

# **Cognitive Rehabilitation**

**A guided self-help programme for improving thinking skills**

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# Welcome!

This is the online guide book for your cognitive rehabilitation program.

This has been put together by the neuropsychology department in Stoke-on-Trent, UK.

If there are any problems in accessing this resource the please contact the service on 00000000

## Course Overview

Chapter	Topic
Chapter 1	Overview of Cognition
Chapter 2	Overview of Memory
Chapter 3	Internal Strategies
Chapter 4	External Strategies
Chapter 5	Mood & Cognitive Functioning
Chapter 6	Keeping Well

# Introduction



Thank you for attending and welcome to the memory support skills group. This group has been designed for people who are experiencing difficulties with their memory. By participating in this group programme we hope that you will learn more about your difficulties and develop some strategies to help you manage these difficulties. The aims of the group are listed below:

- To develop knowledge and understanding of our memory and the process underpinning it.
- To develop awareness of and share our own difficulties.
- To develop internal and external strategies to support our memory.
- To increase knowledge and understanding of the impact of memory difficulties on our well-being.
- To develop an awareness of strategies to support psychological and emotional well-being.
- To increase our knowledge and understanding of cognitive functioning and abilities

We hope that the memory support skills group will also provide you with a space to share your experiences, knowledge and skills. It can be daunting coming together within a group and it's perfectly natural to feel worried or anxious about attending and talking within a group. It is therefore important that we support one another and contribute as much or as little as we feel comfortable with. The emphasis of this group is active participation and it is equally important to contribute as much as you feel you can. It is also important that you attend all

the sessions, however, if for some reason you can't attend the group could you please let us know at least 24 hours in advance.

There will be the opportunity for you to complete some work out-of-session if you wish to. This is not compulsory, but may be helpful when thinking together about which strategies might help you manage your difficulties. Please also be aware that this group is not about 'solving' memory problems but developing strategies to help us to cope with our difficulties. It can take time to find the strategies that work for you, to implement these and for these to become effective. So it's important that we take an explorative approach with trial and error.

Sometimes attending groups can cause us to have difficult thoughts and feelings. If you have any difficulties please feel able to arrange a time to discuss this with Grace Sunerton. I will endeavour to be available for telephone consultation on 01782 275188 to support you if you are having difficulties with the programme. There will also be space to ask any questions and explore with us your difficulties within the group if you feel comfortable sharing these.

## **Group Rules**

As we mentioned, we hope that members of the group will support and learn from each other. We also hope all the members will share thoughts, ideas and experiences during the sessions. However, it can help to have a few 'ground rules' to ensure that everyone feels as comfortable as possible and to help the group run smoothly.

This can also help to ensure that everyone has chance to contribute to the group. Is there anything that you would suggest could help the group to run smoothly? Feel free to make a note of any group rules agreed upon in the space below.

# 1 Cognitive Function

## 1.1 What are Cognitive Abilities?

The term cognitive ability is used to describe people's thinking abilities; including problem solving, concentration and memory. Our minds are made up of lots of these abilities. We will explore some of these in more detail below; however, for the purpose of this group we will not cover all cognitive abilities. We all have our strengths as well as areas we find more difficult. Some of you may have completed a cognitive assessment before attending this group which helps us to identify these strengths and areas of difficulty.

The image below shows the different types of abilities:

## 1.2 Attention

Attention is a complex thinking skill. Attention describes the process through which you select something to concentrate on, filter out distractions, maintain concentration and switch it when necessary.

### Types of Attention:

#### 1.2.1 Focused or selective attention

This is your ability to choose something to pay attention to while filtering out and ignoring other stimuli like noise.

#### 1.2.2 Sustained attention

This is your ability to keep concentrating on something over a period of time.

#### 1.2.3 Divided attention

This is your ability to pay attention to more than one thing at the same time.



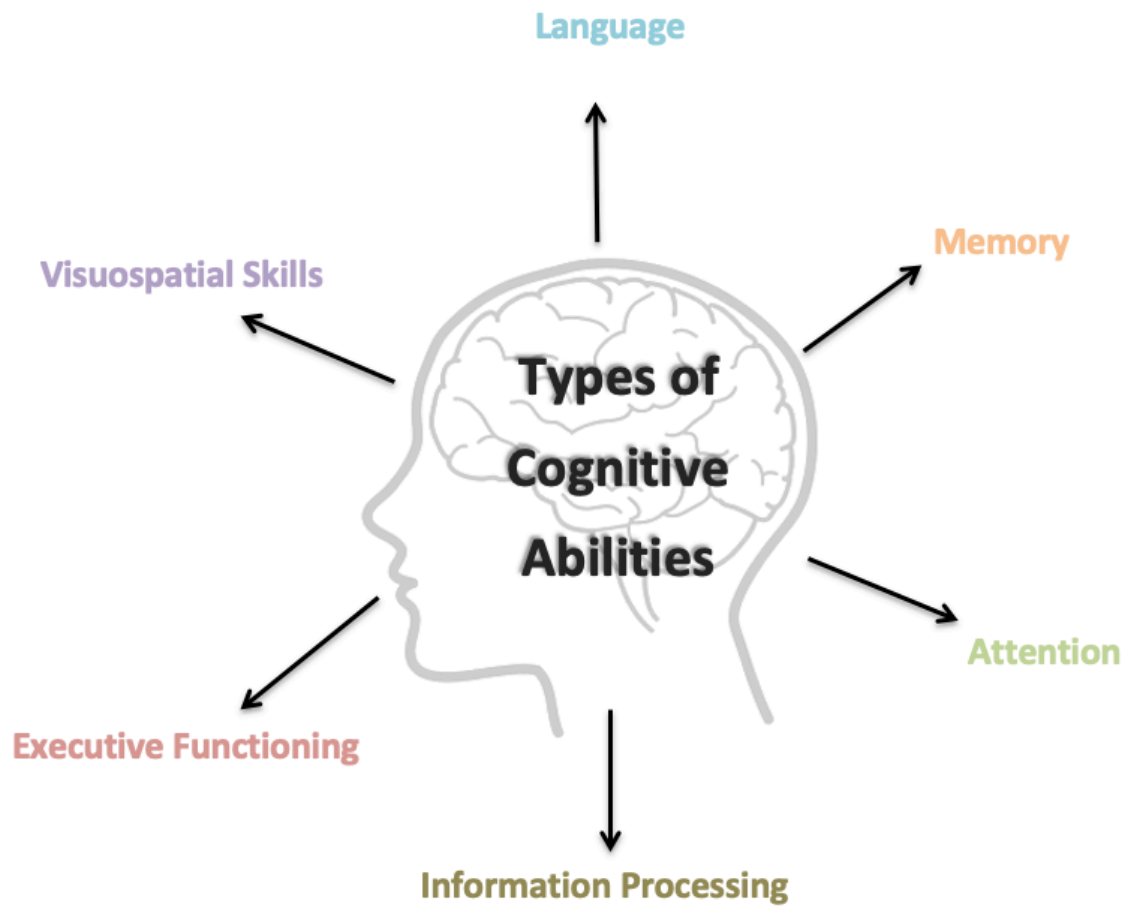


Figure 1.1: An overview of the different types of cognitive functions.

### 1.2.4 Alternating attention

This your ability to switch your attention between two or more tasks.



- I find it hard to do more than one thing at a time like writing a message while talking on the phone.
- My mind often wanders when I read or watch TV. I'll get to the end of a programme or page and have no idea what I read or watched.
- I start doing something but then get distracted and start doing something else. Then I can't remember what I was meant to be doing.

## 1.3 Information Processing

Information processing refers to the process through which your mind takes in information, processes that information and acts on. We often talk about speed of information processing which refers to how quickly people are able to do this. For some people this may have slowed down which means that they find it hard to take new information in, especially when they're trying to concentrate on lots of different things at once. Imagine that your mind works a bit like a computer.



If you have lots of programmes open at the same time this will put pressure on the computer and cause it to slow down. Equally, if you're using one programme it might be overloaded with

information. The same can happen with our minds, especially for people who have reduced speed of information processing. If you overload your mind, information might not go in properly.



- It takes me longer to answer questions now. If someone asks me something I have to stop and think about what it means before I can answer.
- I used to be able to do maths in my head really quickly but now it takes me ages.
- If someone's explaining what something means I have to ask them to slow down and repeat it because it takes a while for the information to sink in.

## **1.4 Executive Functioning**

Executive functioning is a broad term used to describe our ability to regulate and organise our thoughts and activities and effectively make decisions. It includes lots of different abilities such as:

### **1.4.1 Planning and Organising**

The ability to plan a task including organising your time.

### **1.4.2 Sequencing**

The ability to complete tasks in the right order.

### **1.4.3 Flexible thinking**

The ability to think in a non-rigid way and adapt your thinking.

### **1.4.4 Self-monitoring**

The ability to monitor your behaviour and responses and adapt these if necessary.

### **1.4.5 Problem solving**

The ability to solve problems or tasks.

## 1.5 Session 2 Preview

We will also be talking a bit more about memory in the next session. At the start of the next session we will be doing a brief breathing exercise. This is because often when we attend the sessions there may be lots of things on our minds. Perhaps thoughts about what we've been doing, what we need to do, maybe some expectations or perhaps worries about what the group itself will be like. Our minds often wander and life is sometimes filled with stresses or worries. So we will do this breathing exercise to help us to feel more 'grounded' in the next session.

## 2 Overview of Memory

### 2.1 Introduction

In the last session, we introduced different cognitive abilities. We also began to think about our own memory difficulties, when these started and any strategies we have tried to overcome them. Today, we're going to focus in on memory.

When we talk about 'memory' or we say 'my memory's getting really bad', it's easy to think of 'memory' as being one, singular function. However, in reality it's much more complex.

Today we'll start off by looking at the memory process and linking it to the other cognitive abilities we have been introduced to. We'll also be talking about what memory difficulties we have noticed ourselves, along with what aspects of memory we find work better for us. This can help us to identify where in the process our main difficulties are. In turn, we're then able to come up with more effective and targeted strategies to support our memory.

The term memory is used to describe the process through which people acquire information through their senses (sight, hearing, taste, smell), store and recall that information. There are lots of different types of memory which require many thinking abilities. We will be talking about these later in the session.

The image below shows the different types of abilities:

### 2.2 Mindfulness

As we said in the last session, when you come into each session there may be lots of things on your mind. You might have thoughts about what you've been doing, what you need to do, maybe some expectations or perhaps worries about what the group itself will be like. Our minds often wander and life is sometimes filled with stresses or worries.

To start off today, and at the beginning of our future sessions, we will carry out a brief breathing exercise. The aim of this is just to help us be more present 'in the moment', and give us some time to become more aware of our thoughts, feelings and any physical sensations.

As we'll see later in the course, this can also support our cognitive functioning and help our memory along with promoting overall well-being. If you have difficulty focusing on the breath

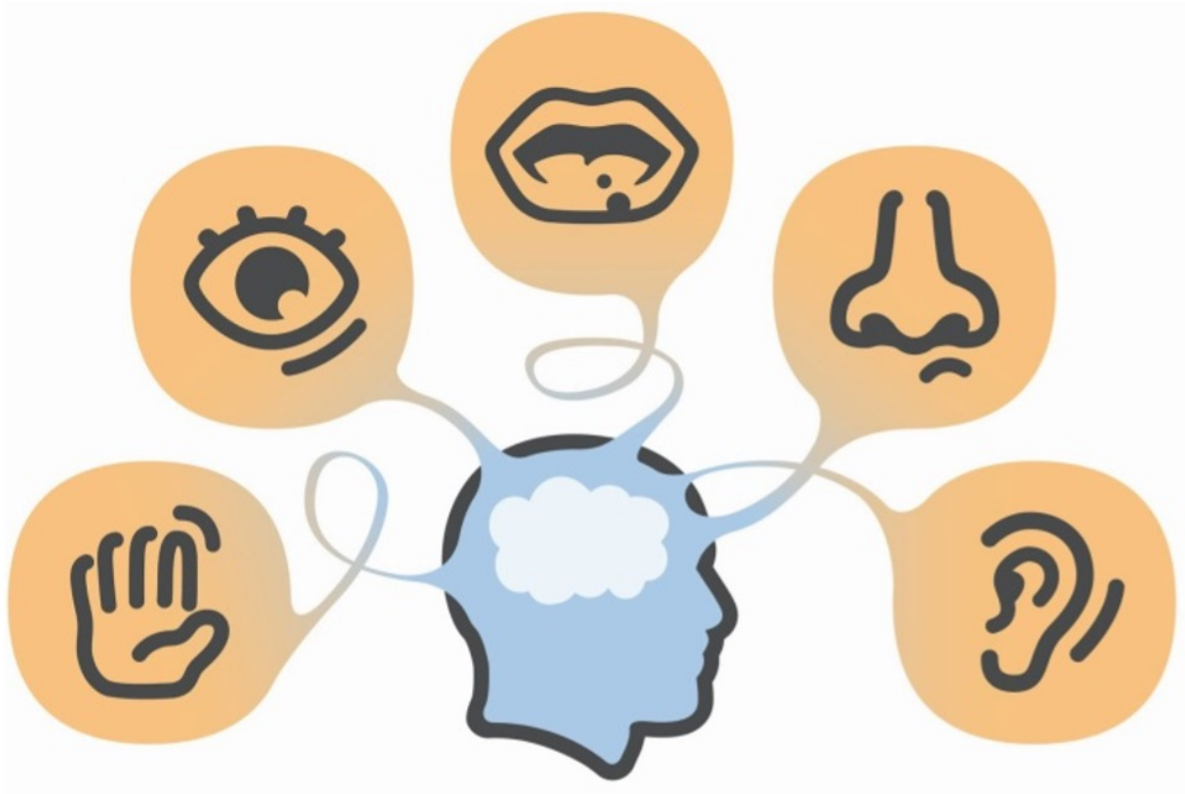


Figure 2.1: Our different senses impact our cognitive abilities.



Figure 2.2: Meditation can reduce stress which can improve memory..

(e.g. due to breathing difficulties) then go at a pace that feels comfortable to you, stop the meditation or focus on another part of your body, such as your feet.

## 2.3 Memory and Mindfulness

As we've said before, if we're distracted or trying to pay attention to lots of different things at once it can result in that information not going in properly.

Have you ever arrived at a destination after a drive or a walk completely unaware of how you got there? This is what we call being on 'automatic pilot' and often happens because we're so wrapped up in thoughts about the past and the future that we're not paying attention to what's happening around us in the present moment.



Figure 2.3: Stress has been shown to impact upon our ability to remember..

### 2.3.1 How does this Impact on Our Memory?

If we're paying attention to these thoughts about the past and the future it means that we're not giving our full attention to what's happening around us now. As we said before, this can impact on our memory because it means that important information might not be entering or being processed within our minds. We also end up using up our cognitive resources on this rather than learning new information.



### 2.3.2 What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is about paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment and non-judgementally. It is used to help people improve their wellbeing by helping people to defuse from these thoughts and improve their attention. By just noticing and paying attention to what's happening now, mindfulness helps us to distance ourselves from our thoughts and be more present. Below are some of the core principles of mindfulness: - The 'being' mode: Mindfulness says that often we are so caught up in these thoughts about the past and future (the 'doing' mode) that we end up not paying attention to what's happening around us now (the 'being' mode). - Self-compassion: We often have so much compassion and empathy for others that we forget to have the same for ourselves. Mindfulness is about extending some of this kindness to ourselves.

Mindfulness can have a positive impact on lots of areas of our lives including: - *Emotional wellbeing*: becoming more aware of our unhelpful thoughts and feelings and distancing ourselves from these. This can help us to realise that thoughts are just that thoughts! We will talk more about this in sessions 5 and 6. - *Physical wellbeing*: Becoming more aware of our bodies can be very useful for managing stress and reducing the release of cortisol. This is because we're often not even aware of the impact of stress on our bodies. We will also discuss this in more detail in another session. - *Cognitive functioning*: Mindfulness can be used to help improve our attention. By becoming aware of our thoughts, feelings and physical sensations we can bring our attention back to the present moment and reduce how much time we spend in automatic pilot. This can actually also help us to train our attention and help us to process and encode information effectively.

## 2.4 How does our Memory Work?

The process of learning and remembering is quite complex and requires lots of different abilities and skills. This includes attention, information processing, encoding, storage and retrieval.

The diagram below illustrates part of this process:



- I find it hard to do more than one thing at a time like writing a message while talking on the phone.
- My mind often wanders when I read or watch TV. I'll get to the end of a programme or page and have no idea what I read or watched.
- I start doing something but then get distracted and start doing something else. Then I can't remember what I was meant to be doing.

If the memory process is interrupted or affected at any point it can impact on your ability to recall information.

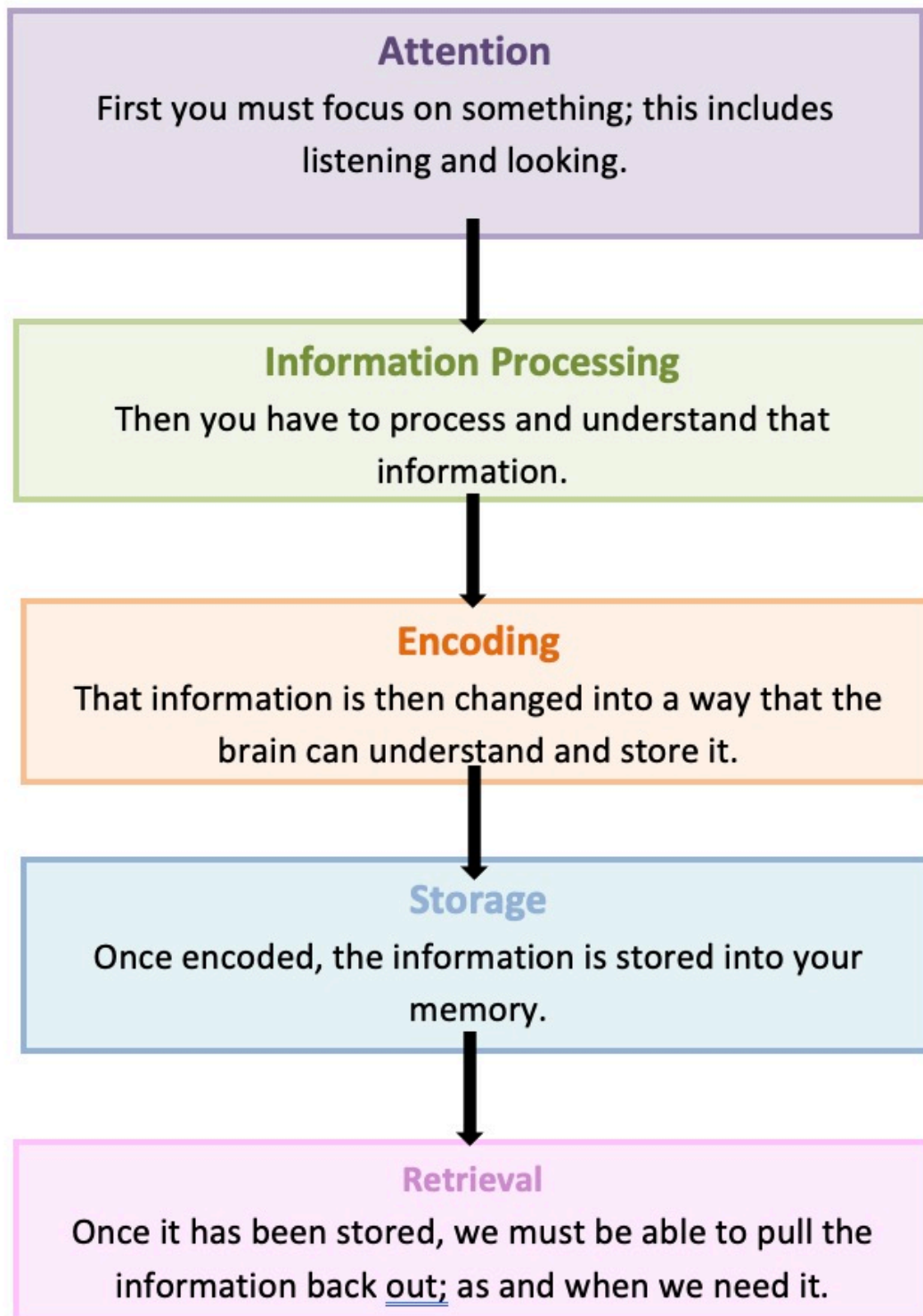


Figure 2.4: This is the model of how we learn and remember information.

For example, if someone's having difficulty with their attention they might think they're forgetting that information when in fact it's not entering their minds in the first place.

If someone's experiencing reduced speed of information processing they might not remember because the information isn't being processed properly.

Alternatively, information might be encoded in their memory but they could be having difficulty retrieving that information.

## 2.5 Types of Memory

For the purpose of this group we will be splitting memory into the types listed below. But please be aware that there are lots of other ways of dividing memory into different types.

- *Working Memory*: Is your ability to temporarily hold information while manipulating it in your mind. An example of this is mental arithmetic.
- *Immediate Memory or Short-term Memory*: is your ability to remember information for a few seconds or minutes such as remembering a phone number for long enough to dial it.
- *Delayed or long-term Memory*: refers to your memory for information over longer periods of time. For example your ability to remember things from years ago).
- *Visual Memory*: involves things that you have seen such as faces, objects and pictures.
- *Verbal Memory*: is your memory for things you've heard or read.
- *Prospective Memory*: is your ability to remember to do something such as brush your teeth or go to a meeting.
- *Autobiographical Memory*: refers to your memory for things that have happened in your life such as where you went to school.
- *Procedural Memory*: is a type of long term memory of how to perform different actions or skills like walking, talking or eating. These types of memories are so ingrained they usually become automatic.



- I can remember things that people said years ago but I can't seem to remember what people said or what happened yesterday
- I'm able to recognise people's faces but I find it hard to remember their names.
- I can never seem to remember my appointments.
- I find it hard to remember what I just did, even if it was two minutes ago.

## 2.6 Why do People have Memory Difficulties?

Difficulty recalling information can be caused by a number of things. This includes:

- A head injury or other injury to the brain.
- Some conditions such as epilepsy.
- Neurological conditions such as Multiple Sclerosis or Alzheimer's disease.
- Stroke.
- Shortage of oxygen to the brain, for example because of a heart attack.
- Infections of the brain such as encephalitis.
- Use of substances like alcohol and drugs.
- Some medications.
- Stress.
- Low mood or anxiety.
- A difficult experience like a bereavement or stressful life event.
- Physical difficulties such as hearing loss or difficulties with vision.
- Some people notice difficulty recalling information as they get older.
- Feeling tired or fatigued.
- Poor diet and routine.

## **2.7 How are People with Memory Difficulties affected?**

The impact of memory difficulties can vary from person to person. We will discuss some aspects of this later in the course. Below are some examples of how memory difficulties can affect people:

- Our mood or emotions. For example, some people might feel anxious, frustrated or low because of their difficulties.
- Our relationships – sometimes it can put strain on our relationships with friends or family.
- It might make us feel less motivated to do the things we need to do or enjoy in life.
- We might lose confidence to try new things.

## 3 External Memory Strategies

### 3.1 Introduction

As we said in the last session, when you come into each session there may be lots of things on your mind. You might have thoughts about what you've been doing, what you need to do; maybe some expectations or perhaps worries about what the group itself will be like. Our minds often wander and life is sometimes filled with stresses or worries. To start off today, and at the beginning of our future sessions, we will carry out a brief mindfulness exercise. The aim of this is just to help us be more present 'in the moment', and give us some time to become more aware of our thoughts, feelings and any physical sensations. As we'll see later in the course, this can also support our cognitive functioning and help our memory along with promoting overall well-being.

If you have difficulty focusing on the breath (e.g. due to breathing difficulties) then go at a pace that feels comfortable to you, stop the meditation or focus on another part of your body, such as your feet.

**i** As we said in the last session, having memory difficulties can impact on our lives in lots of different ways, including our relationships, work, mood and general wellbeing. A common problem for people with memory difficulties is thinking about whether and how we might tell other people about our difficulties. As a group, we will be thinking about the pros and cons of telling people about our memory difficulties and how this impacts on our lives.

If you want, you can use the table on the following page to jot down the pros and cons.



Figure 3.1: Communicating out difficulties

Pros	Cons

**Think about who it might be useful for us to share our memory difficulties with. You can use the space below to make a note of the group discussion.**

**Sometimes it can be difficult to know how to communicate the impact of our difficulties with others. Have a think about how we might do this and jot it down in the space below.**

## ## What are External Strategies?

External strategies are used to help us compensate for difficulties with our memory. These strategies involve making external changes within our environment.

### 3.1.1 Visual aids

If you're likely to remember things that you see, use pictures, drawings and photographs. These can help us to encode and store information into our memory as well as prompt our memory later on.



Figure 3.2: Pictures can help to elicit memories.

### 3.1.2 Verbal aids

If your memory is better for information that you hear it might be useful to use a Dictaphone to describe events of the day, record lectures or meetings or just to make a note of something important. This can also help us to encode and store information into our memory and that way if you forget you can listen back to the information to help to jog your memory. There is



also computer software and audio versions of books which you can use to listen to information rather than relying on reading it.

### 3.1.3 Get organised!

Getting organised at home is very important for memory. There are lots of different aids that can help us become more organised. If used consistently these aids can make life much easier and puts less strain on your memory. Below are some examples:

- *Folders/files*: Make folders and files for important papers, bills, recipes etc. so they're easier to locate.
- *Sort it*: everything should have its place. Sort drawers, cupboards, shelves etc.
- *Label it*: use labels on drawers, doors, cabinets, files, boxes etc. That way you and others in your house will find it easier to locate and put things away.
- *Diary/Filofax*: using a diary or Filofax can be helpful for remembering what you need to do.
- *Charts/calendars*: Charts and calendars can also be useful for remembering what you need to do. Making these visible around the house is also useful because it helps us to pay attention to them.



### 3.1.4 Boards

Hanging boards, blackboards or bulletin boards can be helpful for remembering information. These can be strategically placed around the house for remembering information (e.g. in the hallway or on the fridge). You could use this for to do lists, shopping lists, for events or simply to jot down important information. ### Notes

Take notes of what you need to remember but try to keep it in one place (i.e. a note pad) so you remember to look. You might want to keep a daily list of what need to remember. It's important to write enough that you understand what you need to remember but not too much that it becomes overwhelming and counter-productive. We will demonstrate this later on.

### 3.1.5 Journal

A journal can be useful for reflecting back on your day or checking what you did during the day later on if you're unsure.

### 3.1.6 Post it notes

Leave post it notes to remind you of things in places that you know you'll look. For example, you might want to remind yourself to lock the door when you come in at night by putting a post it note next to the door.

### 3.1.7 Cues

Leaving cues around the house or in other places can also help to jog your memory. For example, if you leave your notebook by the kettle you might be more likely to pick it up in the morning.

### 3.1.8 To do lists

It might be worth creating a daily 'to do' list of things you need to do. You can add to this throughout the day and tick off when each task has been completed.



#### ### Environment

Try to eliminate background noise as much as possible to reduce distraction. Turn off the TV or radio and close doors if people are talking. Getting rid of clutter can help to reduce visual distraction. This will help you to have more focused rather than divided attention.

### 3.1.9 Technology

With technology continuously changing, new memory aids are constantly developing. Below are some examples of these:

- Location detection devices: These can be useful if you if you misplace/forget where important things are. They can be attached to keys or other important devices and make a loud sound to help you find it. Mobile phones can also be linked to family and friends so they know your whereabouts if you're worried getting lost
- Tablets/computers: Also have similar functions to smart phones but are slightly bigger. You can 'sync' your devices (share your information and apps between your phone/computer/tablet). This can be useful if other people need access to your information or you use more than one device for different things (e.g. at work, home or when you're out).
- Satellite Navigation (SATNAV): Can be used if you have difficulty remembering routes. Navigation systems are also available on phones and tablets.
- Phones: Phones have a number of useful features including calendars, alarms and reminders. Smart phones have a number of additional apps and features that can be helpful for remembering information. This includes budgeting tools and notes pages for writing lists. Some phones even have 'memory aid apps' which incorporate lots of different strategies to help your memory.

### 3.1.10 Difficulty

When learning something new you should try to pace yourself and start off with simple tasks, gradually increasing their difficulty and length of time spent on the task. This will also help to gradually train your attention.

### 3.1.11 Timing

Are you a morning person or do you function better later in the day? Try to schedule activities which put higher demands on your attention and memory for the time of day when you perform the best.

### 3.1.12 Slow down

When doing new things or tasks that you know will put high demands on you plan ahead and take your time. For example, if people are talking too quickly or if you don't understand something ask them to slow down or repeat the information.

### **3.1.13 Breaks**

Ensure that you take regular breaks when learning something new. This will help to take the pressure off your concentration and minimise tiredness and frustration caused by overexerting yourself. It's also useful to give yourself rewards to look forward to.

### **3.1.14 Routine**

Maintaining a good routine is very important for memory. This is because when something becomes part of our routine it put less pressure on our memory and becomes part of our procedural memory (our long term memory of how to perform different actions or skills). These types of memories are so ingrained they usually become automatic which is why they put less pressure on other types of memory or our attention.

### **3.1.15 Context**

Sometimes it's easier to retrieve information if we're in the same place, situation or mood we were in when we learned that information. If you're having trouble remembering something it might be worth going back to the place or situation you encoded it.

### **3.1.16 Creating my memory 'tool box'**

It's useful to start off by making a plan of which strategies would be useful for you and when you aim to start implementing each strategy. Try to focus on one strategy at a time. Remember that it takes time for strategies work and become part of our routine so try to be patient and stick with the strategies even if you feel they're not working straight away.

## **3.2 How do I Know which Strategies will be the Most Useful for Me?**

When deciding which strategies are the most useful for you, ask yourself questions about what exactly the problem is.

### **3.2.1 Do I have a specific difficulty with my memory?**

Think about whether there's a specific difficulty with your memory. For example, is it that you're forgetting what you need to do? Are you forgetting names? Are you having difficulty recognising faces? Then focus your strategies on these difficulties.

### **3.2.2 Do I remember information better when I see or hear things?**

If you're better at remembering visual information, try to incorporate as many visual aids into your plan such as pictures, diagrams or photos. If you're better at remembering verbal information use verbal aids such as saying things out loud or using a Dictaphone.

### **3.2.3 Do I forget things shortly after they've happened or after an extended period of time?**

If you're likely to forget things straight away, use the strategies immediately. E.g. put things in your diary straight away, write your lists straight away etc. If you're likely to forget things over an extended period of time think ahead! Take photos, write things down important information etc.

### **3.2.4 Are you having a specific difficulty during the process of learning?**

Think about the process of learning new information (see session 2) and try to identify where you're having difficulty. Is it that you're getting distracted and not paying attention? Do you feel as though you've slowed down a bit? Are you having trouble encoding, storing or retrieving the information? Try to focus your strategies on the different stages of this process. For example, if you're having difficulty with your attention try to focus on one task at a time, clear external clutter and take regular breaks. See the table below for more information on this.

## **3.3 Other useful tips**

- Try to incorporate the strategies into your routine. That way you won't be relying so much on remembering and it will become part of your procedural memory (your automatic memory for doing things).
- Incorporating strategies into your life and routine can take time. Give yourself time to adjust!
- Don't try to do too much at once. When implementing new strategies try to do one at a time. That way you're more likely to remember and incorporate it into your routine.
- Keep track of your progress. Keep a diary of all the strategies you're implementing and monitor your progress over a month or a week. That way you can also review whether those strategies are working for you.

Stage	Strategies
<b>Attention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Visual aids to help pay attention (e.g. wall charts/calendars).</li> <li>▪ Get organised</li> <li>▪ Notes</li> <li>▪ Journal</li> <li>▪ Post-it notes</li> <li>▪ Cues</li> <li>▪ Technology</li> <li>▪ Boards</li> <li>▪ Alerts/reminders</li> <li>▪ Focus</li> <li>▪ Environment</li> <li>▪ Slow down</li> <li>▪ Take breaks</li> <li>▪ Timing</li> <li>▪ Difficulty</li> <li>▪ Routine</li> </ul>
<b>Information Processing</b>	<p>Visual aids</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal aids</li> <li>• Get organised</li> <li>• Boards</li> <li>• Notes</li> <li>• Journal</li> <li>• Post-it notes</li> <li>• Cues</li> <li>• technology</li> <li>• Slow down</li> <li>• Take breaks</li> <li>• Timing</li> <li>• Difficulty</li> <li>• Focus</li> <li>• Environment</li> <li>• Routine</li> </ul>

<b>Encoding and Storage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Visual aids</li> <li>▪ Verbal aids</li> <li>▪ Get organised</li> <li>▪ Boards</li> <li>▪ Notes</li> <li>▪ Journal</li> <li>▪ Post-it notes</li> <li>▪ Cues</li> <li>▪ Technology</li> <li>▪ Slow down</li> <li>▪ Take breaks</li> <li>▪ Timing</li> <li>▪ Difficulty</li> <li>▪ Focus</li> <li>▪ Environment</li> <li>▪ Routine</li> </ul>
<b>Retrieval</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Visual aids</li> <li>▪ Verbal aids</li> <li>▪ Get organised</li> <li>▪ Boards</li> <li>▪ Notes</li> <li>▪ Journal</li> <li>▪ Cues</li> <li>▪ Post-it notes</li> <li>▪ Technology</li> <li>▪ Slow down</li> <li>▪ Take breaks</li> <li>▪ Timing</li> <li>▪ Focus</li> <li>▪ Environment</li> <li>▪ Routine</li> <li>▪ Context</li> </ul>

How can I effectively utilise external memory aids?

It's important that we use our memory aids effectively in order for them to work. There are some examples of effective and ineffective use of strategies on the next couple of pages. Here are some tips for utilising external memory enhancement strategies effectively:

- Keep it simple. Focus on the main bits that you need to remember.
- Don't write too much or too little. It's important to write just enough to help jog your memory later on.
- Don't overload your mind with visual and verbal information because when you read over it will be too overwhelming for your mind to take it in and visualise later on.
- Use visual and verbal aids wherever possible to aid memory.
- Organise your notes on the page so it's easy to visualise later on.

## **3.4 Out of Session Work**

### **Implementing my External Memory Enhancement Strategy**

Between now and the next session we would like you to start implementing the strategy that you have chosen. It's important to remember that it takes time for strategies to start working so we should try not to have expectations about the effectiveness of the strategy.



## Out of Session Work:

### Putting Together my Memory Strategy 'Toolbox'

Complete the flowchart below to identify which strategy might be helpful for you. Remember it takes time for strategies to work and different strategies work for different people.

- 1. Choose one memory difficulty that you would like to focus on:**

*It might be useful to look over the memory strategy sheet you completed after session 1.*

I would like to focus on: \_\_\_\_\_



- 2. Which part of the memory process might be causing this difficulty?**

*It might be useful to look over the memory self-assessment 2 sheet you completed after session 2.*

My main area of difficulty is: \_\_\_\_\_



- 3. What are my cognitive strengths?**

*You might want to look over memory assessment form 2 for this.*

My strengths are: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



- 4. Choose a strategy that we discussed today that might help with your difficulty.**

*Try out this strategy over the next week and we will discuss how it went over the next week.*

External memory enhancement strategy: \_\_\_\_\_

## **4 Internal Memory Strategies**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Internal memory enhancement strategies are strategies that we use within our minds to aid memory. These strategies focus on different parts of the process of memory, including encoding, storage and retrieval and can be useful for remembering new information. Today we will be talking a bit about these strategies. But to start off the session, we will be introducing mindfulness – an approach that can be useful for lots of different things, including memory and wellbeing.

### **4.2 Mindfulness**

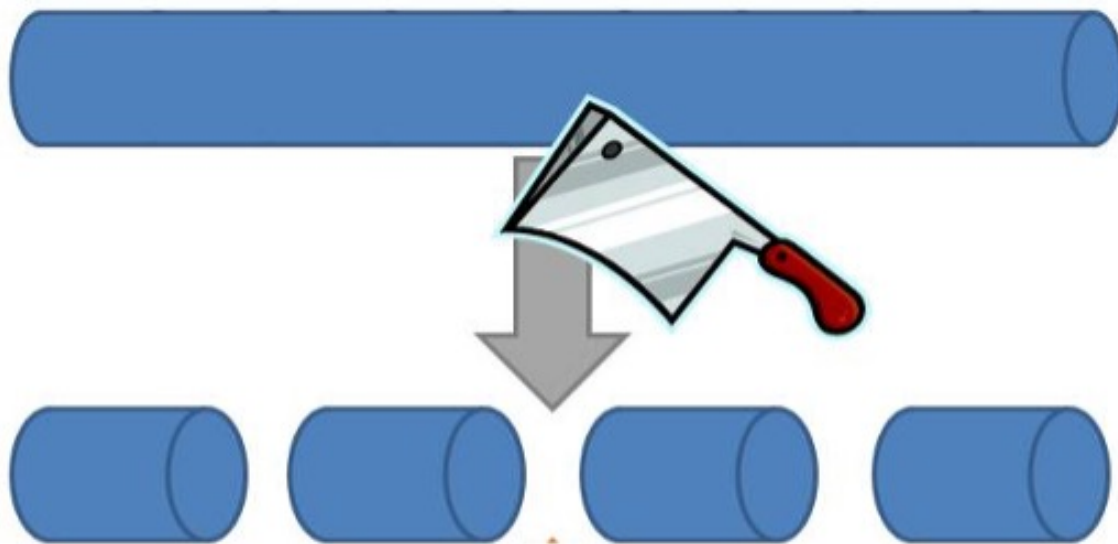
Our minds often wander and life is sometimes filled with stresses or worries. To start off today, and at the beginning of our future sessions, we will carry out a brief breathing exercise. The aim of this is just to help us be more present ‘in the moment’, and give us some time to become more aware of our thoughts, feelings and any physical sensations.

### **4.3 Internal Strategies**

As we’ve said, internal memory enhancement strategies are strategies that we use within our minds to aid memory. An outline of some of these strategies is provided below.

#### **4.3.1 Chunking of Information**

Rather than trying to remember a whole phone number or list such as 1485968704, chunk the numbers into 148-596-8704.



#### **4.3.2 Repetition**

When trying to encode information into your memory, rehearse it.

You can do this by either repeating it out loud or in your head.

#### **4.3.3 Grouping**

Grouping information together into categories can aid recall because it makes information more meaningful. For example, if you need to remember a shopping list it might be useful to group items into fruits, vegetables etc.

#### **4.3.4 Breaking down tasks**

When learning how to do something new it can be helpful to plan and break the task down into smaller steps. Write these steps down so you can refer back to them next time you do that task. For example, if learning how to cook a new dish you might break down the task into smaller sections; write a checklist of all the ingredients I need, write a list of all the utensils I need, take out the ingredients, take out the utensils, turn on the oven etc. This will help you to attend to each aspect of the task and consolidate learning.

### 4.3.5 The PQRS method

The PQRS method is used to help improve our memory for information that we read. Reading is usually quite a passive way of learning but PQRS helps us to remember better by making the process more active. Each letter stands for a different stage in this process:

- P stands for PREVIEW: You should preview the text that you are going to read by quickly skimming through it. This will help you to get an idea of what the text is about.
- Q stands for QUESTION: Next you should ask yourself questions about the text. E.g. What is it about? Who are the main characters? What am I supposed to learn from this? You can write these down if needed.
- R stands for READ: Read the text, keeping the questions you asked yourself in mind. This will help you focus on the most important areas.
- S stands for SUMMARY: Summarise the key points of the text. Ask yourself what was it about? Did it make sense to you? Do I need to reread anything?
- T stands for TEST: Test your knowledge of it, you can do this by asking yourself the questions you thought of earlier and see if you're better able to answer them now. This will help you to consolidate the information.

### 4.3.6 Making Associations

Making associations between something you need to remember and previous knowledge can help us to make the new information more meaningful and we therefore remember it better. This includes:

- Remembering to do a new activity by linking it to an existing one. For example, taking medication at meal times
- Learning a new name by associating it with something or someone you already know. For example, you might remember the name Angela by thinking of an angel.
- Leaving an item associated with an activity visible so you remember to do it. E.g. leaving the boots by the door so you remember to take the dog for a walk.



#### **4.3.7 Mental Retracing**

If we're struggling to remember something, retracing our movements, activities and thoughts in our heads can be helpful.

#### **4.3.8 Stories**

Making up stories can be useful for remembering things. For example, if you had a shopping list of weetabix, milk, jam, teabags and toothpaste you might create a story like 'In the morning I get up and have my Weetabix with milk and jam then I have a nice cup of tea before I brush my teeth'.

#### **4.3.9 Visual Imagery**

The use of visual imagery can be very helpful for learning and remembering information. Below are some examples:

- Things to do - If you need to complete a task like posting a letter, you can imagine yourself doing that task. By making the association between the post-box and the action of posting the letter you're more likely to remember to do it.
- Routes – If you need to remember a new route it can be useful imagining yourself walking the route.

- Peg Method

**i** This method uses two memory strategies to help you remember information. It uses 'association' and 'visualisation'. The idea is that you will 'hang' one piece of information on each peg.

Following the steps below to set up your pegs:

1. Number your pegs in order, e.g. 1 2 3 4
2. Write down a word that rhymes with each number. This works best if the word can be easily pictured in your mind, e.g. two = shoe

- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....

3. What does each word look like as a picture in your mind, e.g. is it cartoon, is it colour, how big is it? Can you draw this in the box?
4. Repeat the paired numbers/words aloud until you feel confident with them
5. Repeat the paired numbers/words in your head and as you do this, visualise the words as pictures in your mind
6. Imagine you need to remember to phone a friend later today. Use your imagination to associate a visual image of phoning a friend, with the visual image of peg one.

Stage	Strategies
<b>Attention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mindfulness meditation</li> <li>• Breaking down tasks</li> <li>• Making associations</li> <li>• Visual imagery</li> <li>• Peg method</li> </ul>
<b>Information processing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making associations</li> <li>• Visual imagery</li> </ul>
<b>Encoding and storage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chunking</li> <li>• Grouping</li> <li>• PQRS</li> <li>• Repetition</li> <li>• Expanding rehearsal</li> <li>• Making associations</li> <li>• Stories</li> <li>• Visual imagery</li> <li>• Peg method</li> </ul>
<b>Retrieval</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mindfulness meditation</li> <li>• Mental retracing</li> <li>• Making associations</li> <li>• Replacing numbers</li> <li>• Visual imagery</li> </ul>

### Out of session work – putting together my memory strategy ‘toolbox’

Complete the flowchart below page to identify which internal strategy might be helpful for you. Remember it takes time for strategies to work and different strategies work for different people.

work for different people.

1. Choose one memory difficulty that you would like to focus on:

*It might be useful to look over the memory strategy sheet you completed after session 1.*

I would like to focus on: \_\_\_\_\_



2. Which part of the memory process might be causing this difficulty?

*It might be useful to look over the memory self-assessment 2 sheet you completed after session 2.*

My main area of difficulty is: \_\_\_\_\_



3. What are my cognitive strengths?

*You might want to look over memory assessment form 2 for this.*

My strengths are: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



4. Choose a strategy that we discussed today that might help with your difficulty.

*Try out this strategy over the next week and we will discuss how it went over the next week.*

External memory enhancement strategy: \_\_\_\_\_



**i** Implementing my External Memory Enhancement Strategy

Between now and the next session we would like you to start implementing the strategy that you have chosen. It's important to remember that it takes time for strategies to start working so we should try not to have expectations about the effectiveness of the strategy.

## 5 Mood and Wellbeing



### 5.1 Introduction

As mentioned previously, having memory difficulties can impact on lots of different aspects of our lives. This includes our mood. In this section we will explore the reciprocal impact of mood and cognitive functioning. We will also think about some strategies to help us manage how we feel, which can in turn have a positive impact on cognitive functioning. We will also be looking at how other aspects such as diet and exercise are important for our cognitive abilities.

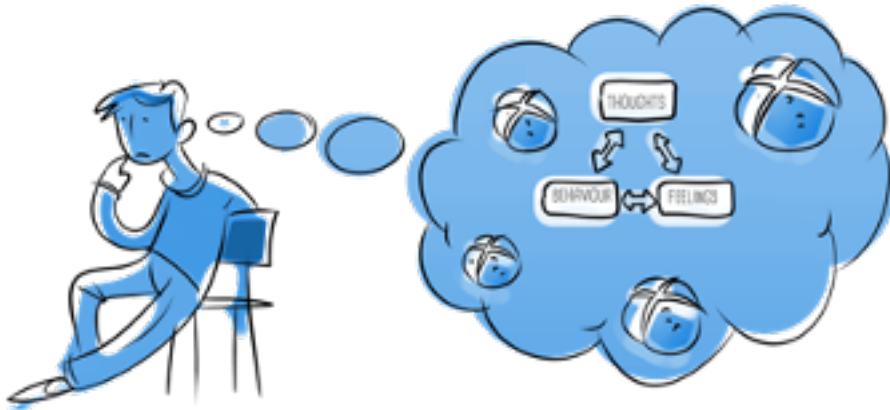


## 5.2 Mindfulness

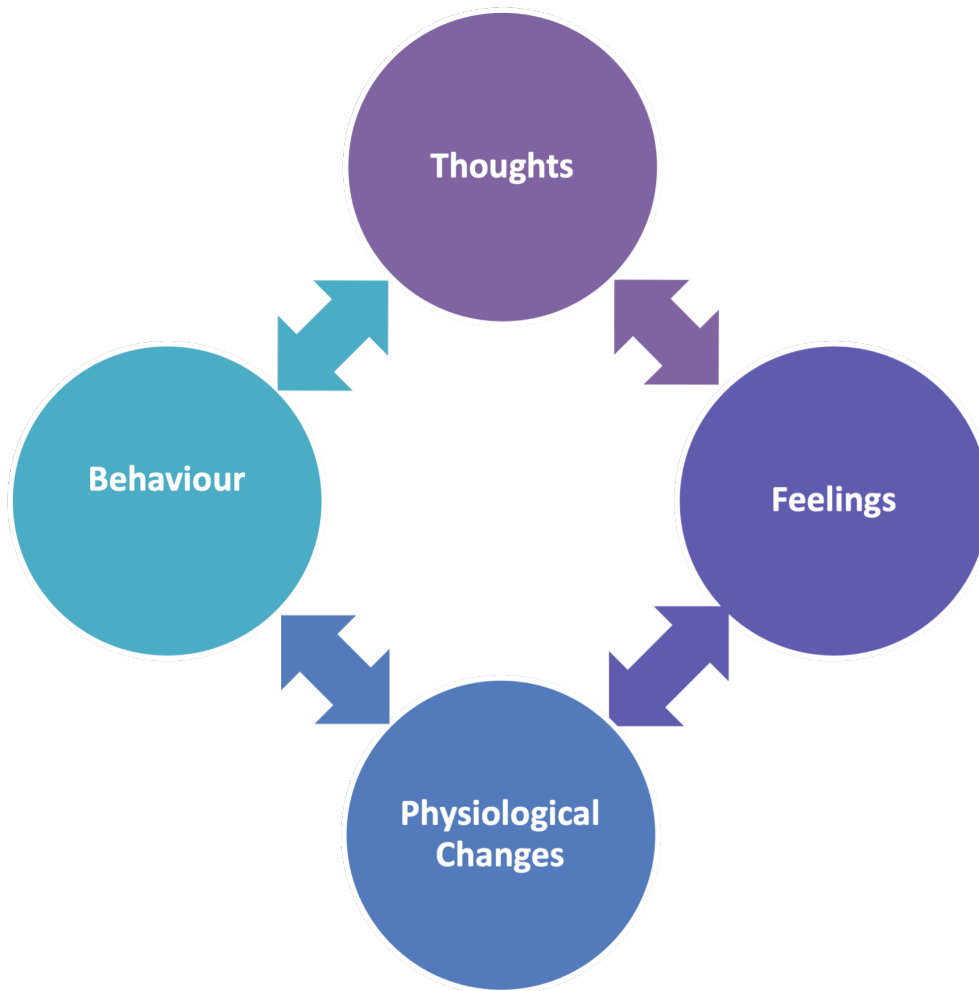
Our minds often wander and life is sometimes filled with stresses or worries. To start off today, we will carry out a brief Mindfulness Exercise. The aim of this is just to help us be more present ‘in the moment’, and give us some time to become more aware of our thoughts, feelings and any physical sensations.

## 5.3 How our Thoughts and Mood Affect Memory

Throughout the sessions we have mentioned how mood is important when looking at memory difficulties. The problems experienced may have an impact on how you think and feel. For example you may notice you are having a problem remembering something. This in turn causes you to have thoughts like “I’m so stupid” which can then make you feel low in mood.



The way in which you think can influence the way you feel (emotionally and physically) which can then have an impact on your behaviour. The diagram below shows how all these are linked together in a “cycle”.



### 5.3.1 How this can impact memory?

So, why have we explored these ‘cycles’? What impact might they have on our cognitive functioning, including our memory? Getting caught up in a cycle of unhelpful thoughts-feelings-physical sensations-behaviour can affect these functions in several different ways:

- Thoughts: Being very critical of ourselves and our memory difficulties can increase stress levels. It can also mean we become more aware of times when we have difficulty with our memory and ignore any times when our memory is fine. Different kinds of unhelpful thoughts are outlined later.
  - Distraction – When we are focusing on worrying thoughts (known as ruminating) we divert our cognitive resources to our worries and stresses. This not only impacts

on processing of new information but also means that we're not paying attention to other things and we consequently do not process this new information.

- Physiological changes – As we mentioned before, the body releases hormones in reaction to stress (cortisol in reaction to low level stress and adrenaline in reaction to high level stress). This release of cortisol can result in new information not being processed properly and difficulty retrieving information we have encoded and stored.
  - Sleep and fatigue – When we're feeling worried or stressed this can impact on our sleep and result in feeling tired and fatigued throughout the day. This can in turn impact on our ability to concentrate and retrieve stored information. We also consolidate new information into our memory during sleep so if we are not sleeping properly this could impact on encoding of new information into our memories.
- Behaviour - If we feel stressed or low in mood, sometimes we feel like doing less. We may stop engaging in activities we usually find enjoyable, or not feel like being around other people. However, doing less means we don't get as much cognitive stimulation, which means we don't get chance to use our memory skills. Social withdrawal can also play a part in maintaining low mood and anxiety

## 5.4 Impact of cognitive functioning on mood

Memory difficulties can affect people in different ways. For some people, memory difficulties may not be a cause for concern. However, at other times memory difficulties can have a significant impact on our thoughts about ourselves and on our mood. Whilst all these thoughts and reactions are normal, they can cause us distress. Take some time to consider your own experiences.

What impact have memory difficulties had on your mood, if any? What thoughts have you had about yourself as a result of memory difficulties? Does this in turn have an impact on how serious you perceive your memory difficulties to be? Note down some examples in the table below.

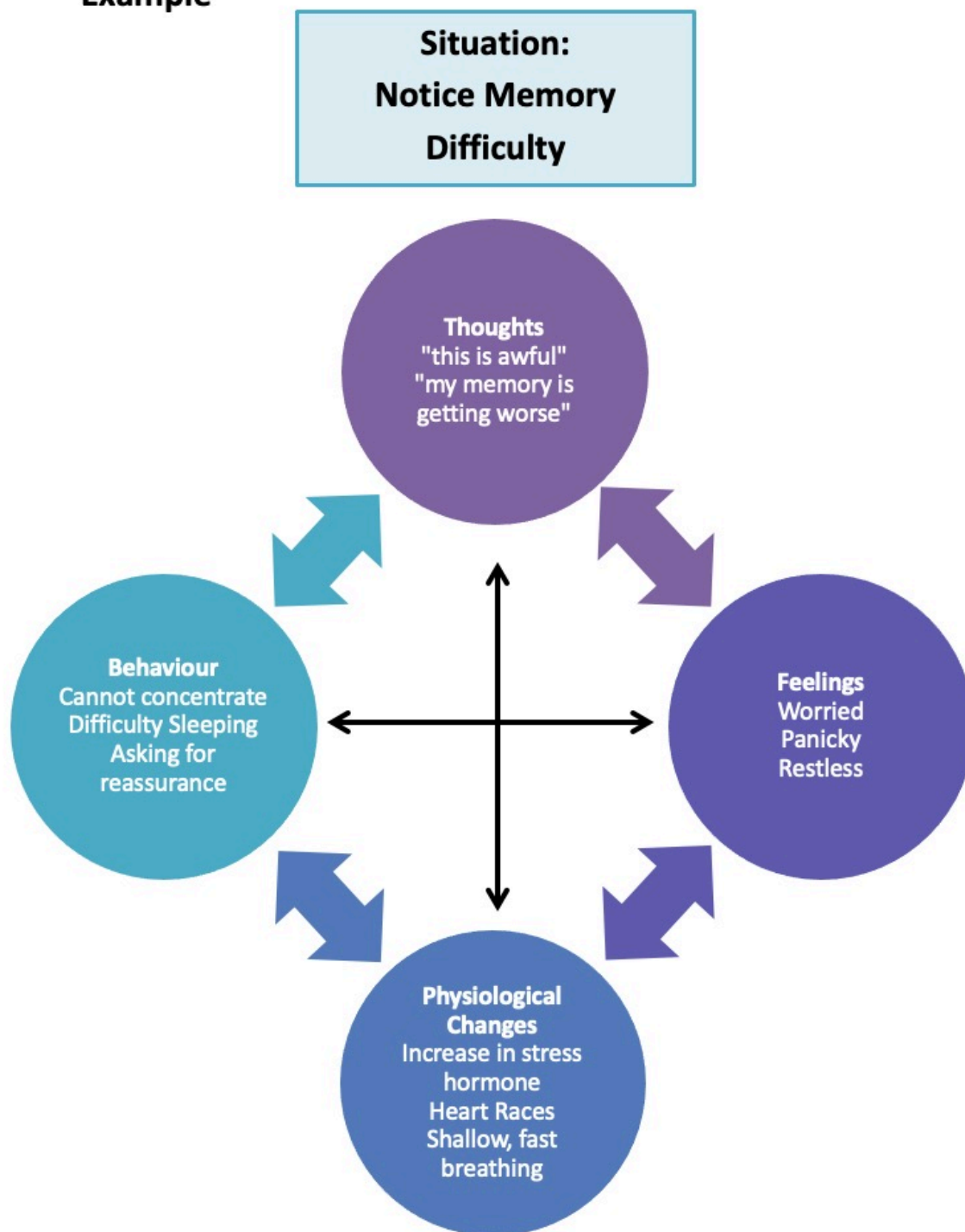
Think of a time when you have noticed a memory difficulty):

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<b>Thoughts</b> What thoughts went through your mind at the time?	<b>Feelings</b> How did you feel? What emotions or moods did you experience?	<b>Physical sensations</b> What changes in your body did you notice?	<b>Behaviour</b> What did you do in this situation?

## Example



## 5.5 Identifying our own cycles

At this point, it's really important to note that such 'cycles' are not uncommon. However, noticing and becoming more aware of when we are getting caught up in these thoughts and feelings can be really beneficial in itself. It means we can do something to 'break the cycle'. This can have a positive impact on how we feel and what we do. As we've discussed, this can also support our cognitive functioning and memory.

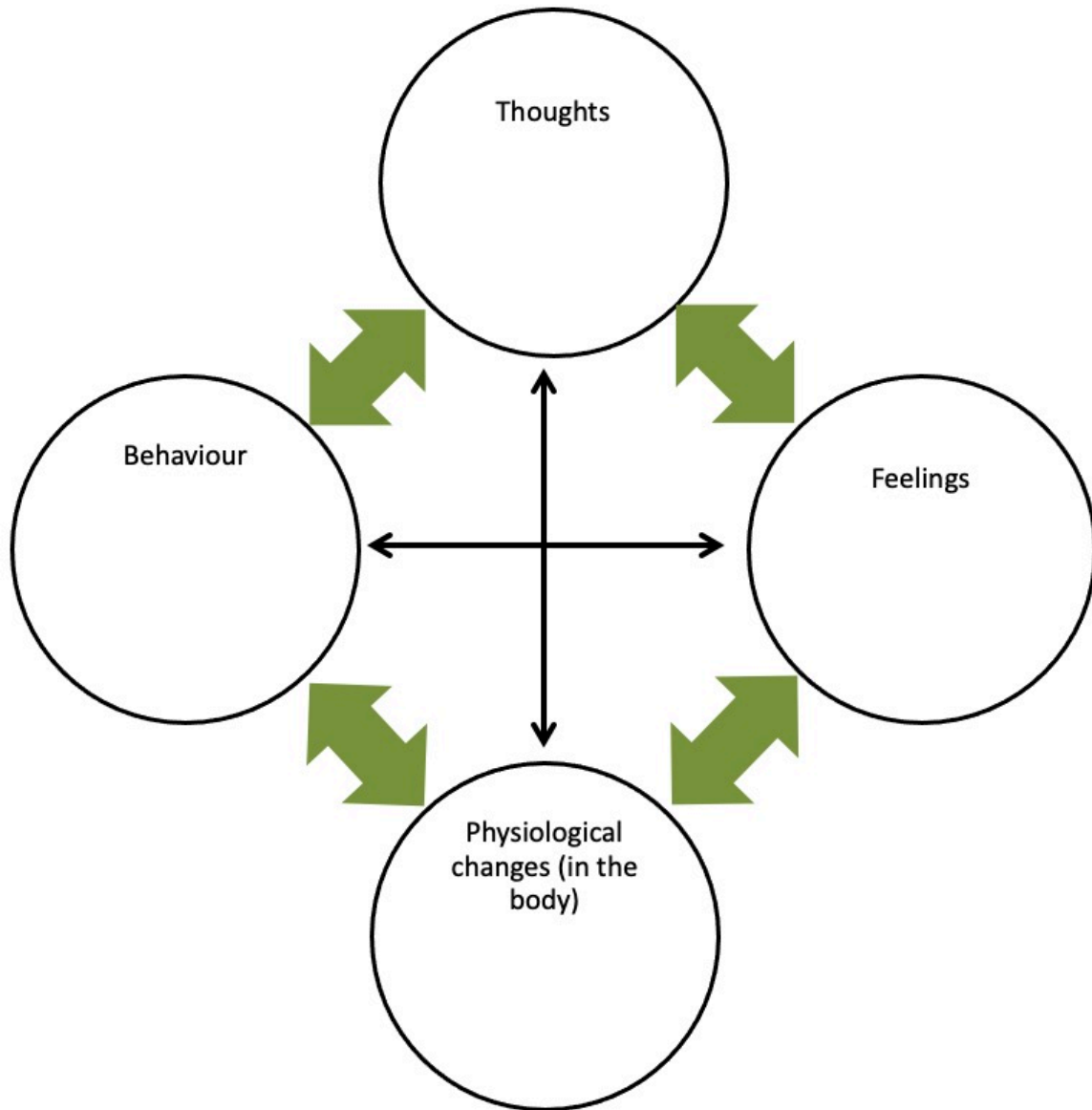


So how do we go about changing these? The first step is to think about your own cycle and how this might be impacting on your memory.

Fill in the diagram on the following page; identifying your thoughts, feelings, physical sensations and behaviours in relation to memory difficulties.

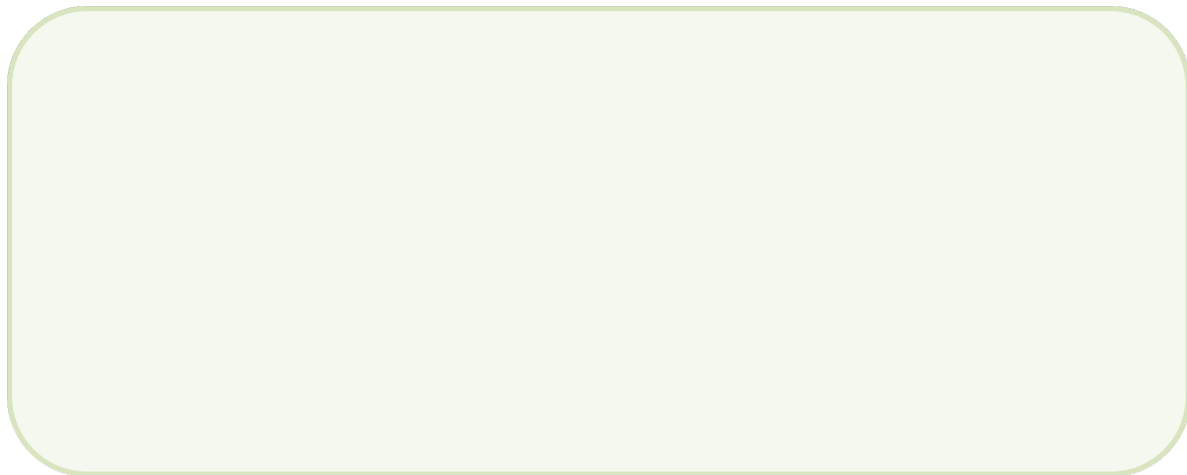


A cycle I may become caught up in...



## 5.6 Strategies

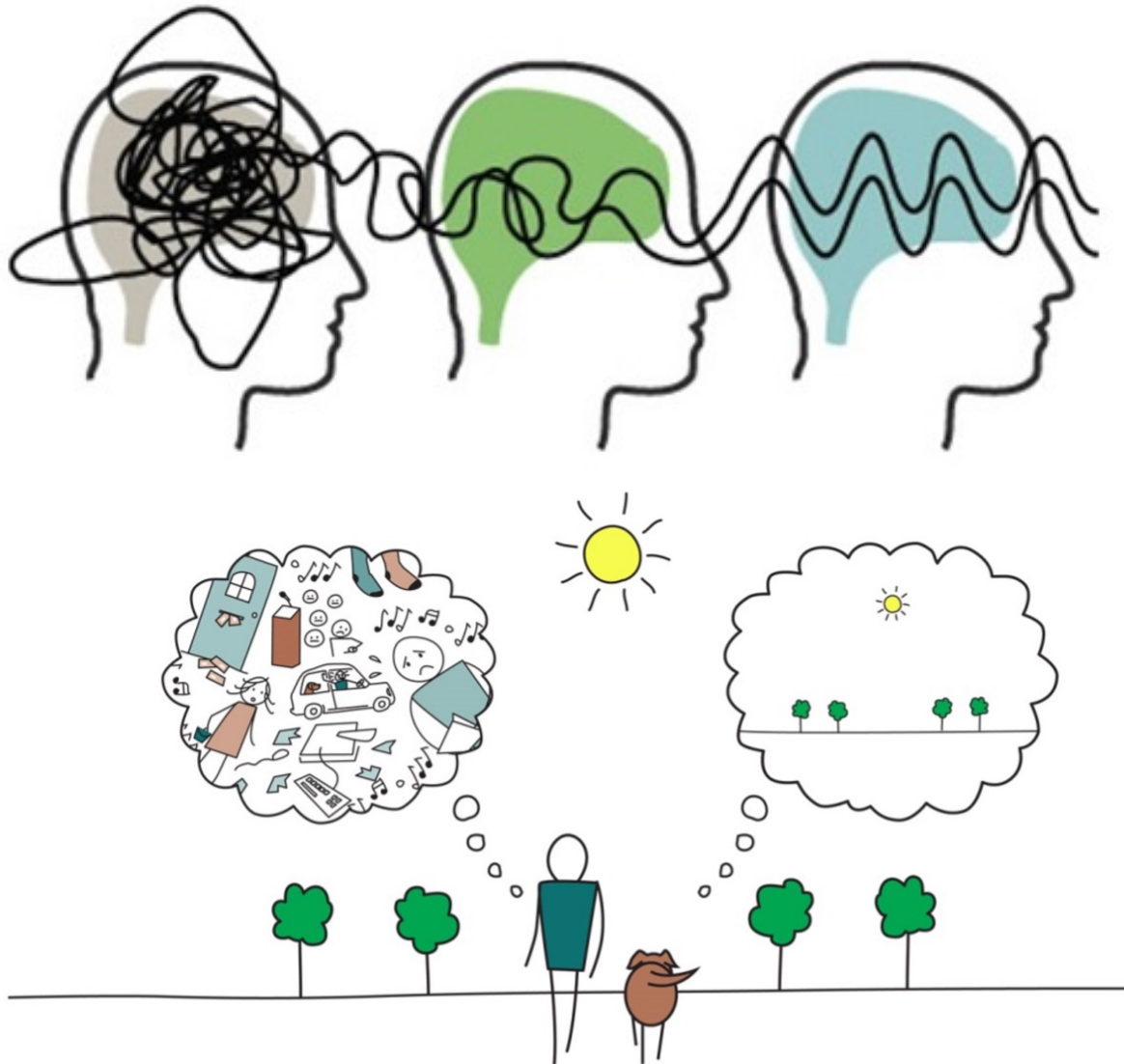
- Becoming more aware of thoughts and feelings
- Identifying unhelpful thoughts and beliefs
- Try a relaxation or mindfulness exercise.
- If you are imagining and believing that the worst thing possible will happen, try to think if this is actually likely to happen?
- When setting expectations for yourself, ask yourself: is this realistic?
- Sometimes we can be over critical of ourselves. If you find yourself being really negative about yourself try being kind to yourself. Think about what you would say to friend if they were saying that about themselves.
- Everyone has strengths and difficulties. It can be helpful to accept that you might not be able to change these, but you can learn to strategies manage them.
- Where possible you can also try to problem solve the negative thoughts or worries around your memory difficulties. You can do this by:
  - Breaking down the problem
  - Looking at your strengths
  - Looking at what internal and external strategies work for you
  - Implementing the strategy



## 5.7 How can I distance myself from my thoughts?

As we said, mindfulness can be used to help us defuse from our thoughts. Mindfulness is quite tricky to explain because it's something we learn through experience over time. It is usually taught and practiced through meditation but we can be mindful in anything we do like walking, eating and even cleaning.

Mindfulness is about noticing and observing our thoughts but not getting caught up in them then switching our attention to something else like our breathing or other tasks at hand. By doing this we are able to see that thoughts are just that – thoughts. They are not facts or a part of who we are.



Mind Full, or Mindful?

## 5.8 ‘Getting present’

(This section is taken from the book ‘Mindfulness: A practical guide to finding peace in a frantic world’ by Mark Williams and Danny Penman)

Like we said, often in life we can find ourselves on ‘automatic pilot’; become lost in our own thoughts; or get so distracted and carried away with tasks and things to do, that we forget about what we had set out to do in the first place. For example, has it ever happened to you, that you go into a room to get something but by the time you reach the door you’ve forgotten what it was? As we’ve mentioned, all this can make it very hard for our brains to keep up, paying attention, taking information in, processing it and storing it.

As we’ve seen, mindfulness is a way of connecting to the present moment, of simply ‘being’ and noticing (purposefully, and non-judgementally) all of our body sensations and experiences. Over time, some people find that this provides them with a whole new perspective and way of living – however mindfulness techniques can also be used as a helpful strategy for choosing and learning to control our focus of attention. If we think of our minds like a computer with several programs running all at once, mindfulness can be a good way of closing down some of the many ‘tabs’ we have open (freeing up space and avoiding ‘unexpected errors’). We can develop flexibility in our attention and contact with the present, by bringing our awareness to everyday activities, so that we can see life as it is, unfolding moment by moment (it sounds simple, but does require practice).

There are lots of activities that we usually do without thinking which we can do more ‘mindfully’ by paying full attention to it. This includes:

- Brushing your teeth
- Walking from one room to another at home or work
- Drinking tea, coffee or juice
- Taking out the rubbish
- Loading the washing machine or doing the dishes

Noticing your unhelpful thoughts can take some practice. Over the next week, keep an eye out and notice any occasions when you experience an unhelpful thought about memory.

Remember, we all experience these kinds of thoughts at times; try not to be hard on yourself if you do notice any. Instead, think about trying one of the strategies that we have discussed. See what impact this has on how you feel.

To help you keep a track, to use the table on the following page.

## 6 Lifestyle

### 6.1 Introduction

The purpose of today's session is to bring together the information and skills we have developed during the course. It's also a chance to reflect on how we can apply the skills developed in the future. During the programme we have discussed the impact of mood on cognitive functioning, and in turn the impact our cognitive functioning can have on our mood. During session 5 we identified the links between our thoughts-feelings-body sensations-behaviour. We identified some 'unhelpful thoughts' about our memory and ourselves, and thought about how to challenge these. We also had an introduction to the benefits of mindfulness. Both of these skills can help us to maintain good mental health and wellbeing. This is important for our cognitive functioning generally and memory in particular. It's also really important to consider how we can maintain good physical and emotional health – our general well-being. This is because our cognitive functions do not operate in isolation: they are impacted by our physical health. For example, our heart and blood vessels carry important oxygen and nutrients to brain cells, vital for efficient cognitive functioning. During today's session we will think about what we can do to promote our physical and emotional well-being.

### 6.2 Mindfulness

As we said in the last session, when you come into each session there may be lots of things on your mind. You might have thoughts about what you've been doing, what you need to do, maybe some expectations or perhaps worries about what the group itself will be like. Our minds often wander and life is sometimes filled with stresses or worries. To start off today, and at the beginning of our future sessions, we will carry out a brief breathing exercise. The aim of this is just to help us be more present 'in the moment', and give us some time to become more aware of our thoughts, feelings and any physical sensations. As we'll see later in the course, this can also support our cognitive functioning and help our memory along with promoting overall well-being. If you have difficulty focusing on the breath (e.g. due to breathing difficulties) then go at a pace that feels comfortable to you, stop the meditation or focus on another part of your body, such as your feet.



### 6.3 Diet

Eating a varied and well-balanced diet is good for our general well-being – a mix of plenty of carbohydrate, plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables some protein and dairy if possible (or other sources of calcium), and just a small amount of food/drinks that are high in fat or sugar. The plate below shows a healthy balanced diet, which helps to keep cholesterol and blood pressure low. It can also support our cognitive functioning.

There has been lots of research into what particular food groups or nutrients may support cognitive functions and memory. There are also certain foods that can help promote a healthy brain such as Omega 3 fatty acid (nuts, seeds, olive oils and oily fish) and antioxidants (broccoli, blueberries and spinach). There is some evidence that B vitamins, especially B12, may also support memory functioning as we get older. Overall it seems that a healthy, varied diet is important rather than any one food group alone.

### 6.4 Exercise

Regular exercise helps to improve our overall health and reduce the risk of developing illness or health problems that impact on cognitive functioning. Research shows that several cardiovascular risk factors (including obesity and high blood pressure) are also risk factors for cognitive decline, so exercise can aid both physical and cognitive well-being.

Exercise also improves the flow of blood and oxygen to the brain, helping us to perform better mentally. It boosts the release of endorphins, or so-called ‘feel good’ hormones; and lots of research suggests that it can have a good impact on our emotional well-being and symptoms of stress, anxiety or low mood.

Current guidelines recommend that adults take part in moderate exercise for the equivalent of 30 minutes, 5 days a week (or 75 minutes of more vigorous exercise spread across the week). Moderate exercise means doing something that raises your heartbeat, but that you can do whilst holding a conversation.

Examples include going for a brisk walk or pushing the lawnmower, so it may be easier than we sometimes think to incorporate exercise into our daily routine. For example, getting off the bus a stop early or walking to the shop rather than driving all count. Like all skills, it will take some time to notice the benefits that exercise brings, but keeping going on a regular basis will maximise those benefits.





## 6.5 Sleep

Sleep is very important and can play a huge part in the memory process. If we are feeling tired then this can make our memory worse. You may notice that when you have had little sleep it is difficult to focus on a task or to retain information. It is recommended that you have around 6-9 hours, but this can differ from each person. There are some tips below to help you have good sleep hygiene.

- Try to go to bed at the same time each night and wake up at the same time.
- Avoid caffeine, alcohol, nicotine and heavy meals before going to sleep.
- Try to do regular physical exercise, but avoid this 2 hours before bedtime.
- Have a warm bath before bed time.
- Try some relaxation exercises such as mindfulness or light yoga.
- Try to make your bedroom a relaxing environment- avoid electronics, noise and light.



1 UNIT	1.5 UNITS	2 UNITS	3 UNITS
<p>Normal beer half pint (284ml) 4%</p>	<p>Small glass of wine (125ml) 12.5%</p>	<p>Strong beer half pint (284ml) 6.5%</p>	<p>Strong beer Large bottle/can (440ml) 6.5%</p>
<p>Single spirit shot (25ml) 40%</p>	<p>Alcopops bottle (275ml) 5.5%</p>	<p>Normal beer Large bottle/can (440ml) 4.5%</p>	<p>Large glass of wine (250ml) 12.5%</p>

## 6.6 Smoking

Smoking is another cardiovascular risk factor. This means that it increases the chance of issues such as stroke, which can affect cognitive functioning and memory. It also increases the risk of several other physical health problems. If you want any further information for support in stopping smoking, speak to one of the facilitators.

## 6.7 Caffeine

Large amounts of caffeine can have an impact of your sleep, which in turn can have an impact of your cognitive functioning. Some evidence suggests that excessive caffeine can have a negative effect on short term memory. Caffeine can be found in tea, coffee, chocolate, some fizzy drinks and energy drinks.

## 6.8 Alcohol

Some research suggests that, along with the impact on physical health, drinking a lot of alcohol can have a detrimental impact on cognitive functioning. Whilst drinking a moderate amount is fine, it's good to be aware of recommended limits (see below) and to seek further help and advice if you recognise you are drinking outside of these.

## 6.9 Emotional Wellbeing

Our physical, mental and emotional well-being are all linked. Many of the tips to improve physical health can also promote good emotional well-being. For example, keeping active and doing the things we enjoy has multiple benefits: it ensures we get a good amount of cognitive stimulation; it provides opportunity to use our cognitive abilities; and chance to practice strategies to support memory; and it also improves mood.

Just as we devote time to ensuring our physical health is as good as it can be, we can take some time to look after our emotional well-being too. As we discussed last session, how we feel can have a positive impact on our cognitive functioning and memory.

Looking after our emotional and mental well-being may involve doing things that help us to relax, take time out and feel good about ourselves. These needn't be big things; some examples could be:

- Doing a relaxation exercise
- Reading a book
- Having a long shower or bath
- Having a nice meal, and really taking time to enjoy it
- Walking and playing with a pet
- Phoning a friend or going out for a catch up
- Painting, making a collage, knitting, writing or drawing – anything you find soothing

Regularly practicing a mindfulness relaxation exercise, like those we have introduced during the programme, can also support our general well-being. If this is something that interests you, you can listen to CD of some mindfulness relaxation exercises. Listening to these and

deciding which work best for you, along with practicing frequently, can help you to gain the benefits of these exercises. As we've discussed, these exercises can also help us to become more aware of our thoughts, feelings and physical sensations and become more aware of where we focus our attention.

A key point is taking a holistic approach – our cognitive functioning is impacted by other parts of our well-being, so looking after all and making small changes in one area can have a positive impact on others.

If it is difficult to make time for these activities, making a plan might help. Some people find it useful to plan time in the diary or calendar for them, as you would other appointments and meetings. For others the Toolbox approach might be helpful (Adapted from [www.getselfhelp.co.uk](http://www.getselfhelp.co.uk)).



## 6.10 Review: putting it all together - our 'toolbox'

Now we are coming to the end of the programme, it can be helpful to take some time to review what we have covered. Take some time to remind yourself of all the skills and information we have looked at (it may help to have a review over this booklet!) Remind yourself of our sessions:

Session	Topic
Session 1	Initial overview of cognitive processes –attention, information processing, executive functioning, visuo-spatial skills and language

Session	Topic
Session 2	Focus on memory processes – attention, information processing, encoding, storage and retrieval
Session 3	External memory enhancement strategies – adapting our <u>e</u> nvironment to support memory. Discussing our memory difficulties.
Session 4	Internal memory enhancement strategies – drawing our <u>i</u> nnner resources to support memory
Session 5	Mood and cognitive functioning
Session 6	General well-being and cognitive functioning – physical and emotional health

There's been a lot to take in. As we discussed at the start of the course, different bits of information and skills will feel most useful and relevant to different people. When it comes to memory enhancement strategies, a bit of a 'trial and error' approach can help us to try out different skills and work out what works best for us.

At this point it can be really helpful to plan how we might take forward and develop the skills and information discussed during the programme. Just like a toolbox, we can now put together our strategies or 'tools' to help support our memory.

### **6.10.1 Prepare:**

Decide what you are going to do, when, how and who with. Set time aside each day, perhaps in the evening, to plan the next day. Be realistic in what you hope to achieve – don't put too much pressure on yourself.

### **6.10.2 List:**

Prioritise what would be the most important, most urgent, most helpful, most effective thing to do. Write it down (use a weekly planner, a diary or notepad).

Try to make goals SMART (specific; measurable; attractive; realistic; time-bound)

### **6.10.3 Action:**

Do it! Put your plan into action.

#### **6.10.4 Notice:**

Notice how the activity affects you. If it was unhelpful, then ask yourself if you could have done anything differently, or maybe decide not to do it again. If it has a helpful or positive effect, then plan to do more. What else could you do?

Memory 'Toolbox'
<p>The parts of my memory that I have identified I have the most difficulty with <u>are</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<p>The parts of my memory that I have identified are my strengths are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<p><b>External memory strategies are those which involve making adaptations to our environment to support memory.</b></p>
<p><b>External memory strategies that I have identified I will put into practice in the future are:</b></p> <p><i>(A good tip is to look at your strengths and difficulties. For example, if your difficulty is retrieving information and visual memory is a strength, using a <u>calendar</u> or <u>diary</u> may help to recall information; drawing <u>pictures</u> or using <u>photographs</u> around the house may also help remind you to do things)</i></p>
<p><b>Internal memory strategies are those which involve our inner resources</b></p>
<p><b>Internal memory strategies that I have identified I will put into practice in the future are:</b></p> <p><i>(Review your strengths and difficulties. Using the example above, <u>associating words or numbers with images</u> or using the <u>method of loci</u> may help to retrieve information from long term memory stores)</i></p>
<p><b>If I notice an unhelpful thought about my memory, I could say to myself:</b></p> <p><i>(Remind yourself of the more helpful, alternative thoughts from session 5)</i></p>
<p><b>Three things I can do to look after my physical and emotional well-being to support my memory functioning are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>

## 6.11 Good bye

Saying our goodbyes

The aim of this group was to help you learn more about your memory, to identify strengths and any difficulties and to think together about some strategies to help manage difficulties. We also hope that the group has provided you with the space to share your experiences, knowledge and skills.

Remember that it takes time to identify and implement new strategies and it can take time for these to work so be patient and allow yourself time to adjust. It can also take time to practice and consolidate these skills. However, using them on a regular basis will give them the best chance of becoming effective.

Sometimes attending groups and saying goodbye can cause us to have difficult thoughts and feelings. If you're experiencing any difficulties please feel able to arrange a time to discuss this with Grace. We will endeavour to be available for telephone consultation on 01782 275188 to support you if you are having difficulties due to the group.

Thank you for taking part in this group programme. We hope that you have learned things that will be helpful now and in the future.

## References