

SESSION 4:

Attention II



Review of session 3

Discussion topics

- What did we learn about attention last week?
- What more did we learn from our take home activity?



Use prompts:

Did you have any difficulties being distracted?

Did you use any attention strategies from last week?

Did you manage to remember the route?

Review session 3:
5mins

Review take home
activities:
5mins

Passage Attention Exercise

Passage exercise 1 and
discussion:
10mins

Read the following passage and try to remember it as best you can:

Edward White, from Stoke-on Trent, and his wife, Angie, last week became the latest victims of a teenage gang who are terrifying the neighbourhood. The White family were visiting a local park on Saturday evening when they noticed a 14-year-old girl being attacked by a mob of 20 to 30 teens.

"They were coming in droves. Ten at a time, five at a time, White told reporters, "They saw the girl they were looking for and they all attacked her".

The couple stepped in to pull the girl away from the mob, when the youths turned on them. They both suffered serious injuries from the beating which only stopped when local police arrived to break up the gang. Several key members of the gang were arrested, but police are appealing for witnesses in order to trace others involved in the attacks.

TURN TO THE NEXT PAGE

- Without returning to the story, try to recall as much of the information as you can.



- How did you go about recalling the information? What about others in the group?



Use prompts:
Did you naturally use any strategies?
What did you focus on most?

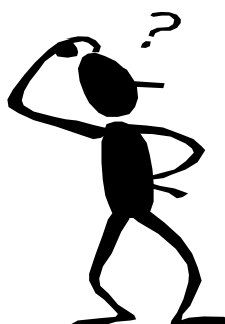
The 5 Ws and the H

When you are paying attention to some sort of information, whether it's a conversation, appointment or newspaper story, it can be useful to think about the 5 Ws and the H... who, what, where, why, when and how?

Tell the group: "Now we will be trying a strategy on a task like the one you've just done. This strategy will help you focus in on the details you need to remember and block out irrelevant information (distracters)"



WHO?



WHERE?



WHEN?

WHAT?



WHY?



HOW?

To use this strategy, when reading the information think about these questions and pick out the information to answer them, focus on these facts and use it as a structure to organise the information.

Ask the group to do the same reading task again, this time focussing in on the 5 W's and the H. If needed, write down the full words to prompt them.

Passage task 2, scoring and discussion:
15mins

Now read the following story and remember to focus on the 5W and 1H questions:

On Boxing Day last year, Jack Stevens from Chorley was eating dinner when the doorbell rang. He went to answer the door and found his next door neighbour frantically yelling about a fire that was engulfing her house and which had left her husband trapped inside. Mr Stevens' wife immediately called 999, but there was little time for waiting.

Stevens, 44 at the time, proceeded to the front door of the building and encountered heavy smoke. Upon entering the house into the living room, he saw what he thought was a foot about 12 feet in front of him. Mr Stevens moved through the heavy and accumulating smoke, grabbing the burn victim's foot and pulling him out of the house to the front lawn.

Deputy Chief Jim Walters, who was asked just after the incident whether Stevens saved the man's life, said, "no doubt." He also stated that he expected Mr Stevens to receive an award for bravery.



TURN TO THE NEXT PAGE

Without looking back at the passage, jot down as much as you can remember about the story. Use the following questions as prompts for more memory retrieval.



Who

What

Where

When

Why

How

Task scoring:

Now ask the group to score their own passage tasks, giving 1 point for each full piece of information (e.g. for “Jack Stevens”) and ½ point for any partially recalled piece (e.g. for “Jack” or “Josh Stevens”).

Answer any questions by using your own judgement but don’t spend too long worrying about exact scoring.

Now count up the number of points you remembered and compare it to the story that you read at the start of the session.

Story 1:

Precisely recalled information = (1 full point per piece)

Partially recalled information = (1/2 a point per piece)

Total:

Story 2:

Precisely recalled information = (1 full point per piece)

Partially recalled information = (1/2 a point per piece)

Total:

After scoring, have a brief discussion:

- How did everyone find using the strategy?
- Did they get more or less points using the strategy?

If someone got more points in the first task or didn’t find the strategy useful, remind them of the toolbox analogy, this might not be a strategy that works well for them but it’s still useful to find out which do and don’t work. Also, is it possible that the strategy may cause them to remember less information altogether, but to more reliably remember the important points?

----- **BREAK** -----

15mins

1. Based on our discussions over this session, the past session and your take home activities, when is it difficult to pay attention?

- a. When the information is not interesting or important
- b. When the information is not out of the ordinary
- c. When there are a lot of distractions around (e.g., noise)
- d. When tired, irritable, upset, etc. (your state of mind)

Make notes of any more distractions you can think of below:



What have the group learned about their own attention skills?

e.g.

Have they found they can / can't listen to music without getting distracted?

Have they found they concentrate better at a certain time of the day?

Have they found certain tasks easier/harder to concentrate on?

2. How can our attention be improved?

- a. By being aware of what you are doing, and why you are doing it (e.g., "I am parking the car")
- b. By focusing closely on the information (place, person, words, etc.), and paying attention to detail (e.g., "I'm parking on the 4th level, and the exit...a green door is to my right.... and from here I can see the clock tower")
- c. By repeating the information
- d. By making mental notes of the information or event



Everyday things such as parking the car can become automatic and therefore forgotten easily.

Any attention strategies we can use will make it explicit and require focus, helping us remember.

3. Case studies

Based on the 5Ws and the H, and the information we have learned about attention, what are the best strategies to improve attention in the following case studies?

Case Study 1: You meet a friend in the street. He tells you that some old friends are meeting at 7pm at the Greyhound Pub and would like you to join them later. How will you remember this message?



Give examples for these case study questions only if the group are struggling. If they are really struggling, show them the list of strategies on page 48.

Case Study 2: After a busy day, you rush home, cook dinner for the family and prepare to have some time for yourself in the evening. You just sit down in front of the TV to watch your favourite programme when you are interrupted by your partner/kids/the phone ringing. At the end of the programme, you are unsure what has happened as you found it difficult to keep up with the storyline.

- What can you do to help you remember what the partner/kids/person on the phone said?
- What can you do to ensure that you can enjoy time watching the TV programme and keeping up with the storyline?



Case Study 3: You are late for a meeting with a friend and have looked all over your house for your keys. How can you pay more attention to where you have put your keys in the future?



Case Study 4: You meet Rosemary and Adam Webster for the first time. How can you pay attention so that you remember their names next time you meet?



Depending on the time you have left, either make the group aware this list is here and read out a few strategies, or go through them all together.

List of attention strategies:
5mins

**Strategies to remember the information you are given in a conversation:
(e.g., Greyhound Pub example above)**

1. Repeat it over and over again
2. Write it down as soon as you get home
3. Say "Can you please give me a call to remind me?"
4. Use imagery (picture your friends sitting around a table with drinks on them [pub], and with greyhounds sitting beside each [The Greyhound pub], and the clock chiming 7 [7pm])
5. Slotting the information into your daily routine (e.g., telling yourself, "Right, after I do the dishes, I should get ready to go to the Greyhound")
6. Using the 5Ws and 1H (try and find, and remember, the answers to all these question): Who? What? Where? When? Why? And How?



Strategies to help you remember a name:

1. Repeat the name (to yourself)
2. Use the name in the conversation when possible
3. Write it down
4. Make associations with the name (e.g., where he/she was seated when you first met him/her)
5. Create an image for the name, by the way it sounds (e.g., Angela Webster, can be pictured as an angel, a web, and a star, all put together to form one picture)
6. Associate the name with a personality characteristic (e.g., "Oh John, the angry young man")
7. Use humour (e.g., call everyone "Charlie". This technique may not help you remember the right name, but it may get you out of the situation!)

Strategies to help remember where the car is parked:

1. Be aware of parking the car (try not to be distracted by other thoughts)
2. When getting out of the car, pay attention to the landmarks (name of building opposite the car, or floor level in car parks, etc.)
3. Look for big and small details
4. Make a mental note (say, "I have parked the car in front of ...")

Strategies to help you remember a face:

1. Look at it as a whole
2. Look for some characteristic detail, what makes this face unique?
3. Imagine how it would look if drawn as a caricature or a cartoon
4. Try imagining this face with your eyes shut

Strategies to help you put a name to a face:

1. Associate the name and the face to personality characteristics
2. Try to find the name in the face (e.g., "What about this person's face makes her look like an Angela?")
3. Make associations with other people you know or know of with the same name
4. [remember the techniques of how to remember a name, and how to remember a face (from session 3)]





Take Home Activities

Task 1

- Choose two newspaper articles of about the same length (a local paper may be best for this)
- Read the first one through, making sure you think about the 5Ws and the H.
- Put the article out of sight
- Record all of the key points that you remember in the box below:



- Now repeat the above stages for the 2nd article, and again, write down everything you can remember.



If you have asked yourself the: who, what, where, why, when and how questions when you are reading something, it is useful to use the same questions when you are trying to recall the information.

Task 2



Choose 2 or 3 memory difficulties that may be affected by how you pay attention. Write them down in the grid below.
(You may wish to look back at your responses from the previous take home activities to help you).

1. Which attention strategies would you normally use to help you remember information?
2. Which are the strategies have we discussed that you do not use?

Memory Difficulty	Attention Strategies I currently use	Attention Strategies I am going to try
e.g. remembering content of conversations with my husband	e.g. asking him to repeat if I have forgotten	e.g. focussing on the 5 W's and the H
<div>Advise if they aren't sure if it an attention problem, to write it down anyway and you will talk about it at the start of next session.</div>		

Continued...

- Think about these attention strategies and try to use them from the moment you get home.
- Before the next session, make a note of the things you found most difficult/most successful about implementing these strategies.

E.g., Were any of the strategies successful?
Were any of the strategies not successful? Why?
What will you do differently next time?



SESSION 5:

Introducing Internal Memory Aids



Review of session 4

Discussion topics

- What did you learn from your take home activities?



Does anyone need help clarifying if it their issue was a problem with attention?
How useful did you find the 5 W's and the H?
Will you continue to use it?

Review of session 4:
5mins



Review take home activity:
5mins

1. What is meant by internal memory aids?
2. What kind of internal memory strategies do people use now?

Internal memory aids
introduction:
10mins

Write these down here:



If members of the group aren't sure if they use any, highlight that most people use rehearsal and repetition.

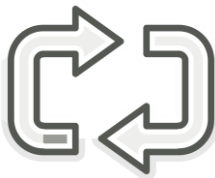
What are internal memory aids?

These are memory aids that require you to mentally process, organise, and think about the information you wish to remember, instead of relying on external aids.

Over the next three sessions we will discuss some of the internal memory aids people use. You may find some of them useful. Remember that you will probably not use all of them and you will find some suit you better than others. The aim of this session is to help you select the best techniques for your own personal 'toolbox'.

Rehearsal and Repetition: Does practice make perfect?

**Rehearsal and repetition:
10mins**



This strategy involves repeating information silently in your minds or vocally (out loud) that you want to remember. You can use this technique for quick, immediate recall.

Example: repeating a number you have found in the telephone directory until you can dial it.

- Think of a time you needed to memorise information and recall it, for example a presentation/speech or facts for an exam.
- What type of strategies did you use to remember the information?



**Is there a preference for external strategies?
What if there was no pen/paper etc available?**

Chunking activity:
10mins

Chunk it! Chunking

Chunking involves grouping or clustering items together to form units. It is particularly useful in remembering a string of numbers, like phone numbers, post codes, etc. This strategy works because it effectively reduces the number of bits of information to store in your memory.

- Spend some time trying to remember the following telephone number:

01842586729

Ask the group to do this individually, in silence so as not to distract others. Give 5 mins.

- Once you have learnt the number, cover it and write it down here:



A large dashed rectangular box for writing the remembered number.

- How did you remember the number?
- How many 'chunks' did you divide the number into?

Briefly discuss this.
Did chunking make the phone number easier to remember?

----- BREAK -----

15 mins

Categorisation

This technique involves our grouping of items according to particular categories. You can make your own categories based on one of the many principles of grouping. Groups can be made on the basis of colour, shape, common themes, etc.

Example: You need to buy apples, pens, a sharpener, pears, a rubber, oranges, and a pencil. One way to recall these items is to memorise them all as one group. The other way is to group them into two categories, and recalling the two categories (fruit and stationery) may help you remember the items in each.

Try this exercise: Look at the grid of pictures. Take a few minutes to group the information into common themes. Choose the themes that would suit you best and assign each item to a theme.

E.g., Theme 1: Animals – cat, dog, stork

You can make notes of your themes and the items that go with each theme below:



Give the group a few mins to categorise the pictures.
Depending on how well your group work together it is best to do this in either couples or individually.
If the group get very stuck, suggest some categories.

Now try to remember as many of the items as possible. List them here. Use your themes to guide you:



After a few mins, take the picture grid away and ask the group to write down as many of the items as possible, without saying them out loud.

Total number of items remembered.....

- Why can we remember more when items are put into themes?

Chunking the items into categories decreases the amount to remember and the categories can be used as a prompt to remember more information. The categorisation also adds meaning to the items to be remembered - making them more memorable.

- What other pieces of information can you organise (chunk or categorise) in your everyday lives to help you remember something?



E.g. Shopping lists / to do lists

- Can you remember the phone number from the beginning of the session? Write it down here, or as many of the numbers as you can remember.

**Phone number
recap:
5mins**

Take Home Activity

Take home activity:
10mins

Task 1

Think about the different ways you already use to learn and remember information that is important to you. List them here:



Task 2

Now think about some of these strategies that we talked about today for organising the information and processing it more meaningfully. The next time we meet it might be helpful to discuss how you went about **learning something new**. Attempt to use some of these new strategies you learnt in the session to learn something new or to help you remember information.

Think about the following questions:

1. What did you attempt to learn?
2. What new strategy did you use?
3. Was this strategy helpful?
4. If not, why do you think it didn't work so well, and what other approaches can you use in the future?



SESSION 6:

Internal Memory

Aids II



Review Session 5

Discussion topic

1. What did you learn from the take home activity?



What strategy did you try?
Did it work?

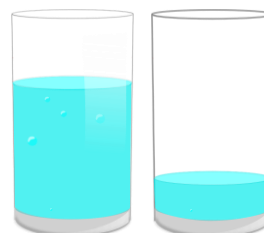
Review session 5
&
Review take home activity:
5mins

As there is more content in this session, these need to be done more quickly than usual.

Deep vs Shallow Processing

Our ability to remember information can depend on the way we process it. If we only process a piece of information in a **shallow** way, it will form a weaker memory trace and be more likely to be forgotten.

If we process the information using **deep** processing it will become a stronger, more long-term memory trace and we are more likely to remember it.



Exercise (part one):



Look at the newspaper image and for a couple of minutes and discuss what you remember with the group.

Present the first newspaper image for 2 mins
Ask the group to verbally recall as much as they can

Shallow processing task:
5mins

What is deep-level processing?

Deep-level processing involves understanding and **attaching meaning** to the information you want to remember, and rehearsing it in a meaningful way which requires effort.

If you want to learn some new information and to organise it in your mind so that you are better able to recall the information later, it is better to use deep processing.

What are deep/shallow processing:
15mins

What is shallow-level processing?

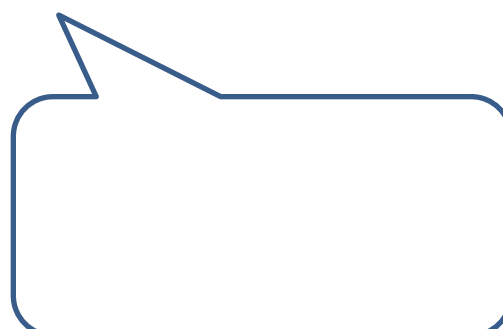
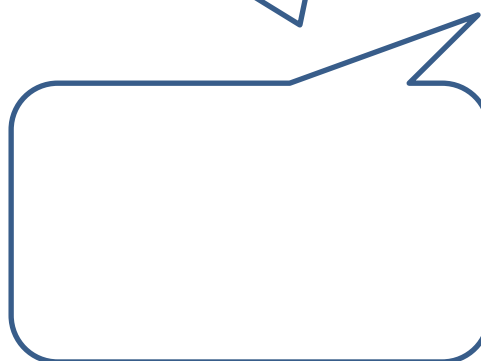
Shallow processing is when we only think about and process the new information in terms of what it looks like or sounds like.

For example, if we repeat the same word over and over again without really thinking about the word and its meaning, it may help it stay in your short term memory but won't help you remember the word long term.

Examples:

Example	Shallow processing	Deep processing
Trying to remember the word "Kat"	Repeating the name	Imagining the person with cat ears and tail
Creating a password and trying to remember it	Repeating the set password to yourself	Changing the password to something which is already meaningful to you, e.g. your partner's birthday
Trying to learn about a topic in a lecture	Listening to the lecture	Writing the information down in your own words

Discuss and write down more ways we can process information more deeply:



Write down some more examples of shallow processing in everyday life:



E.g. Someone telling you information you don't need or don't fully understand like at a doctors' appointment

Exercise (part two):

**Deep processing task:
5mins**



Look at the second newspaper image and this time think about it in terms on what is happening, meaning, and try and make some associations.

Discuss what you remember with the group and write below how you found recalling this image compared to the first, shallow processed photograph.



Visualise it! Visual imagery

This strategy involves the use of making mental pictures of information that you would like to remember. This strategy can be used effectively to remember names of people, faces, where you have kept something, etc.

Example: You can remember the name Theresa Lockhart, by making a mental image of Mother Theresa with wearing a locket the shape of a heart that can be opened with a key.

Or, for the name Teddy Fisherman, perhaps you could picture a teddy bear on a fishing trip.

It's a good idea to make your images as elaborate as possible.



Exercise: At a friend's party, you meet Susan and Andy Wright.

Take a few minutes to think of a mental image of how you would remember their names. After you have committed the image to memory, jot down or draw the image you have created in the space below:



Participants who are naturally less visually creative may need support with this.

Encourage them to be silly with it, it doesn't matter if their picture only makes sense to them and no one else!

Tips for creating effective visual imagery



1. Form images in your mind

- a. It's usually good to use concrete nouns (like ball or tree) as they are easiest to visualise
- b. It is more difficult to visualise numbers or abstract information (e.g., 'democracy') so more effort to create visual images is required, but it is possible.

For example, try to associate the abstract information with concrete nouns. What type of image can you come up with to represent 'peace'?



2. Create associations between images

- a. **Interaction** – Make them interact in some way, not just pictured beside each other
- b. **Vividness** – Make the images really clear in your mind
- c. **Bizarreness** – Unusual or ridiculous images can be remembered the easiest. For example, if you are trying to associate an image of a mouse and a pen, imagine writing with a real mouse as though it is a pen
- d. **Emotion** – Images that evoke an emotion, especially, a positive or funny emotion can be beneficial. Stay away from negative emotions!

----- **BREAK** -----

15mins

Associations

Associations:
5mins

Associations can also help you remember by connecting new information to old information (or routine tasks) that is already in your long term memory.

Example: Your friend's birthday on the 27th of December can be remembered as two days after Christmas

Example 2: You might try to remind yourself to phone your friend after lunch.

When do you use associations?



In case the group are stuck, use more examples:

E.g.

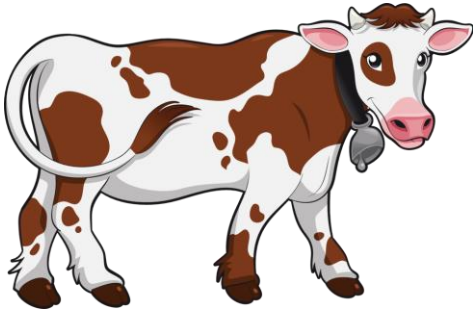
- **Leaving a gift by the door to remind you it's your friends birthday**
- **Remembering a new person's name by thinking of someone you already know with the same name.**



Story method:
10mins

The story method

This strategy requires you to make a story that incorporates all the different bits of information that you wish to recall into the story itself.



Example: If you want to remember to post a letter and buy some milk and sweets for your children's party tonight you could make a story such as:

There was a boy who went to the post office, but on the way he met the milk-man who was taking his cow out for a walk, so the boy gave the cow some sweets to eat, which made the cow so happy it began to party.



Exercise:

Imagine you wake up and have a lot of things to do today. You need to buy bread, eggs, dates and soap, drop off 2 suits at the dry cleaners, collect a prescription, and meet a friend at the cinema.

Using visual imagery and the story method, spend 5 minutes making up a way of linking and remembering the information. Try to make the images as bizarre and vivid as possible.

Ask the group to do this on their own. Tell them to visualise the story happening to help them remember it.

If the group are stuck and can't think of a story to link the items, suggest this one:
"A slice of bread and the egg are going on a date. The bread is getting ready for the date and washing using some soap, while the egg is picking up his suits from the cleaners and collecting a prescription. They both meet up at the cinema for their date and they bump into some friends."

First letter cues

Using the first letter of words can be a useful strategy for learning lists. The first letters can be arranged alphabetically, or the first letters can also make a prompt word that can help jog your memory of the list.

Example: If you need to remember to buy carrots, apples, teabags and sugar, you could use the first letter cue: CATS.

Rhymes

Making up simple rhymes and songs can aid recall of information. The added effort to create a rhyme will mean the information is more deeply processed.

Example: The rhyme, "Thirty days have September, April, June, and November..." helps you remember how many days there are in a particular month.

Take home activity:
10mins

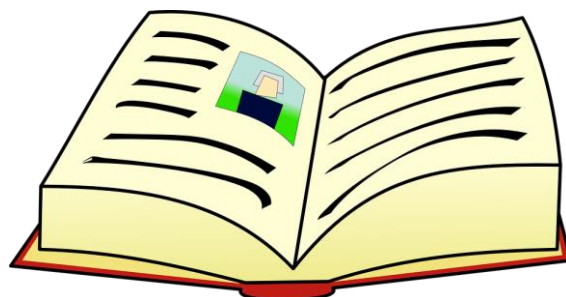


Take Home Activity

Task 1

Earlier you were asked to come up with a visual imagery story to remember what to do during the day. Are you able to remember the story now?

Without turning to the previous page, take a couple of minutes to remember the story and then write it in the space below. Did you accurately remember all the things you need to do?



Task 2



- Attempt to use some of the internal memory strategies discussed in today's session to **learn something new**.
 - Maybe try to learn someone's name?
 - Or try to remember the tasks that need doing for the day?
 - Or apply some of these strategies to other things you are trying to remember at work or at home?
- What successes and problems did you experience?



- What techniques did you prefer and why?



SESSION 7:

Internal

Memory Aids

III



Review Session 6

Review session 6:
5mins

Discussion topics

- Feedback from take home activity and experiences of last week's internal aids
- What were the main positive and negative points made by the group and what can be done to reduce problems and enhance success?



- **What was fun/useful/positive about the strategies we went through last week?**
- **What was not so useful?**
- **How can we improve them?**

Review take home
activity:
5mins

Positives

Negatives

How can we improve our success with internal memory aids?

Practise!

Encourage the group to practise these strategies, especially the visual imagery ones/ They may be difficult for group members who aren't creative, but this can be improved with practise and confidence.



Internal memory aids III:

Little and often
strategy:
15mins

Little and Often....

It's better to work for a few minutes several times a day than for one long period. The same is true about trying to remember something. Try to spread out the information to remember over a certain amount of time, and try to remind yourself little and often.



Exercise:

Listen to the list of 20 words and try to remember as many of the words as possible.

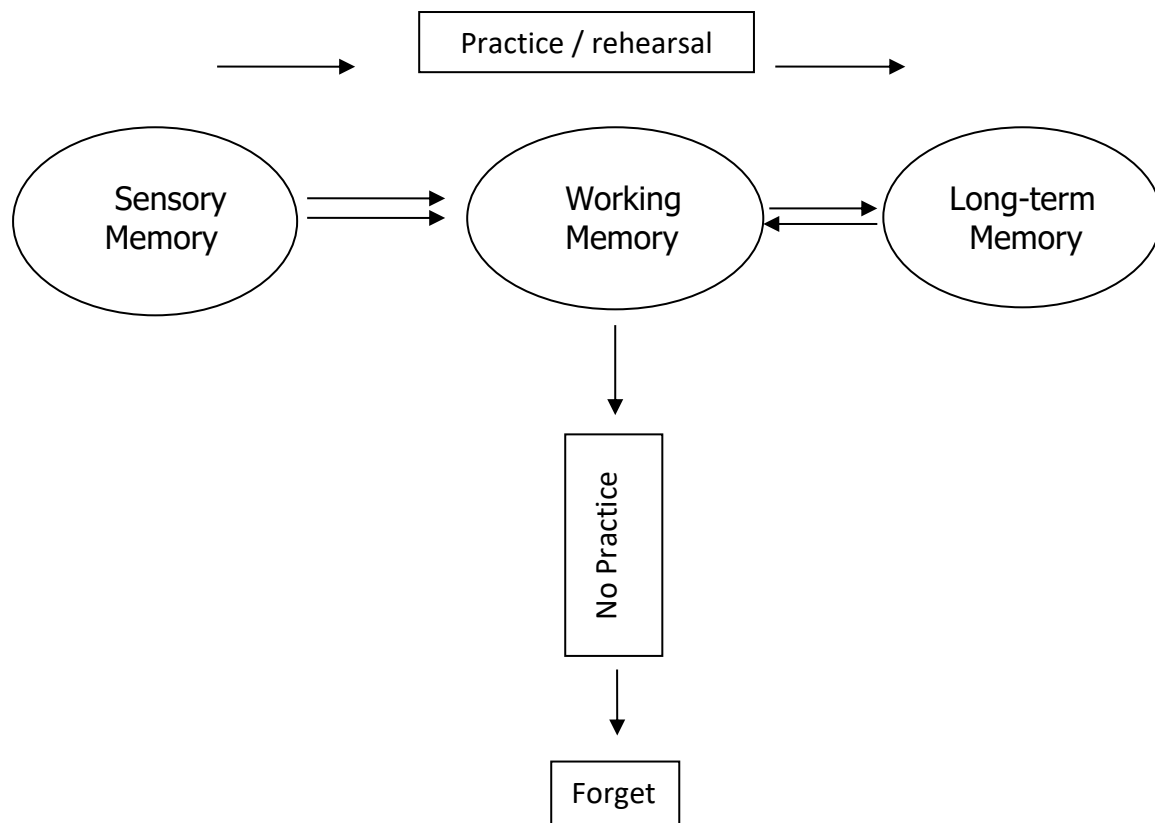
Read out the list of 20 words slowly (around 1 every 3 seconds) and ask the group to remember as many as they can and then write them down after you have finished the list.

Write down as many of the words that you can remember now:



We tend to remember words best if they have been read at the beginning (called the *primacy* effect) or at the end (called the *recency* effect) with everything else in the middle most likely to be forgotten.

Can you remember this diagram that was shown to you during Session 2?



It is thought that memory is good for the words read at the beginning because they have moved to our long-term memory, and words that are remembered at the end are still in the short-term (working memory).

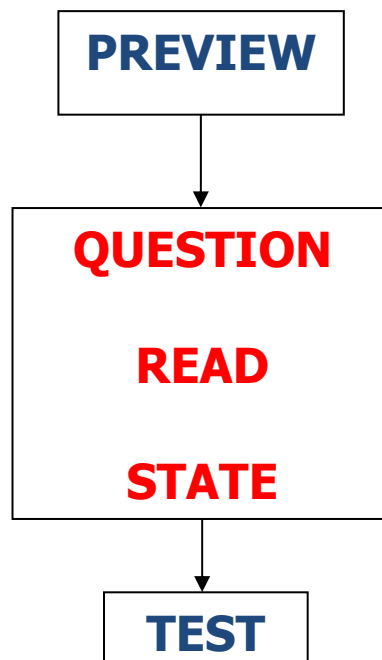
In order to get all of the words (or information that needs to be remembered) into your long term memory, you will need to repeat them little and often.

Example:

If someone asks you to give a message to someone, repeating the message immediately afterwards to yourself will be useful. Then, every so often, remind yourself what the message was, especially after a time doing something else. You can gradually increase the intervals between reminding yourself of the message and it should get stored in long-term memory. When you next see the person to give the message to, the message should be easier to retrieve.

The PQRST Method

This strategy is particularly useful when you have some material from books and articles you wish to remember. PQRST are first letter cues that stand for **P**review, **Q**uestion, **R**ead, **S**tate, and **T**est. This technique also helps you to understand the material at a deeper level.



P – Preview: read through the information once and get a feel of the whole text

Q – Question: ask yourself questions about what you have read

R – Read: re-read the whole text

S – State: see if you can answer the questions you had posed

T – Test: see if the answers you came up with were correct



**Exercise:**

Read the following article and try out the PQIRST method.
It's ok to make notes on the article page as you are reading!

Ask the group to read the article in silence so the others can concentrate.

When they are finished, ask them to turn the page and write down some questions on what they have just read.

Tornadoes are vertical funnels of rapidly spinning air. Their winds may top 250 miles (400 kilometres) an hour and can clear-cut a pathway a mile (1.6 kilometres) wide and 50 miles (80 kilometres) long.

Twisters are born in thunderstorms and are often accompanied by hail. Giant, persistent thunderstorms called supercells spawn the most destructive tornadoes.

These violent storms occur around the world, but the United States is a major hotspot with about a thousand tornadoes every year. "Tornado Alley," a region that includes eastern South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, northern Texas, and eastern Colorado, is home to the most powerful and destructive of these storms. U.S. tornadoes cause 80 deaths and more than 1,500 injuries per year.

A tornado forms when changes in wind speed and direction create a horizontal spinning effect within a storm cell. This effect is then tipped vertical by rising air moving up through the thunderclouds.

The meteorological factors that drive tornadoes make them more likely at some times than at others. They occur more often in late afternoon, when thunderstorms are common, and are more prevalent in spring and summer. However, tornadoes can and do form at any time of the day and year.

Tornadoes' distinctive funnel clouds are actually transparent. They become visible when water droplets pulled from a storm's moist air condense or when dust and debris are taken up. Funnels typically grow about 660 feet (200 meters) wide.

National Geographic Online



Test yourself – try and recall as much as you can using the PQRST method!



Remember: Preview, Question, State, Read and Test

----- **BREAK** -----

15mins



Breaking down tasks:

Information can be more easily stored if it is broken down into manageable chunks. As with the telephone number earlier, this can be done with other types of information. One example is recipes, which are naturally broken down into manageable steps. With a partner in the group, try to learn the follow recipe for chocolate truffles.

Chocolate truffles:

1. *Crush the digestive biscuits together until smooth*
2. *Mix the chocolate, coconut and crushed biscuits together in a bowl*
3. *Add the tin of condensed milk*
4. *Combine them all together until you end up with a sticky dough*
5. *Put the mix in the fridge to cool and become less sticky to handle (10 mins)*
6. *Roll the dough into balls, roll them in cocoa powder and place in cupcake cups*
7. *Keep in fridge to harden for around 20 minutes*

When you have learnt the recipe, cover the instructions above and write it down in the space below.



Encourage the group to use a mixture of different strategies e.g. chunk the information and visualise it too



Which other strategies did you use to remember the information?





Memory retrieval top tips:

Retrieval tips:
15mins

When we are trying to retrieve information, such as the reason why we went into a room, it is always worthwhile to:

1. *Relax* – the more we stress or worry about remembering, the less likely we are to retrieve the information
2. Use *mental retracing* – what were you doing just before?
3. Think about the *context* you were just in (context dependent memory)
4. Use *alphabetical searching* – Think 'what does the word begin with?', particularly useful when a word is on the 'tip of the tongue'
5. Understand that *everyone experiences memory difficulties* at times



Take Home Activity

Take home activity:
5mins

Task 1

Part 1

- Attempt to use some of the internal memory strategies discussed today.
- What successes and problems did you experience?
- Which technique did you prefer and why?



Part 2

- Identify a task you would like to complete (e.g., setting reminders on mobile phones, remembering the name of someone new).
- Write down what the task was and how you felt about the learning process. Were you successful? Were you able to complete the task a few days later?



Task 2

Bring your diary with you to the session next week!

You will not have to share the information inside the diary with anyone, but it would be useful if you had yours with you as we will be discussing the use of diaries.

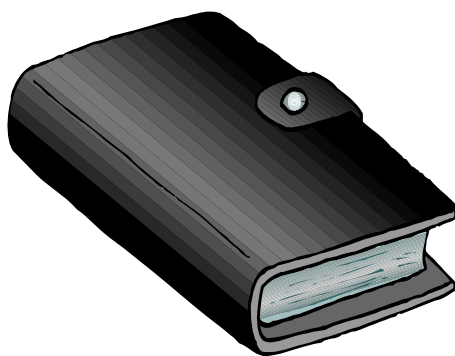
If you do not have a diary, it may be best to buy one (even if it's a small pocket one) after the next session.

It doesn't have to be a paper diary, many people use an electronic diary on their smartphones.



SESSION 8:

**Introduction to
External Memory
Aids & Diaries**



Review of session 7

Discussion topics

- What did we learn from our take home activity?



Review of session 7:
5mins



Review take home
activity:
5mins

Complete the following table, reflecting on the internal memory aids we have covered in the sessions and have a think about the external memory aids that we can use:

Introduction to external
memory aids & diaries:
10mins

	Internal memory aids	External memory aids
Definition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inside you • Require active mental processing of information • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outside you • Can be touched
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehearsal • Associations • • • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timers • Diaries • • • •

“So far we have focussed on internal strategies, but today we will move onto external strategies.” Talk through and complete the table together and ask them to write down the answers.

What are external memory aids?

External memory aids are any strategy that requires a physical aid. They are external to your mind i.e. you can touch them.

It may be useful to use an external memory aid instead of internal in certain situations, for example if there is long gap before retrieving the information (e.g. a dentist appointment in a few months' time) or if you have a lot of other things to do in between.

We will be looking at a variety of different external memory strategies and ways we can use them to make them more effective.

Introduction to diaries

Diaries are an excellent memory aid for many keeping different types of information in one place. You may keep notes, dates, appointments and to do lists in your diary.

The physical act of writing information in your diary will also force your brain to process it more deeply and help you remember it. It may be either a paper book or an electronic diary on your smartphone.



There are benefits of each of these. Tell the group to use whichever they feel is best for them. If they find technology confusing, use a paper diary. If they like to use their phone a lot and have it all on there that's fine.

Using a diary effectively

Discussion questions:

1. Do you currently use a diary?
2. What kind of problems do you think you face when using a diary?
3. What are the possible solutions to these problems?

“As a group, we’re now going to discuss these questions and fill out the table on the next page about problems with diaries”

**Diaries discussion:
10mins**

Use the table on the next page to record particular problems that may affect you, and the possible solutions to these problems:

Diary table:
15mins

	Potential problem with diary use	Possible solutions to the problem
1	e.g. Forget to write in my diary	Set alarms to remind me to write in the diary before bed Make writing in the diary part of my daily routine
2	<p>Work through and fill out the table together one line at a time. Don't let the group split off into multiple conversations to make sure you all hear all of the answers. Take enough time to fully discuss all points that are brought up.</p>	
3	<p>Examples of problems (only use if the group have run out of ideas): Forgetting to check diary Diary gets messy Battery on phone running out Losing diary Too bulky to carry around</p>	<p>Examples of solutions: Set timers to remind you to check diary every day and make it part of your routine (e.g. check while eating breakfast) Use 5W's and the H as frame for diary entries, only write details Charge phone every night Duplicate diary into a bigger diary kept at home, and carry small one.</p>
4		
5		
6		

Run through any points below that were not covered by the group in the table on the last page.

Diary tips:
4mins



Useful tips when using a diary:

- Make the diary part of your everyday routine
- Always keep it in the same place and get into the habit of checking it regularly
- Buy a diary that is best suited for you and your lifestyle
- A good one would have space for hourly appointments and an opportunity for you to see the week at one glance (on one page)
- Having space to enter some notes on each page / under each day is useful
- It's useful if your diary has space to enter phone numbers and addresses
- If you wish to separate your entries into two or more categories (e.g., personal and professional engagements) use different coloured ink for each, or split each day/page into two sections, one for each category
- Use Post-it notes to write temporary reminders which can be stuck in your diary
 - Post-its can be moved from one page to another, to remind you to do things you had planned to do
 - to-do lists can be written on Post-its and each item can be scored off as and when they are completed, and the remainder of items can be remain on the list, with the Post-it simply being moved to the next day's page
- Entries can be both prospective (things you want to do) and retrospective (things that you have done)
- Your diary itself can become a memory place, where you can leave other notes, bills, memos, etc.
- Encourage family and friends to write / ask you to write things in your diary, or have a family diary
- Use coloured pens to make important notes stand out, or colour code your entire diary!



Potential problems encountered in using a diary:

- Deciding what type/size of diary will be best for your lifestyle
- Forgetting to make an entry
- Forgetting to check entries
- Transferring information from one diary (or piece of paper) to another
- Mislaying diary
- Forgetting to cancel appointments that have been called off/cancelled
- Making haphazard entries making locating entries difficult
- Not understanding what a diary entry means because you haven't written enough detail



Possible solutions:

- ✓ Transfer information from notes to your diary as soon as possible or keep a fixed time daily where transfers are done
- ✓ You could try writing all information on Post-its and stick them in the diary for entries later
- ✓ Always keep the diary in one place (take the phone to the diary if possible), this may prevent you losing it
- ✓ Alternatively, you could put your diary in a bag that you always take around with you (this also helps in case you need to make some appointments when you are out of the house)
- ✓ Make entries as soon as possible (e.g., while fixing an appointment)
- ✓ Alternatively, make and check entries at a fixed time daily
- ✓ Once a planned activity has been carried out, cross it out or tick it off so that the focus is on upcoming activities
- ✓ Get a diary with hours marked out on each page, so that entries can be written in next to the appropriate time and date
- ✓ Make entries with enough detail so you will understand what you need to do later, but keep them short and simple so they are easy to read quickly (writing legibly may also help!). You could use the 5 W's and the H strategy to help use write entries: Who? What? When? Where? How?
- ✓ Enter phone numbers and addresses only in the phone / address section, and not randomly elsewhere



----- BREAK -----

15mins

Allow the group to discuss these thoughts briefly.
Do they experience fatigue?
Do they need to plan more time for breaks?

Pacing activity:
15mins

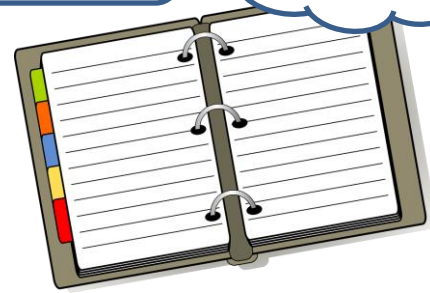
Energy levels

Making the most of your energy: Pacing activity

How do you plan your days?
Do you **plan** your day, or do you **respond** to your day?

Making the most of your energy is very important, especially if you experience fatigue.

We are now going to look at ways you can make the most of your energy during the day, and avoid burnout or exhaustion.



Remember the 3 Ps:

“Diaries can be a great tool to help with the 3 P’s.
So you can use your diary to plan out your day,
including the prioritising and pacing.”

1. PLAN

Plan your day: Make a list of things to do.
Set time slots to do the tasks, making them generous and allowing for breaks.

2. PRIORITISE

Decide what is most important to be done today.
Perhaps put a star next to the important things.
Decide what can be done another day.
List your to-do list in order of importance.

3. PACE

Take regular short breaks.
Break your tasks into steps and take a break between steps.
Pace yourself during activities, do not rush.
Pace yourself during the day.

Pacing requires self-discipline as it’s natural to want to get to the end of a job. However, it is much better to take things steadily rather than continuing with an activity to the point of exhaustion and being forced to rest for longer.



Planning and pacing tip:

Be kind to yourself and don’t push yourself too hard and overwhelm yourself with things to do. Make a to-do list including everything, even getting up and getting dressed. Congratulate yourself for anything you have ticked off at the end of the day.

It's also very important to **monitor** closely how you are feeling throughout the day. Be on the lookout for signs such as: Yawning, tiredness, aches and pains, brain fog and difficulty thinking.

If you are tired, do one of the following things:

- **Stop.** It is ok to finish something another day
- **Delegate** the task or ask for help
- **Take a break** and come back to the task when you have more energy
- **Do a different task for a while**, if you are not yet exhausted but need a change



What specific things can you do to ensure that the energy you have is used efficiently?



Use prompts if the group are unsure:
Have you ever been exhausted to the point of fatigue? What happened?
What could you do to avoid this again?

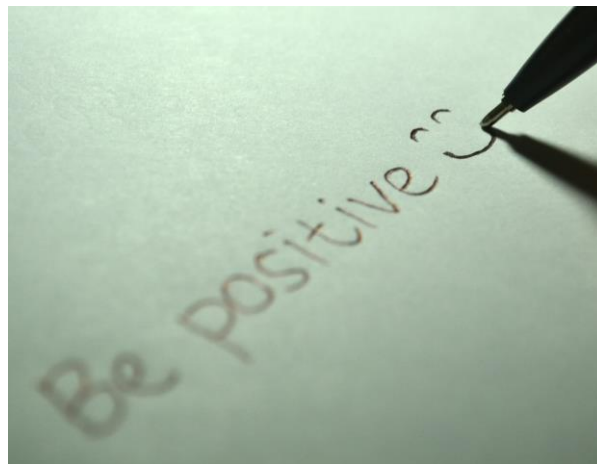
“We’ve got a few tips here because it’s really important that you feel positive about the things you are doing to help your memory. It makes a big difference in how effective they are going to be for you”

Positive attitude
to memory aids:
5mins



Developing a positive attitude about using both internal and external memory aids:

1. Everyone needs to use them whether they have a memory problem or not
2. Experiment – try to develop your own techniques to help you remember better
3. Make sure you *recognise a purpose* for the strategy – if you have any questions about why a strategy is useful or how it works, ask your group leader to explain
4. Be flexible – use different strategies to suit various situations
5. Remember – try to use 3-6 aids for better memory



Take home activity:
5mins



Take Home Activity

For the next week, consider starting using a diary as a way of keeping track of what you need to do in the next week. If you already use a diary, think about using a new strategy to make your current diary more effective. Begin using the diary or the new strategy over the next week! Make sure it has plenty of space and perhaps think about how you can attach a pen to it.

- What techniques do you plan to use to make sure the diary works?

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- What information will you record in the diary? (e.g., appointments, 'to-do' lists, things to remember)

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- Have you experienced any difficulties in the first week of using it and planning your week?

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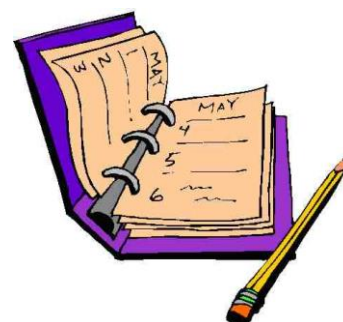
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SESSION 9:

External

Memory Aids

II



Review of Session 8

Discussion topics

- Take Home Activity: Success and difficulties



Spend a little longer than usual reviewing how using the diaries went. E.g:
How did you find your first week using your diary?
Was it useful?



Review of session 8:
5mins


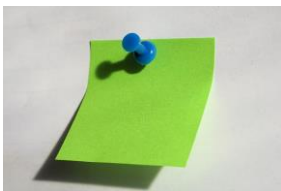



Review take home
activity:
10mins

Diaries are not the only external memory aids available to help you remember things. There are many options, and it will be the most helpful if you select a few external strategies you can use together which fit in with your lifestyle.

Below is a list of many of the available external memory aids. Think about the potential problems when using each one.
What are the solutions to these problems?

Other external
memory strategies:
20mins

Memory aid	Problems	Solutions
<p>Smartphone apps</p> 		
<p>Other people</p> 		

<p>Lists</p> 		
<p>Post-its</p> 		
<p>Calendars</p> 		
<p>Personal organisers</p> 		
<p>Noticeboards</p> 		

Timers / alarms



Computers



Dictaphones



2. Are there any memory aids that you would like to use?
What prevents you from using these memory aids now?

External memory
strategies discussion:
10mins



----- BREAK -----

15mins

Case Studies: Making life a bit easier

Using the following memory aids (and any others that you can think of), discuss which external memory aids each person in the case studies may need to use to plan his/her day.

- Notepad beside phone
- Notepad beside bed
- Notepad to carry around
- Lists
- Diary
- Calendar/wall chart
- Pill box/medication
- Leave something in a prominent place (or the same place always)
- Leave something in a prominent place so that it acts as a prompt
- Notice-board
- Alarm clock
- Computer
- Timer
- Ask someone to remind you
- Pacing Activity
- Dictaphone/Voice recorder



Case Study 1

Katy is struggling to keep up with remembering what to do each day. She is out and about all day and has to remember lots of things. Last week Katy missed 2 appointments.

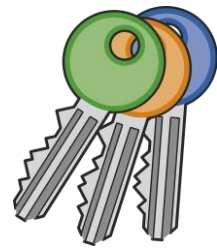
- Which external memory aids can Katy use to help her keep track of everything she needs to do?



For each case study, ask the group to suggest external strategies, or a system, that might help the person and write them down.

Case Study 2

Alan is finding it difficult to find things around the house. He keeps misplacing his keys and glasses which means he wastes a lot of time finding them. He also struggles to take his medication on time.



- Which external memory aids can Alan use to help him with these memory difficulties?



Case Study 3

Miranda leads a very busy life. She is working part-time and has kids and finds that she tries to do everything at once. By late afternoon Miranda is exhausted with fatigue. She feels very stressed late at night with lots of 'things to do' the next day buzzing around in her head.



- What can Miranda do to feel less fatigued and stressed, and get everything done that she needs to?



Case Study 4

Michael very efficiently wrote notes about important conversations and messages on pieces of paper. He ended up losing a lot of the pieces of paper and is having difficulty with his vision.



- Which external memory aids can Michael use to help him with these difficulties?



A large dashed rectangular box for writing an answer to the question.



Useful tips when using external memory aids:

Useful tips:
5mins

- Incorporate things into daily routine (e.g., charge phone every night, leaving the charger in one place all the time)
- Keep your list in a prominent position and keep writing things down as soon as you remember something
- Use different **colours** (to prevent monotony from setting in) ... marker pens, post-its, etc.



Take Home Activities

Take home activity:
10mins

Task 1: Trying out new external memory aids

This week, begin to experiment with some different external memory aids to those you have used in the past.

- First, list the external memory aids which you already use:

-
-
-
-



- Now, make a note of any new aids you would like to try, and how you will put this plan into action:

External aid	First step	Putting it to use
e.g. Notice board	Buy a pin / white board	Keep a note of all info needed for day and inform family to write on it too
1.
2.
3.

Now put your plan into action! Try out the new memory aids and record the problems you face and the successes you've had in using them.

Task 2: Remembering to do things in the future (Prospective memory)



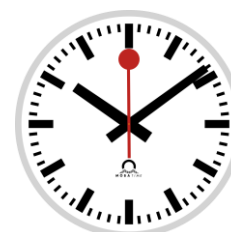
1. Choose an afternoon or evening to complete the following memory task. In order to complete the task you should try to use any external and/or internal memory aids that you feel will help you to remember what you have to do. You may decide to use just one aid, or a combination of methods.

Write the time you are starting the task here (start time) _____

Below are three boxes. Aim to mark an X in the first box one hour after the start time, and record the actual time when you've done this in the space provided (no cheating!). You should then mark an X in the second box two hours after the start time, and in the third box three hours after the start time. (This task will take three hours)

	Actual time remembered
	Actual time remembered
	Actual time remembered

- How did you remember to do this task?
- Which external memory aids did you use?
- Which internal memory aids did you use?
- If you used a number of methods, which methods were most useful?



SESSION 10:

Review & Fine - tuning



Review session 9

Discussion topics

- Successes and difficulties with take home activity tasks

Successes

Difficulties

What are the solutions to your difficulties?

Go back to the beginning of the workbook together. Spend a few mins flicking through and reminding the group what you covered in each session. Focus on the strategies they learned.

Review session 9:
5mins

Review take
home activity:
5mins



Review all sessions:
15mins

- Look back through all the sessions – attention strategies, internal memory strategies, external memory aids. List your favourite and most effective strategies below, which you think you'd like to continue using.

Favourite strategies:
10mins

	Favourite Aids/ Strategies	Why you like them
Attention	<p>Lay the spider diagrams of all the internal and external strategies out so the whole group can see them. Ask the group to complete the table with their favourite strategies that they have learned.</p>	
Internal		
External		

----- BREAK -----

15mins

Back to session 1...

Ask the group to turn back to page 14 to remind themselves of their problems at the start of the programme, and fill out the identical table below to show if anything has changed.

Review changes:
15mins

- Think about the main memory problems you recorded in the session 1 take home activity (pg14) and re-enter them in the table. Then, as before, state how often each occurs now (i.e. hourly, twice daily, weekly and so on) and reflect on how much you feel they affect you now.

	Memory problem faced	How often this occurs	How much it affects you 1= not at all 5= severely	Techniques used (if any) to deal with it
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				



Discussion Topics

- Group feedback
- What did the group gain from attending this programme?
- What were the difficulties you faced and how did you overcome them?



Leave this section as a very open discussion for anything relevant.



That's it!

We hope you have enjoyed the sessions and will continue to use the strategies you have learnt over the last ten weeks.

Please keep this workbook so you can look back to refresh the strategies in your head as and when you need them.

Thank you for attending the programme.

*** * ***



What happens next....

Final Take home activity:

Continue to use the strategies we talked about during the session to manage your memory difficulties at home. Look back over this workbook if you ever need to remind yourself.



