

WEEK 2

MEMORY SKILLS AND GOAL SETTING

*Make sure you take time to acquaint yourself with this curriculum so you can be as engaged, energetic, and confident as possible when working with the kids!

GOALS/OBJECTIVES:

To increase group member knowledge of strategies to aid memory and goal-setting skills.

- Members will discuss the new information and practice within the group
- Members will utilize the new memory skills to plan for the week ahead

TIME:

The entire session should last for approximately 60-90 minutes.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS:

A minimum of four participants is suggested.

WEEK 2

PREPARATION



VIDEO

Watch the following video:

<https://youtu.be/AJC-oc5baP4>



HANDOUTS AND MATERIALS

- Practical Memory Strategies
- Muscle Relaxation Script
- Memory Flash Cards
- S.M.A.R.T. Goals Defined
- Take-Home Impressions Form (Optional)
- Candy (for memory activity)

*All handouts/forms will need to be provided. Provide enough copies of handouts/forms for all participants and facilitators. Extra copies can be provided as needed for parents, teachers, probation officers, therapists, etc. Also, be sure to provide enough food/candy for all participants.

Note: The “Break” section of this group asks the facilitator to utilize the Progressive Muscle Relaxation exercise featured in Module One; please see Module One for this document. It is not necessary to print copies of this for each participant, as the facilitator will be using the handout to verbally lead the exercise while the group members practice the exercise.

*At the start of group take time to greet the participants, thank them for coming, ask them their names and share yours as well. Acknowledge this may not be the most fun way to spend their time, but these skills can be useful to them in the future. Overall, meet the participants where they are emotionally and developmentally to help establish a fun and engaging environment.



WRITE

Write the following module outline on the white board:

- Structure and topic
- Concussion and Memory
- Break
- Introducing SMART goals
- Discussion: developing a SMART goal
- Reflection

*This curriculum uses the word 'concussion' but some people will better recognize or respond to 'brain injury.' Plan to adjust terminology as necessary.

WEEK 2

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES



ESTABLISH GROUP RULES

2-5 MINUTES

WRITE the following group rules on the white board for reference for participants throughout the treatment group:

1. Confidentiality
2. Respect
3. Participation

I am going to go over the rules for this group. If you have any questions about any of the group rules, please ask, and I can help to explain what that rule means.

There are 3 main rules:

The first is:

- 1. Confidentiality:** This means that what we discuss today stays in this room and is not shared with others.

That brings us to our second rule:

- 2. Respect:** Please be kind to one another, by...
 - Listening when someone else is speaking,
 - Not talking over each other,
 - And encouraging one another

The last rule is:

- 3. Participation:** We ask that you take part in the discussion. Your ideas are important to the group. At times, I may need to cut discussion short. I will tell the group when discussion time is over.

Note: As a reminder, rules only need to be reviewed in depth if there are new members who have not participated in previous weeks. Rules are discussed at the start of each group and only a brief reminder should be utilized for groups with no new members.



DISCUSSION PROMPT

What other rules does the group want to establish?



ICE BREAKER AND INTRODUCTION

5-10 MINUTES

For our icebreaker today, pretend you are stranded on an island by yourself. Introduce yourself by saying your name and saying three items you would take with you and why.

Review Take-Home Impressions Form From Module 1

- Have you recognized any of your own concussion symptoms this week? Did you explain them to someone in your support system?

Some participants may take these modules out of sequence. Review homework from previous group with the following questions if applicable.

- During the past week, have you done anything differently because of what you learned in the previous groups? If so, please describe what you did.



EXPLAIN THE NATURE AND PACING OF THE GROUP

2-5 MINUTES

- Because we only have an hour for each group meeting, it is important that we cover everything that is necessary.
- Today, I will guide you through several topics about memory skills and goal setting. We will discuss how a concussion impacts memory, and how it may have affected your memory since your injury.

- Also, we will discuss the importance of goal setting and how established goals can assist you as you move through this program.
- Lastly, we will discuss and review some practical memory skills to assist you with some difficulties in memory. Specifically, we will discuss the concept of S.M.A.R.T. goals and practice developing a specific S.M.A.R.T. goal that you would like to achieve in your treatment.
- **Remember:** To get through all the material, I will be keeping us on point by giving reminders when that section's time is almost up. If we are off-topic, I will redirect you to the relevant topic. If you would like to continue to discuss the topic that I redirected you from, please let me know after group so that we can discuss it at greater length. If necessary, we'll use the signal we agreed upon earlier to wrap up discussions.



DISCUSSION PROMPT

Do you have any questions?

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CONTENT

CONCUSSION AND MEMORY

10-15 MINUTES

Because a concussion can influence your ability to remember information, we are going to review some skills that you can use to help you remember information better. Do any of you have current strategies you use to help you remember your schedule?

Pass out the handout on Practical Memory Strategies (page 44).

- Take a few minutes to look over the memory strategies suggested on this handout.

You may want to read them aloud, as some participants may have difficulty reading.

- 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?

If participants are struggling to engage, reassure participants that there is no wrong answer and provide applicable examples to help lead discussion.

After asking these questions, review the remainder of the Practical Memory Strategies handout with the participants to ensure an understanding of the material. Emphasize the importance of establishing a routine when 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 these strategies?
- If you need reminders to use these strategies, communicate this to the people around you. Your friends and family can remind you to practice these skills.

- Now we will learn a game that you can play on your own time to help improve your memory. Think of memory like a muscle, the more you train it, the stronger it will get! On the other hand, if you do not exercise it, then it can get weaker.

Pass out Memory Practice Flash Cards handout.

Ask participants if they have any food allergies prior handing out candy or food.

Go over the name of each shape on the handout. Then pass out the blank answer sheet and flip the handout over and point to each section on the paper and ask participants to name which shape is in that section.

To change things up, switch the task so that participants have to point to where each shape is (i.e. "Where is the star?" versus "What shape was in the top center"?). Do an example of this exercise before handing out the paper to participants to avoid cheating.

Participants ability will vary depending on the severity of their concussion and you may need to adjust the number of shapes memorized depending on their ability level.

- Practicing exercises like this can help you train your brain to better remember new information. I encourage you all to take this handout home and practice on your own time or make up your own games to train your memory. The more you practice, the more your memory will improve.

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.

Refer to progressive muscle relaxation handout.



INTRODUCE THE TOPIC OF GOAL SETTING

10-15 MINUTES

In the event that participants have not received a neuropsychological screening evaluation, ask them instead to share feedback they have received from teachers, counselors, peers, or family members.

- Now we are going to talk about goals. Studies show that people who organize their day with set events and goals actually have better memory regarding their day-to-day activities and are able to function well and achieve goals.
- Prior to beginning this group, you each met with a clinician discuss the results of your neuropsychological screenings.
- 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 feedback summaries (or reports). For the next 10 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 delayed memory (e.g., a score of Clearly Below Average or otherwise indicated on the feedback summary) 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.

The over-arching purpose of this treatment group is to empower the participants and instill a sense of self-advocacy as they transition into other settings. Emphasize that the goals they outline for themselves should feel empowering.



DISCUSSION PROMPT

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 time frame.



WRITE

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 participant examples on the white board.



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

10-15 MINUTES

Pass out the S.M.A.R.T. Goals handout (page 48).

- S.M.A.R.T. is an acronym that stands for
 - S** – specific, significant, stretching
 - M** – measurable, meaningful, motivational
 - A** – agreed upon, attainable, achievable, acceptable, action-oriented
 - R** – realistic, relevant, reasonable, rewarding, results-oriented
 - T** – time-based, time-bound, timely, tangible, trackable

This style of goal setting helps identify certain aspects of goals so you can achieve them. Setting S.M.A.R.T. goals is important because they break down big goals into smaller pieces that are less discouraging and intimidating. For example, say your goal was to find a job. 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 find a job, 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 “find a job,” which would be very difficult to accomplish right off the bat, your first S.M.A.R.T. goal could be, for example, “apply to three jobs 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 apply to three jobs or not), Attainable (you know you are capable of applying to three jobs), 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 finding a job, and you can make your next week’s goal based on how the first S.M.A.R.T. goal went.

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GROUP ACTIVITY



S.M.A.R.T. GOAL DEVELOPMENT

5 MINUTES

Now you will have the opportunity to practice what you just learned. You will have about five minutes to set one specific S.M.A.R.T. goal that you would like to complete within the next week, and then you will share it with the group. When we discuss our S.M.A.R.T. goals, we will provide each other with constructive feedback.

Here are some suggestions for developing a well-defined goal:

- Write out a short list of beliefs and/or values that are most important to you.
- Now, think of various goals that you are considering for yourself over the next year.
- Identify the goals that most closely match your beliefs and values. Our beliefs and values tend to be motivators for us, so matching goals and values is a good way to increase your odds of success. Ask yourself, “What small thing can I do THIS WEEK to start myself on the path towards this goal?” That small thing will become your first S.M.A.R.T. goal. Once you meet the first goal, create a new S.M.A.R.T. goal to guide you through the next step toward your bigger goal!

WEEK 2

REFLECTION & APPLIED PRACTICE



5 MINUTES

Pass out the Take-Home Impressions form and ask the participants to complete it.

As we come to the end of our group, let's take some time to reflect on what we did today.

- Please share your responses if you'd like.

For our next meeting, I would like you to review your S.M.A.R.T. goal(s) and start working on meeting that goal. Review your goal(s) with your designated support person and encourage them to help you stay on task with your goals over the course of the next few weeks. Be prepared to discuss the next time we meet.



DISCUSSION PROMPT

Do you have any questions? What were your favorite and least favorite parts of the session?

WEEK 2

HANDOUTS

PRACTICAL MEMORY STRATEGIES

MUSCLE RELAXATION SCRIPT

MEMORY FLASH CARDS

S.M.A.R.T. GOALS DEFINED

TAKE-HOME IMPRESSIONS (OPTIONAL)

PRACTICAL MEMORY STRATEGIES

EXTERNAL MEMORY AIDS

Limits the work that the memory has to do and creates reminders.

- Diaries and datebooks
- Notebooks
- Lists
- Calendars
- Wall charts
- Post-it notes

ESTABLISHING A ROUTINE

Following a daily routine can help you get used to your responsibilities and expectations. This helps reduce the reliance on memory and increase your ability to remember tasks.

- Make a list of daily activities and keep it visible
- Use charts, pictures, and noticeboards for daily events
- Have your Behavioral Health Specialist (BHS) help you

ADAPT THE ENVIRONMENT

Changing your environment so as to rely less on your own memory.

- Keeping paper/notepad handy to write down important information and messages
- Picking a specific place to put important things such as glasses, notepads, lists. Always putting these back in that place.
- Keeping important things on you with a lanyard or pockets

COMBINING SEVERAL STRATEGIES

It is often helpful to utilize a combination of multiple aids and strategies. This can cover multiple problem areas and create a system which is specific and useful for you.

Can you think of some examples of doing this?

1. ONE STRATEGY I LEARNED TODAY IS:

2. THREE SITUATIONS WHERE I CAN SEE MYSELF USING THAT STRATEGY/SKILL:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

MUSCLE RELAXATION SCRIPT

This script is designed to be read out loud by the leader of this exercise. If you are planning to practice alone, read through the script ahead of time to become familiar with the content and process. The reading of the script will be difficult during the practice of Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR), but exact adherence to the script is not necessary. Once you are familiar with the exercise, feel free to modify it to fit your specific needs and comforts.

PREPARATION

Here is how to prepare:

- Find a quiet, comfortable spot to practice.
- Sit up or lie down while you practice.
- Have a blanket or sheet handy. Often when people are relaxed, they find they are cooler and need a light blanket.
- Take a few minutes to think about your breathing. (You can keep your eyes open or closed.) Try to do stomach breathing. Fill your stomach as you breathe in and then breathe out. Begin to slow your breathing down. Try to focus only on your breathing.

PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

Steps to follow for progressive muscle relaxation:

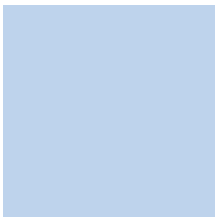
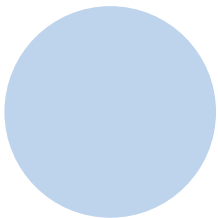
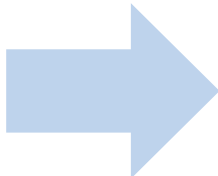
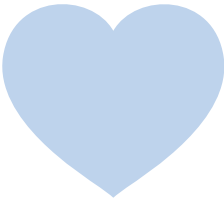
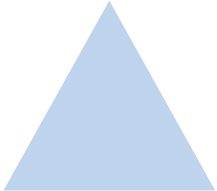




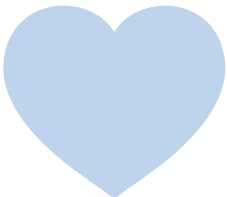

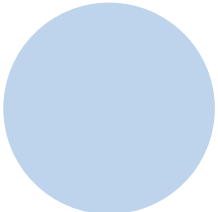

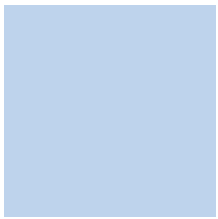


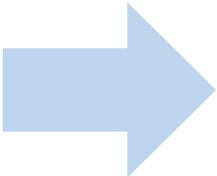

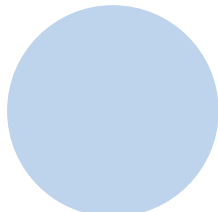




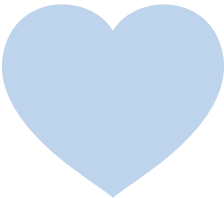
- Take in a deep breath. Hold that breath for a count of 4, let it out, and begin to relax. Do this about 4 times. As you breathe in, think about good, soothing energy flowing in. As you breathe out, breathe out your stress and bad thoughts.
- Allow your mind to focus on one body part at a time. Move from the top of your head all the way down to your toes.
- Relax your head and your scalp. Repeat this 2 or 3 times.
- Move down to your eyes. Relax your eyes and the muscles around your eyes. Squeeze your eyes tight for 4 counts, then relax. Notice the difference in your eyes and face when your eyes are squeezed and tense, and when they are relaxed.
- Focus on your mouth. Relax your mouth. Allow it to go limp.... Move down your neck, and relax your neck muscles.... Relax your shoulders....
- When you get to your arms, you may relax them one at a time or both at the same time. You may even choose to relax each finger, one at a time.
- Move all the way down to your toes using this skill.

EXTRA TIPS

Tips that may help body areas that are tense or painful:

- As you move down your body, you may want to tighten and then relax certain body parts. This helps to show how different your body feels when it is tense and when it is relaxed. You can tense and then relax your eyes, hands, toes, mouth, and shoulders. You should get more relaxed as you move down your body. If you feel relaxed, you may not feel like doing this part past your mouth or shoulders.
- Warm often feels good. Think about any part of your body being warmed by the sun. For example, if your right arm has pain, you can focus on this arm. Think about warm rays of sun on your arm.

MEMORY FLASH CARDS

MEMORY FLASH CARDS

S.M.A.R.T. GOALS DEFINED



- **Specific** (*What, exactly, in detail, do you want to achieve?*)



- **Measurable** (*How will you know when you've reached your goal? Quantify it!*)



- **Actionable** (*What resources are needed - do you have them...including time?*)



- **Realistic** (*What's the outcome - the change - you're expecting?*)



- **Timed** (*Break it into steps. When will each step be completed?*)

TAKE-HOME IMPRESSIONS

You are encouraged to fill out this handout after attending each meeting of this group. Doing this is optional, but it is designed to help you retain as much of what you learned in today's session as possible. In your own words, please answer the following prompts:

1. SOMETHING I LEARNED ABOUT TBI TODAY THAT I DID NOT KNOW BEFORE IS:

2. SOMETHING I LEARNED TODAY THAT I WANT TO SHARE WITH SOMEONE IN MY LIFE IS:

I will share this with: _____

because: _____

3. I STILL HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT:

4. ONE STRATEGY I LEARNED TODAY THAT I BELIEVE WILL HELP ME IS:

5. THESE ARE THREE SITUATIONS WHERE I CAN SEE MYSELF USING THAT STRATEGY/SKILL:

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____