

# THYMe

## Think Health for Your Memory

### Facilitator Manual

### Week Five

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# Week 5 Session Plan

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Time	Agenda	Flip Chart	Page
5mins	Recap		3
20mins	Goal Follow Up	Questions to help you set a goal (from last week)	3
20mins	Physical Activity	Physical Activity Guidelines Benefits of physical exercise How can we incorporate more physical activity into our daily lives? (hand written) Physical Activity in Daily Life	4
10mins	The Role of the Health Trainer	Leaflet	5
15mins	Break		
20mins	Memory Problem Solving	Memory Problems – Explore (handwritten) Memory Problems – Solutions (handwritten) Try it Out (handwritten)	5
25mins	Maintenance Section Risk factors quiz Introduction to maintenance Keeping Motivated Maintaining goal setting 'Changes I Have Made' chart Summary	Quiz (blank) Quiz (from week 1) Keeping motivated (handwritten)	7
30mins	Evaluations		9
5mins	What to do if memory worsens Most Positive Thing Goodbyes		9

# Week Five Session Details

## Recap (five minutes)

Give the reasons and remind that having a healthy balanced diet will lower your risk of high blood pressure/cholesterol/obesity Etc.

Ask questions to explore understanding ...see last week's session plan.

What are the key things we need to remember in relation to our diet?

- Routine/structure
- A rainbow of fruit and veg
- Fluids 1.5litres a day
- Reduce salt
- Healthy balanced – eat well plate/Mediterranean diet
- Nothing to excess

Handwritten Flip

## Goal follow up (20 minutes)

Don't forget put up last week's facilitator's goals.

Questions to Help you Set a Goal

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

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- What?
- How Much/How Often?
- How Important?
- How Confident?

Last week's Handwritten Flips

Each facilitator models the goal setting questions to ask what the goal was, try to clarify the exact goal as helps with your notes. You will have a record of the goals from last week to use as a prompt.

Go round the room for everyone to have the opportunity to feedback – 2 minutes each

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

Get some people 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 preventing memory problems 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 keeping a record and will prompt when respondent does not.

## Physical Activity (twenty minutes)

Recap the importance of this in relation to deteriorating memory. Give out hand-out to read if not already used in earlier sessions.

Recap main Points:

- Strong evidence
- Increases blood flow to the brain
- Maintains health of brain cells and the connections between them
- Lowers your risk of high blood pressure, cholesterol, obesity and diabetes....all of which increase your risk of developing a dementia.

**Do some kind of physical activity**

Now more than ever, there is strong evidence that regular physical activity is associated with better brain function and reduced risk of cognitive decline and dementia. Exercise gives our brains a healthy boost.

## A4 Sheet

Regular physical activity have an increased risk of developing dementia. It is still unclear just how much and how often we should exercise specifically to reduce our risk of dementia.

Of course, exercise doesn't have to be something you just do as an activity. You can include it in your daily life by just being more and being less sedentary. Evidence also indicates that this will reduce your risk of developing a dementia.

You need to get into the habit of exercising and once you do, you'll wonder why you waited so long. Exercise makes us feel good and is a great activity to enjoy with friends.

If not already covered go through the physical guidelines and benefits of physical exercise here. Otherwise, use this opportunity to do a recap.

### Physical Activity Guidelines

- **150 minutes of physical activity each week**  
Enough to raise your heart rate and make you slightly out of breath but this will be different for everyone and can be spilt up e.g. into 10 minutes chunks



- **Muscle Strengthening twice a week**
- **Avoid sitting for long periods**

### Benefits of Physical Exercise

- Up to **35%** lower risk of coronary heart disease and stroke
- Up to **50%** lower risk of type two diabetes
- A **30%** lower risk of falls (among older people)
- Up to a **30%** lower risk of depression
- Up to a **30%** lower risk of dementia

**Muscle strengthening is particularly important for older people as it reduces risk of falls, hitting your head, damaging your brain.....what things can you do to strengthen muscles?**

**Avoid sitting for long periods....gets blood flowing better oxygenated blood to the brain.**

Put up the hand written flip about incorporating more physical activity into our daily lives and take suggestions, writing them up on the flip.



### Prompts:

- What can you do to avoid sitting for long periods?
- Does anyone use the bus? How can you incorporate more exercise
- If you meet friends in a pub/café what else can you do with them?
- Where do you park when you go to the supermarket?
- Who carries shopping home?
- Anyone have grand children?
- Who has an upstairs toilet? Do you use it during the day?

### Health Trainers (ten minutes)

In areas that have Health trainers. They offer 1:1 support and access to groups in the local area, to help people look at individual changes they want to make to their lifestyles. They also help people to continue to set goals. In areas with no health trainers, you can spend more time on local resources in your area that link to the six pillars e.g. gyms/swimming pools/walking groups etc...

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

If more appropriate for the group and not already covered you can use this problem solve to cover any sleep problems instead of a memory one.

### Solving Memory Problems

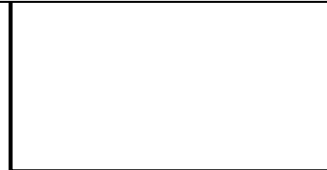
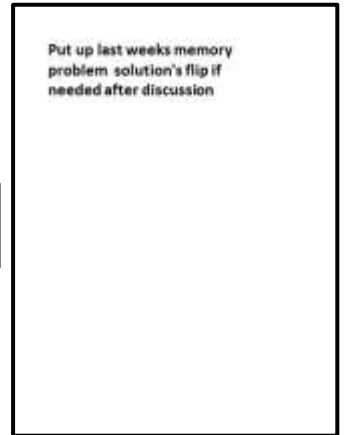
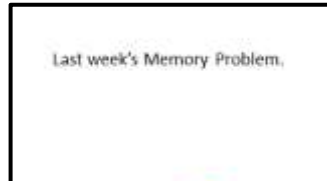
*'Last week's memory problem was...'  
'How did you get on with trying the solutions? What worked? What didn't?'*

Recap solutions. If you get little response, put up the sheet of solutions from last week.

*'Today's memory problem is..... and 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.'*

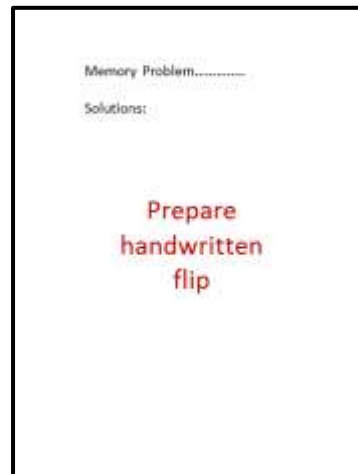
*'It is important that you try to practice these methods and get into good habits and routines now, both to help you now, but also so that as your memory deteriorates it will enable you to carry on being as independent as possible for longer.'*



### Memory Problem Solving (twenty minutes)

*'Our memory problem for this week is.....'*

Put up blank flips side by side:



Write up any solutions on the 'Solutions' flip in the 'explore' stage if they come up but say we'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 (Prompt Sheet for solving memory problems) and one to be given out after the discussion (Solutions to .....specific memory problem) 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...



**Maintaining a healthy Lifestyle for your memory (twenty five minutes)**

**Quiz: Risk factors for Dementia over which we have some control**

**Put up blank sheet first then results from week one (after you have done the quiz!).**

*'We would now like to get an idea of what things you think may contribute towards our memories deteriorating more quickly and us possibly developing a dementia. For each of the following items can we have a show of hands for those that think these things could lead to a dementia, those that don't think they can and those who don't know or aren't sure.'*

Read out each one, count the hands and note down on the

Are These Risk Factors for Developing a Dementia?

	Yes	No	Don't Know
Being physically inactive			
Smoking			
High Blood Pressure			
High Cholesterol			
Obesity			
Too much fat in your diet			
Stress in your life			
Lack of an active social life			
Lack of mental stimulation			
Drinking too much alcohol			

flip chart. As in week one, make sure people do not personalise this quiz. We are referring to a general risk rather than their individual lifestyle.

Put up results from week one and say how well everyone has done and how much they have learnt. Though please note, if they answered “No” or “Don’t Know” in any numbers to any of the risk factors then you will need to reinforce the message, giving the evidence and benefits of that area. Talk about how positive this is as these are things that we have control of in our lives and that we can all try to change to lower our risk of our memories deteriorating

Link the results from this to why we have been making changes over the past four weeks to try to slow down/stop us developing a dementia. This is a strong motivator to continue with the changes we have already made and to identify others. This then links to maintaining changes section below

## **Introduction to Maintenance**

### **‘Changes I Have Made’ Chart:**

*‘One way to help keep ourselves motivated is to acknowledge the things we have already achieved and not forget them. Here is a sheet you can simply add things you do to keep as a reminder of your achievements. Spend a few minutes now writing down the things you have changed/achieved over the past five weeks. You will notice that this may also help you identify areas of the six pillars that you have not made any changes in....as they will have less written down.’*

**Ask the group to spend five minutes completing the “Changes I have made to help my memory “ form. Ask them to include any changes, not just their goals. This is to help acknowledge the things we have already changed in the five weeks.**

**Then start introduction.....**

*‘This group was set up for people with a Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) because evidence suggests that if you make changes in the areas of the six pillars of a healthy lifestyle you will reduce your risk of your memory problems getting worse or getting worse more quickly and of developing a dementia. Making these changes will also help you manage your memory problems on a daily basis, as you will be more alert, and your brain will be able to work at its optimum level.’*

*‘As you are aware, there is no medication that will directly improve your memory or prevent it from getting worse, some of you may be taking medication that will help reduce the risk factors e.g. medication for your heart, cholesterol, blood pressure etc...and it is important that you continue to take these. However in the absence of any medication to treat MCI the evidence is that the best treatment are the changes that you have been making in this group in relation to the six pillars and that setting yourself goals every week increases your ability to make these changes.’*



*‘However, we appreciate that it is often easier to make changes when you have the weekly support of others in a group and how this can be a challenge when a group finishes.’*

**Split into two groups (or one if a smaller group).**

**Give out a sheet to each group ‘Keeping Motivated?’**

*‘So how will you continue to maintain the changes you have made in the six pillars?’*

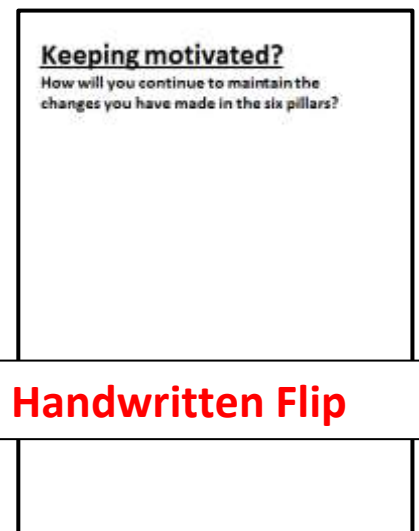
**Ask each group to come up with as many ideas as they can for ways to keep their motivation to make changes to their lifestyle. Ask for solutions rather than focussing on problems.**

**Give five to ten minutes for group discussion.**

**Ask a member from each group to feed these back and then write them all up onto a flip chart (or two). Explore group suggestions with open questions to pull out benefits/reasons. Facilitators to float between groups and use prompts if needed.**

Prompts:

- What have you found motivates you to make changes over the past few weeks?
- How have you chosen out of the six pillars what things to work on?
- Has goal setting worked? (see goal setting box for prompts to explore this further)
- How can you use other people (family/friends) to help keep your motivation up?
- How does doing something regularly help?....habits/routines.



Now get the two groups to feedback and write response onto the flips.

**Maintaining Goal setting:**

*‘How has it helped?’*

Prompts to encourage discussion about what has been the benefit of setting goals:

- Did you find that setting weekly goals helped you make changes in the areas of the six pillars? How?
- How did you feel when you achieved your goal?
- What about if you did not feel you achieved the goal?
- Did the questions we asked that help? How?
- Does talking your goal through with someone else help? How and why? How does this affect your motivation?

- Did planning and prioritising help you achieve the goals? Why?
- Did having a knowledge of what things you could change help you to set goals? In what way?
- What happens if you set a goal that is too difficult/big?
- Having goals you were confident you could achieve?

## Summary of Maintenance

That's a really good list you've come up with to help keep your motivation up. Sometimes though, life gets in the way and if you find things have slipped, that's OK just think to yourself I'm going to start over again and set yourself a small goal. Be kind to yourself.

## Evaluation (thirty minutes)

*'It is important for us and for you to know if this group has been of benefit.'*

Hand out the evaluation sheets and give them time to complete them. Once complete collect them in and move onto explaining what they should do if they are worried about their memory getting worse in the future.

*'If you are worried about your memory getting worse see your GP and ask for another referral to the Memory Clinic. Sometimes you 'll be worrying about your memory and may be pleasantly reassured by this assessment. The more you're worrying, the more it will affect your memory. Of course if things have moved on then you will also receive the appropriate treatment.'*

**Explain that you will be handing out a sheet for them to write down the most positive thing for them to have come out of the past five sessions.**

Give out sheet, give a few minutes to complete and then ask everybody if they mind reading theirs out.

# Do Some Kind of Physical Activity

Now, more than ever, there is strong evidence that regular physical activity is associated with better brain function and reduced risk of cognitive decline and dementia.

Physical activity increases blood flow to the brain, maintains the health of brain cells and the connections between them, and is associated with larger brain volume. It reduces the risk of high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes and high cholesterol, which are associated with an increased risk of cognitive decline and dementia.

There is some evidence that suggests people who don't do regular physical activity have an increased risk of developing dementia.

Of course exercise doesn't have to be something you just do as an activity. You can include it in your daily life by just doing more and being less sedentary. Evidence also indicates that this will reduce your risk of developing a dementia.

You need to get into the habit of exercising and once you do you'll wonder why you waited so long. Exercise makes us feel good and is a great activity to enjoy with friends.

**Over the past five weeks what is the most positive thing for you to have come of these past five sessions?**

## **Changes I have made to help my memory.**

Regular Exercise	
Healthy Diet	
Mental Stimulation	
Stress management	
Active Social Life	
Quality Sleep	