

Timber Ridge Ranch
Family Training Module

Brain Injury
Survivor and Caregiver
Education

4th Module

Topics Covered

Behavior, Memory and Thinking
Problems after Brain Injury

Family: _____

Behavior, Memory and Thinking Problems after Brain Injury

Brain injuries can disturb:

- ❖ Alertness and concentration
- ❖ Self-awareness
- ❖ Perception
- ❖ Memory and learning
- ❖ Reasoning, planning and problem-solving
- ❖ Speech and language
- ❖ Motor control
- ❖ Emotions

CONFUSION

SIGNS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Confuses times/tasks in schedule of activities ❖ Confuses past and present events ❖ Confabulates (makes up convincing stories to fill memory gaps; this is not intentional lying)
WHAT TO DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Encourage the use of a notebook to log events and encourage the person to refer to it for details for daily events. ❖ Gently remind the person of correct details of past and present events ❖ Confirm accurate information with other people ❖ Arrange for consistency in routine tasks (use calendar and notebook) ❖ Limit changes in daily routine ❖ Provide detailed explanations of even the most basic changes in daily routine

DIFFICULTY REMEMBERING

SIGNS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Unable to remember tasks from day to day ❖ Unable to remember new information
WHAT TO DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Establish a structured routine of daily tasks ❖ Encourage the consistent use of memory aids such as calendars and notebooks to plan, record and check off tasks as completed ❖ Encourage the person to write new information in the memory notebook ❖ Encourage other family members also to write and y information they may need to provide the person ❖ Encourage review and rehearsal of this information frequently throughout the day ❖ Provide opportunities for repeated practice of new information ❖ Try to pair new information with things the person is able to recall ❖ Provide spoken cues as needed for recall and, if necessary, help fill in memory gaps

ATTENTION PROBLEMS

SIGNS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Short attention span ❖ Distractibility ❖ Difficulty in attending to one or more things at one time
WHAT TO DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Focus on one task at a time ❖ Be sure you have the person's attention before beginning a discussion or task ❖ Decrease distractions when working or talking with the person ❖ Praise any improvement in length of attention to activity ❖ Gently refocus the person's attention to the details of the activity as needed ❖ Keep abrupt changes to a minimum ❖ Ask the person to repeat information he or she just heard to be sure he or she followed the conversation ❖ Schedule brief rest periods between short periods of work or activity

DIFFICULTY WITH DECISION MAKING

SIGNS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Hesitation with decisions ❖ Inappropriate decisions and potentially harmful decisions ❖ Difficulty reasoning ❖ Ineffective problem solving
WHAT TO DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Encourage the person to "stop and think". ❖ Use the Problem-Solving Format ❖ Help the person explore various options to problems ❖ Have the person write possible options in his or her notebook ❖ Discuss advantages and disadvantages of each option ❖ Role play to prepare the person for various situations

DIFFICULTY WITH INITIATION

SIGNS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Has trouble getting started ❖ Appears disinterested or unmotivated
WHAT TO DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Help the person develop a structured daily routine ❖ Provide specific choices for daily tasks. For example, ask, "Would you like to do A or B?" ❖ Simplify tasks. Break down tasks into simple steps and complete one step at a time ❖ Encourage the use of a notebook or calendar and set specific deadlines for tasks to be completed ❖ Praise the individual when he or she gets started without assistance ❖ Establish a time frame in which to accomplish tasks

IMPAIRED SELF-AWARENESS

SIGNS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Lack of awareness of deficits and limitations ❖ Inaccurate self-image/self-perception
WHAT TO DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Anticipate lack of insight ❖ Prompt accurate self-statements ❖ Use feedback generously in a supportive way ❖ Give realistic feedback as you observe behavior

DIFFICULTY CARRYING OUT A PLAN OF ACTION

SIGNS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Lack of follow-through with a task ❖ Difficulty in planning a sequence of tasks ❖ Appears disorganized
WHAT TO DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Begin with small, realistic projects ❖ Include the person in planning the activity ❖ Provide a clear and detailed explanation of an activity before starting ❖ Break down new or complex tasks into several easier steps ❖ Have the person write the sequence of steps for the task ❖ Ask the person to repeat to you the steps to be done to ensure understanding ❖ Encourage the person to refer to his or her plan, and check off each task as it is completed ❖ Repeat and explain the sequence of activities as needed ❖ Allow extra time for the person to complete tasks

DIFFICULTY WITH SELF-CONTROL: IMPULSIVENESS, LACK OF INHIBITION, PERSEVERATION

SIGNS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Acts or speaks without all the information or without considering the consequences ❖ Impulsiveness or poor judgment ❖ Inappropriate comments to or about others ❖ Gets stuck on one idea or activity (perseveration)
WHAT TO DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Limit options from which the person can choose ❖ Suggest alternatives for behavior ❖ Explain the reasons for tasks ❖ Be fair in your expectations ❖ Respond immediately to inappropriate ideas but maintain the original focus of the discussion ❖ Encourage the person to slow down and think through tasks or responses ❖ Provide verbal and non-verbal feedback in a supportive way for reassurance ❖ If undesired behavior occurs, discuss the consequences privately in a calm and confident manner ❖ Praise and reward desired behavior

DIFFICULTY WITH SOCIAL SITUATIONS

SIGNS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Acting or speaking without all the information or without considering the consequences ❖ Difficulty taking turns ❖ Socially inappropriate behavior or comments ❖ Disrespectful of social boundaries
WHAT TO DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Provide clear expectations for desirable behavior ❖ Treat the person appropriately for his or her age ❖ Plan and rehearse social interactions so that they will be familiar, predictable and consistent ❖ Establish verbal and non-verbal cues to signal the person to “stop and think” ❖ Encourage the person to slow down and think through responses ❖ Prompt the person to consider the consequence of their behavior ❖ Provide positive feedback for appropriate behavior ❖ Encourage a break in activity when frustration is evident ❖ Respond immediately to inappropriate ideas but maintain the original focus of the discussion ❖ If undesired behavior occurs, address the behavior and consequences privately in a calm and confident manner. Be objective and explain that the behavior, not the person, is inappropriate ❖ Reassure and be fair in your expectations

DIFFICULTY CONTROLLING EMOTIONS

SIGNS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Mood swings ranging from anxious to sad to angry ❖ Inappropriate laughing or crying ❖ Lower tolerance for frustrating situations
WHAT TO DO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Expect the unexpected ❖ Remain a model of calm assurance and confidence if an emotional outburst occurs ❖ Take the person to a quiet room or area to give him or her time to calm down and regain control ❖ Provide feedback in a gentle, supportive manner after the person regains control ❖ Avoid comparing past behaviors to present ❖ Gently redirect behavior to a different topic or activity ❖ Use humor in a positive and supportive manner ❖ Recognize that the person may use negative comments or refusal as a means of control ❖ Understand that brain injury often prevents the individual from feeling guilt or empathy ❖ Recognize your own emotional reactions to the person with brain injury

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4th Module Assignment

Client: _____ Family: _____ Date: _____

Clinician: _____

Behavior, Memory and Thinking Problems After Brain Injury: Name 3 areas a brain injury can disturb.

1:

2:

3:

Using the above areas, identify one sign of each.

1:

2:

3:

Using the same three areas as above, identify one "What to do" that you can improve on.

1:

2:

3:

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