open up to help the brain wash toxins out, which will reduce our risk of developing a dementia over time.
- During sleep the brain replays the days' events and forms new connections between brain cells to promote memory formation. Therefore helping our memory on a day to day basis.
- Also a lack of good sleep may stop us from concentrating on things so well, which in turn means we are less likely to remember things well. This is because we may not have taken information in very well in the first place (input).

For more information go to www.getselfhelp.co.uk/sleep.htm

Relaxation

Relaxation: simply speaking, is a process that helps us to relax and reach a state of calmness.

It reduces levels of pain, anxiety, stress and anger. There are many techniques that can be employed to achieve this. All of them focus on decreasing muscle tension, lowering the blood pressure and slowing the heart and breathing rates.

Some of the popular relaxation techniques are performed whilst sitting or lying down with minimum movement; e.g.: progressive muscle relaxation (PMR), massage, meditation, biofeedback, mind / body relaxation, visualisation and many more...

Other techniques incorporate exercise such as gardening, walking, swimming, Tai Chi or yoga. Listening to peaceful music and lying down is also a great way to relax or art (e.g. painting, drawing or knitting).

Whichever way we chose to relax the key component of achieving the calmness and reduce tension is the right breathing. When we are stressed or anxious the way we breathe changes. We might even feel breathless, start to inhale rapidly and in effect get a bit dizzy. Controlled breathing can promote relaxation and reduce the effects of stress.

Candle and flower breathing exercise

Sit comfortably. Straighten your back and relax your shoulders, let your arms rest on your lap/chair. Later on you can also close your eyes to help you focus...

Imagine you are holding a beautiful flower. Breathe in through your nose as if you are smelling the flower... breathe in slowly and gently. Feel how the air fills your body... Breathe in deeply and let the air fill your tummy... You can place a hand on your belly and feel how it rises... try to hold the air in your tummy for one second...

When you exhale imagine that the flower changed into a candle... exhale slowly and gently through your mouth as if blowing the candle, you should feel a soft warm breath on your hand. Hold it for one second...

Repeat this exercise several times.



Pursed lip Breathing

Pursed lip breathing is one of the simplest ways to manage breathlessness and anxiety. For some people, if practised regularly, it can become a good way to give a sense of being able to take control of thoughts and breathing or provide a quick burst of relaxation whenever we need it. It makes each breath we take more effective by releasing used air that is trapped in the lungs.

Pursed lip breathing

- Relax your neck and shoulder muscles
- Allow your hands to rest gently on your thighs.
- Breathe in and out regularly and smoothly
- Now breathe in slowly through your nose, if you can, for two counts, keeping your mouth closed. It does not need to be a deep breath; a normal breath will do. It may help to count to yourself: In one...two.
- As you breathe out, pucker or purse your lips as if you were going to whistle or gently flicker the flame of a candle, and breathe out slowly and gently through these pursed lips.
- Allow space between the out breath and the in breath.
- In, one.....two.... Pause
- Out, one....two.....three....four.... (through pursed lips).

Pursed lip breathing slows our breathing down and allows us to focus on our breath. This can help in stressful situations or when we feel tired or tense by allowing us to regain control.

Like all techniques it will need practice. Once we feel comfortable using the new technique we can try it out in real situations.