

# WEEK 2

## CONTENT

### TBI AND MEMORY

5-15 MINUTES

Briefly, discuss how TBI affects memory.

- How can TBI affect memory? (Examples include: entering a room and forgetting why you went in there, becoming distracted in the middle of tasks and failing to complete them, being unable to remember the name of a new friend, failing to remember to complete a task you were asked to complete earlier that day, not being able to remember appointments or conversations).

*Facilitator should hand out the MSKTC (2016) fact sheet handout and read through it with the participants (use the following link to obtain the handout: [http://www.msctc.org/lib/docs/Factsheets/TBI\\_Memory.pdf](http://www.msctc.org/lib/docs/Factsheets/TBI_Memory.pdf)), then, ask the following questions of the group:*

- Do some of these symptoms present themselves in your daily life?
- Does anyone want to share some personal examples of experiencing these symptoms?

Because TBI can influence your ability to remember information, we are going to review some practical skills that you can use to help you remember information better. *Facilitator should pass out the handout on Practical Memory Strategies which can be found in the handout section for this week.*

Take a few minutes to look over the memory strategies suggested on this handout. *Facilitator may want to read them aloud, as some participants may have difficulty reading.*

Allow participants approximately two minutes to review this handout before continuing.

- Do any of you use any of these strategies already?
- Which strategies do you use?
- How have they been effective?
- How often did you have to practice them?

After asking these process questions, review the remainder of the Practical Memory Strategies handout with the participants to ensure understanding of the material.

Emphasize the importance of establishing a routine of using these strategies in their daily lives. Also, emphasize the importance of writing down information that is essential to remember.

- What are some things that might get in the way of you using these strategies?

**Note:** *Some participants may not be fully competent at writing, in which case they should be encouraged to ask their support person for help in creating reminder notes or other memory aids.*

## **BREAK**

**5 MINUTES**

*Now we are going to take a five-minute break. During this break, we are going to practice a stress management technique that you can use when you are feeling angry or stressed.*

- *Progressive muscle relaxation (found in the handouts section for this week).*



## INTRODUCE THE TOPIC OF GOAL SETTING

25 MINUTES

*Prior to beginning this treatment group, you each met with a clinician discuss the results of your symptoms questionnaire. As we discussed during that brief meeting, we will attempt to individualize this treatment group for each of you to focus on the recommendations suggested by your individual results.*

Please take out your symptoms questionnaire. For the next 25 minutes, we will use the information you got as feedback to help us determine goals for you throughout the course of this group. During this section, the goal will be to decide the ways in which each group member will measure their progress throughout the treatment group. Everyone's goal will be different; keep your mind on your own goal!

- For example, if a group member has an identified deficit in short term memory it may be suggested that the client utilize a notebook throughout the treatment group to record information that they will need to recall later. Additionally, it may be suggested that they act as a self-advocate to request additional time from the group facilitator or other participants to allow for more time to record the information.
- **Important:** The over-arching purpose of this treatment group is to empower the participants and instill a sense of self-advocacy in them as they transition into other settings. Emphasize that the goals they outline for themselves should feel empowering to them.



## INTRODUCE S.M.A.R.T. GOALS

25-30 MINUTES

Facilitator should pass out S.M.A.R.T. Goals handout (found in the handout section for this week).

- Discuss goal setting and the importance of learning skills to help set goals.
  - How do each of you define "goals?"
- A goal is an observable and measurable end result that you intend to achieve or accomplish. A well-planned goal also includes some sort of timeframe.
  - What are the most important parts of that definition?

*WRITE what the participants identify as the most important aspects of that definition on the white board.*

- Why do you think goals are important?  
*Allow participants some time to process this question in group discussion.*
- Goals help us to focus our energy, form plans, live a purpose-centered life, and give us a feeling of accomplishment.
  - Sometimes we say that we have specific goals, but they are not defined well.
  - For example, I could say that my goal is to become rich and that is it.  
Why is that a poorly defined goal?

*WRITE examples that the participants state on the white board, and begin to organize them into the components of S.M.A.R.T. goals.*

*If participants struggle with determining why this is a poorly defined goal, begin emphasizing the aspects of S.M.A.R.T. goals. Explain the domino theory of goal setting: Using this strategy, goals are like dominoes. Our pathway is defined by how we set up our own personal dominoes. Advantages of this method of goal setting are that it is a mindful approach focused on process over outcome and gain over blame.*

- Some questions you might ask yourselves are: But how do you set up these dominoes and establish goals? What goals are worth establishing?
  - Questions like these are why we are going to review how to make S.M.A.R.T. goals.

- Now we are going to be discussing the setting of S.M.A.R.T. goals.  
*Pass out the S.M.A.R.T. Goals handout.*
- S.M.A.R.T. is an acronym that stands for
  - S** – specific (significant, stretching)
  - M** – measurable (meaningful, motivational)
  - A** – actionable (agreed upon, attainable,, acceptable)
  - R** – realistic (relevant, reasonable, rewarding)
  - T** – time-based, (timely, tangible, trackable)
- **EXPLAIN:** This style of goal setting helps identify certain aspects of goals so you can achieve them. For example, say your goal was to one day run a marathon. You know it is going to take a lot of little steps to achieve that big, final goal. If you were going to set out to train for a marathon, you would start by breaking down the steps you need to take to get there into smaller, S.M.A.R.T. steps. Instead of your goal being just to “run a marathon,” which would be very difficult to accomplish right off the bat, your first S.M.A.R.T. goal could be, for example, “Go for a two mile run three days this week.” This is a S.M.A.R.T. goal because it is Specific (you know exactly what you need to do), Measurable (you will know if you did run on three days or not and how far you ran), Attainable (you know you are capable of going on a run three times in one week), Realistic (you have the time and ability to do it), and Time-bound (the goal takes place only within the next week). At the end of that first week, you will know if you met or did not meet that first S.M.A.R.T. goal step towards running the marathon, and you can make your next week’s goal based on how the first S.M.A.R.T. goal went.
- **Setting S.M.A.R.T. goals** is important because they break down big goals into smaller pieces that are less discouraging and intimidating. If you set out to climb a huge mountain, standing at the base and staring up at the top could easily make you feel discouraged and overwhelmed. Think of S.M.A.R.T. goals as something that will help you look only at your feet on the path up the mountain, not at the mountain itself. Once you start seeing the journey up the mountain not as a crazy climb to the top, but as putting one foot in front of the other at a pace you can manage, it becomes a lot easier to believe you can climb the mountain!