

Webinar Series



Striving for Cognitive Wellness

Tuesday, March 10, 2020

Presented by:



Genentech

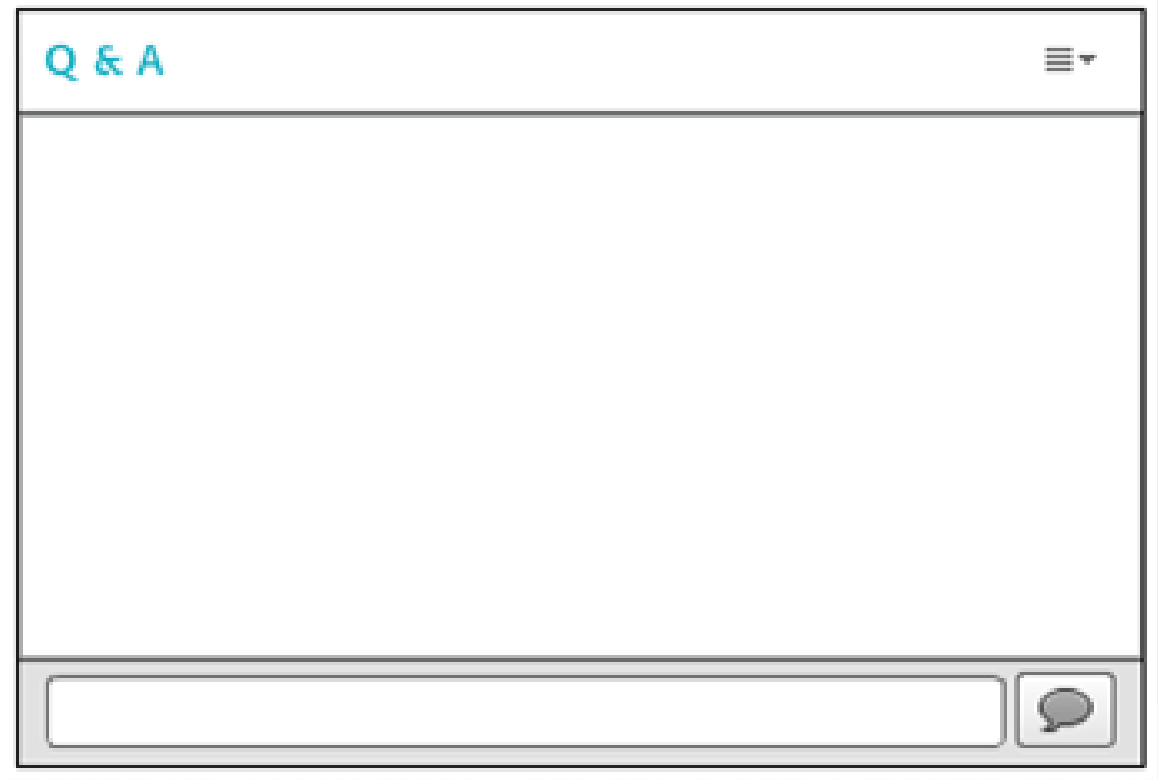


**National
Multiple Sclerosis
Society**



How to Ask Questions During the Webinar:

- Type in your question in the Q & A pod

A screenshot of a Q & A pod interface. The top section is a header bar with the text "Q & A" in blue on the left and a hamburger menu icon on the right. Below the header is a large, empty white rectangular area for questions. At the bottom of the pod is a horizontal bar containing a text input field on the left and a speech bubble icon on the right.

Rosalind Kalb, PhD



Psychologist

West Bath, ME

Janet DeClark, MA, CCC-SLP



Speech Language Pathologist

Pismo Beach, CA

Webinar Learning Objectives

- Explain the common cognitive changes that occur in MS.
- Recognize the impact of these changes on relationships, employment and communication.
- Explore and provide practical strategies to improve mood and everyday cognitive functioning.

COGNITION: What is it?

Higher level brain function

How you think about how and what you think



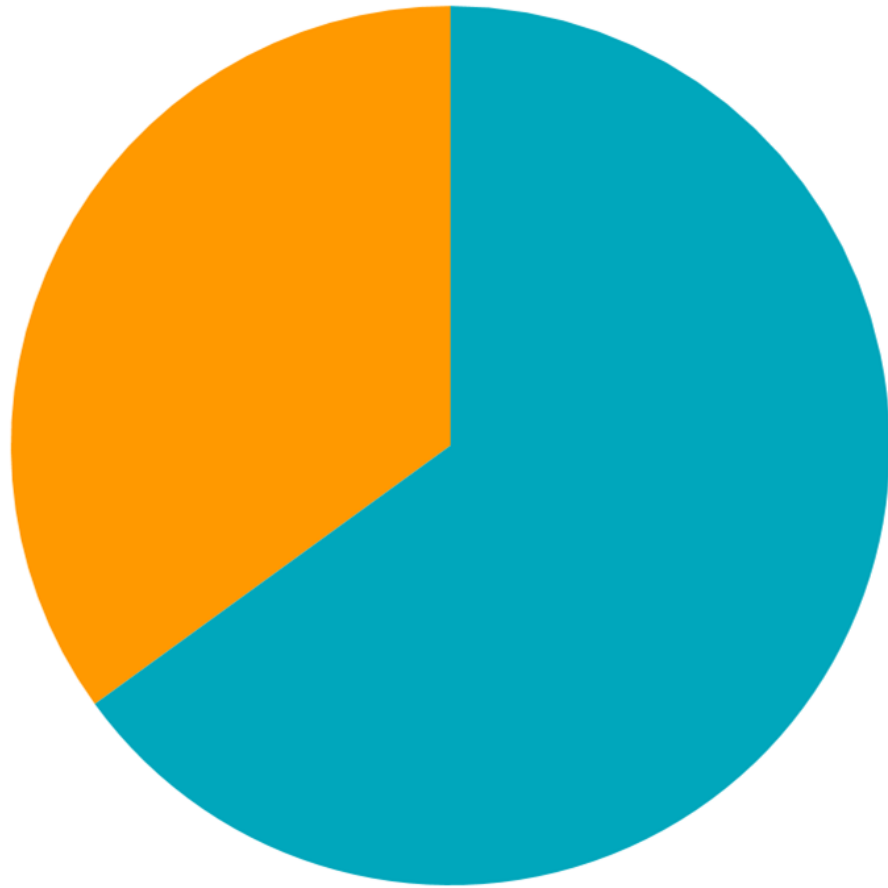
COGNITION: What is it?

How you....

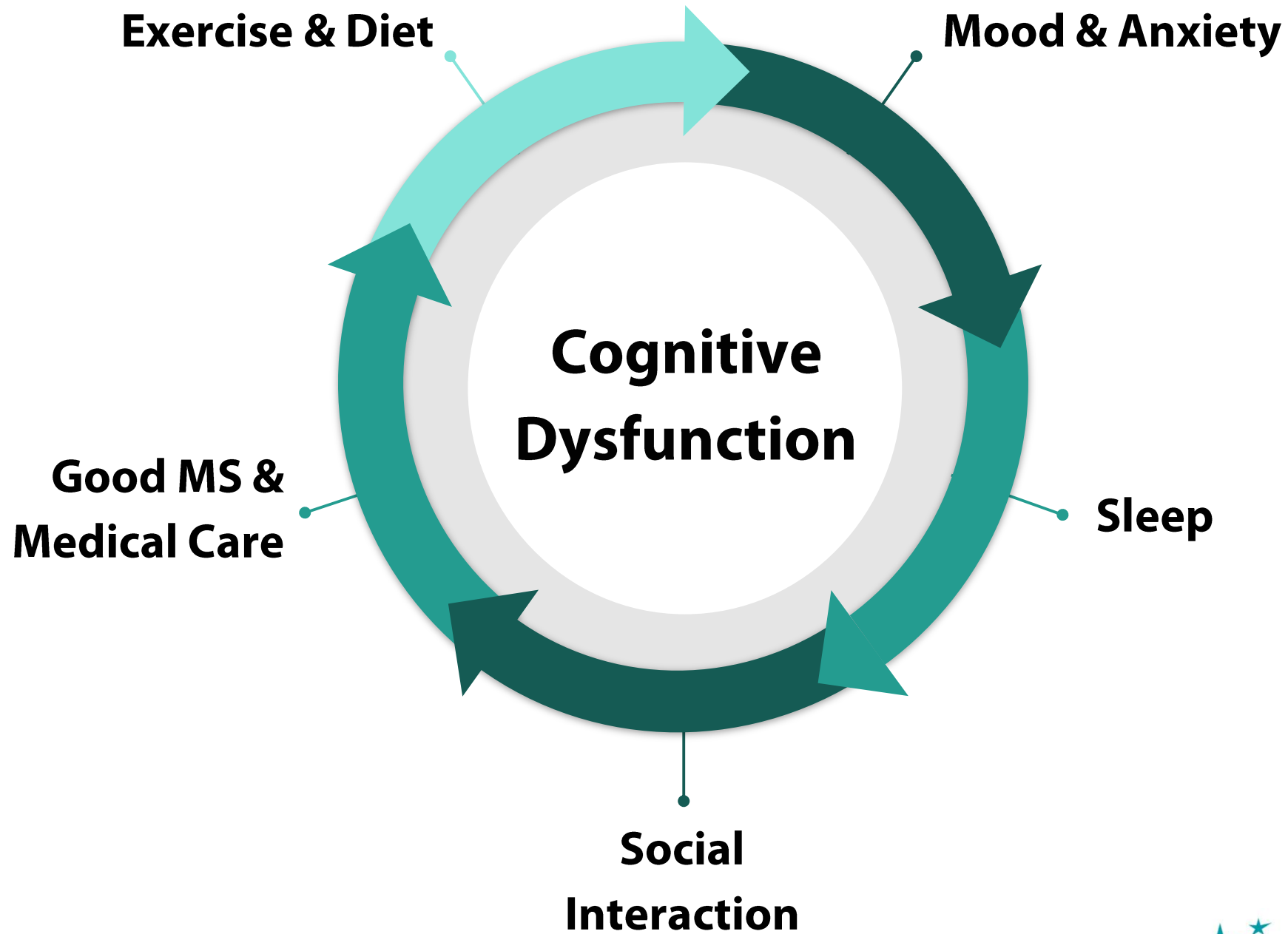
- Understand & Use Language
- Sustain/Shift Attention & Multi-task
- Learn & Remember New Information^{Meghan}
- Plan and Perform Complex Tasks
- Solve Problems & Monitor Behavior



Cognitive Changes & Other Disease Characteristics



**At least 65% of people with MS
will experience a change in
cognition**



Cognitive Changes & Other Disease Characteristics

Cognitive Changes...

- Can occur at any point in the disease course - even as a first symptom
- Unrelated to disability level, but occur more often in those with progressive disease
- Is most correlated with brain tissue loss (atrophy)

Cognitive Changes & Other Disease Characteristics

Cognitive Changes have a Significant Impact On...

- Self-esteem & self-confidence
- Employment (common cause of early departure from the workforce)
- Household activities
- Relationships
- Communication

How Many of You Have....

Grief

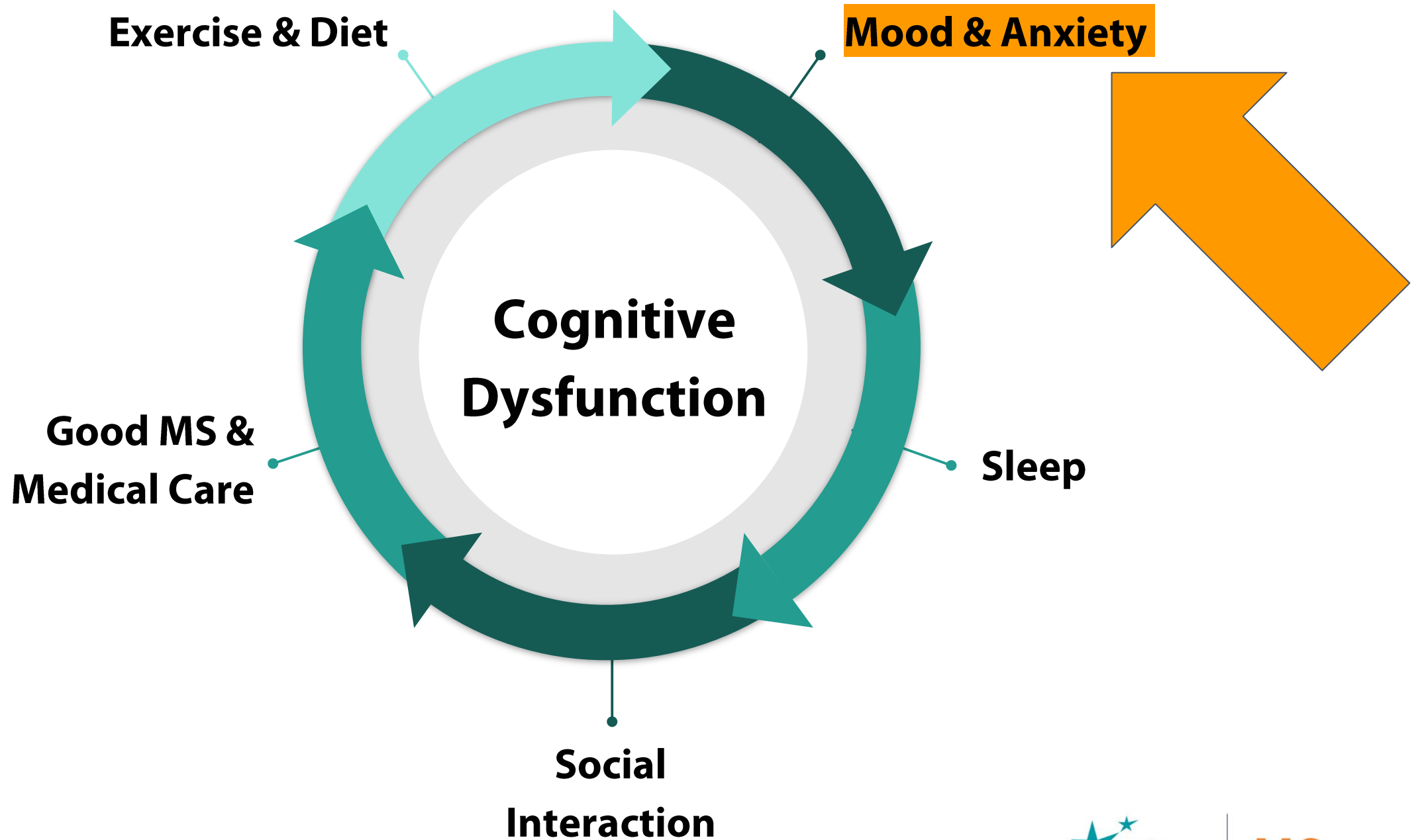
Found it difficult to think clearly after the death of a loved one.



Anxiety

Couldn't think of something simple, like a word or simple math, when put on the spot?





Hearing From Someone with MS

Susan, 45yo woman with RRMS

"I used to write, be creative, I picked up on everyone else's mistakes at work. Now I have no brain. No creative thoughts. I'm not the person I used to be. When people talk to me I don't always get it; I need them to repeat things. I wish you knew the person I used to be."

Depression & Cognition

Up to 50% of MS patients will experience depression

More common in MS than other chronic illnesses & general population

Depression can cause or exacerbate cognitive dysfunction



Depression: Treatment Options



Medications



Work with a Psychologist or Therapist:

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy

Depression: At Home Strategies

- Give yourself time to grieve
 - 20 minutes once per day
 - 5 minutes each time a thought appears
- Track your thoughts about cognition
- Talk to yourself like you would talk to a friend
- Name your top 3 strengths
- Gratitude Practice: Try the 5 Minute Journal

Hearing From Someone with MS

Dave, 60yo man with SPMS

"I don't enjoy parties or social gatherings anymore. I get anxious. I worry I won't be able to get my point across, that people will notice I can't get my words out. I worry that I'm not only isolating myself, but also my wife."

Anxiety & Cognition

Anxiety disorders are 3x greater in MS than the general population

3x

Anxiety can exacerbate cognitive dysfunction, specifically processing speed

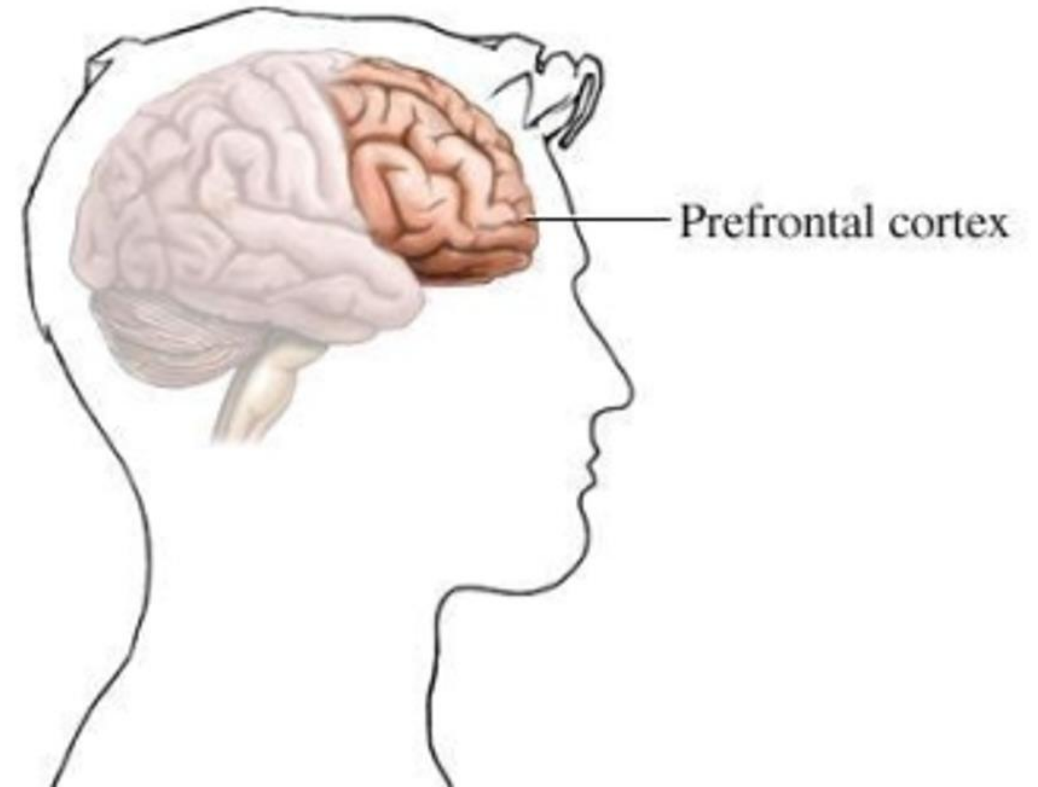


Anxiety & Cognition

HR > 100 beats per minute

↓ pre-frontal cortex

Problem solving diminishes



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Psychologist/Therapist

- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- Exposure Therapy

Self-Care

- Exercise

Anxiety: Treatment Options

Anxiety: At Home Strategies

- Take a 20 min break
- Deep breathing / relaxation
- Mindfulness
- Monitor your thoughts: Watch them pass through



Polling Question

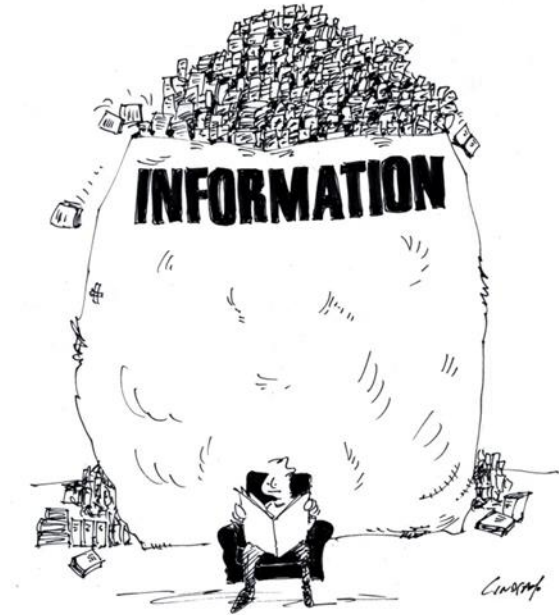
Which of these anxiety strategies do you want to try after this webinar? (check all that apply)

- Take a 20 min break
- Deep breathing / relaxation
- Mindfulness
- Monitor your thoughts: Watch them pass through

Attention/Processing

Speed and capacity can be affected.

Often able to do things done previously, but not as quickly



Attention/Processing

- I feel like I'm "a day late and a dollar short." Overwhelmed when information comes too fast or from many directions
- I feel like comprehension or a response comes too late
- I have trouble keeping up and responding quickly
- I have trouble with tasks that have time constraints
- I can't multitask anymore

Attention/Processing Strategies

Try to modify the environment to make information easier to process and attend to:

- Ask speaker to slow down
- Limit multitasking! It's overrated
- Change a task from simultaneous to sequential or alternating-
- One thing at a time instead of all at once
- Move to a quieter, less distracting place
- Request a break if overloaded. Breaks are mental/physical and restore calm and renew energy

Attention/Processing Strategies

Repeat and verify in conversation to:

- Verify what you heard is correct
- Hear it again
- Buy time

Attention/Processing Strategies

E-mail, text messages are records of conversations and information that can be referred to again, removing the pressure of having to process and recall what you heard.

Write while listening to make it a more active process.



"I occasionally need to read my tweets to remember what I was doing."

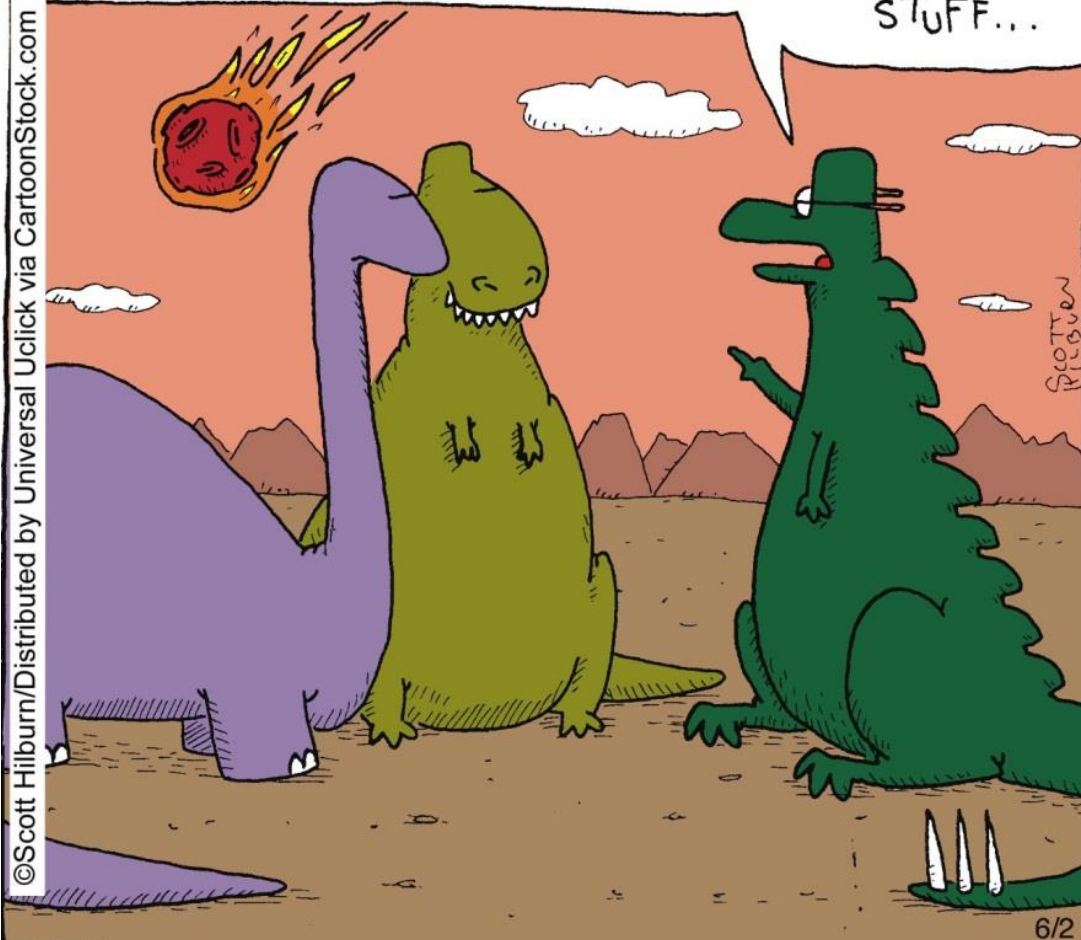
Verbal Fluency / Word Retrieval

- These functions are most likely associated with slowed processing speed, distractibility and/or trouble retrieving the word from where it is stored.
- Confrontation naming is rarely affected
- True aphasia rare

Verbal Fluency/Word Retrieval

- I feel like the right word is on the “tip of my tongue!”
- I get frustrated, give up, and withdraw from conversations
- I trip up on words that are more specific, descriptive, or meaningful (e.g “locomotive” vs. “train”)
- I find myself talking around a word (circumlocution)

HEY EVERYBODY, LOOK OUT! IT'S ONE OF THOSE...
UM... YOU KNOW... UHH, WITH THE FIRE AND
STUFF...



DESPITE ITS NAME, THE THESAURUS WAS QUITE
OFTEN AT A LOSS FOR WORDS.

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Word Retrieval Strategies

- Use gesture, pantomime- often cues the word, but can be used to communicate idea without words
- Writing/drawing- with pen or pencil or finger
- Find a synonym; use an antonym (“it’s not a _____”)
- Talk around the word-describe attributes, function, etc.
- Use the first letter of the word (“starts with a _____”)
- Think of the category the word belongs to (“African animal” for “lion”)

Polling Question

When you are having trouble thinking of the right word at the right time which strategy would you find most useful?

- Use gesture or pantomime
- Writing/drawing - with pen or pencil or finger
- Find a synonym; use an antonym
- Talk around the word-describe attributes, function, etc.
- Use the first letter of the word
- Think of the category the word belongs to

Memory

Previously thought to be trouble with retrieving stored memories, but trouble lies with learning or acquisition of new information.

Sometimes the problem is with attention and processing speed/capacity rather than memory



Memory

- I have trouble learning or recalling new information
- I misplace things
- I forget conversations or dialogue
- I forget appointments
- I forget why I entered a room

Memory Strategies

Combine all senses to help store what needs to be recalled later:

- See it, Say it, Hear it, Write it, Do it
- *“Show Me....” “Is this Right?” “Let me Practice it.” “Please Write it Down.”*

Memory Strategies

- Impaired attention and slowed processing play a large role *You can't remember what you couldn't attend to or process in the first place*
- *"Say it Again, Please."**"A Little Slower."**"One Thing at a Time."**"Can we Talk in a Quieter Place?"**"I Need a Short Break"*
- Small changes can yield BIG benefits. Functional memory can often be improved with better organization strategies

Executive Functioning

- Difficulty planning and prioritizing
- Trouble organizing and managing time
- Inability to get started on a project
- Trouble self-monitoring emotions or modifying behavior in response to changing situations
- Difficulty maintaining topic

Executive Functioning

- I feel overwhelmed by large work or home projects
- I miss deadlines, lose track of bills and pay them late
- I get lost when trying to tell a story
- I find myself saying the wrong thing at the wrong time

Executive Function/Memory Strategies

- Consolidate and centralize! Designate one place in your home as the “Grand Central” information center.
- Make a place for mail, bills, phone messages, to-do lists, keys, wallet, shopping lists, and more.
- Put up a calendar large enough to keep track of everyone’s appointments, activities, and social engagements, with pens or markers hanging right beside it.
- Make sure information on main calendar is also on portable calendar, be it day planner or cellphone







September

2019

Bryntan

		Mom				
1	Sunday					
2	Monday 					
3	Tuesday					
4	Wednesday					
5	Thursday					
6	Friday 					
7	Saturday					
8	Sunday <small>Grandparents Day</small>					
9	Monday					
10	Tuesday					
11	Wednesday 					
12	Thursday					
13	Friday					
14	Saturday					
15	Sunday					
16	Monday 					
17	Tuesday					
18	Wednesday					
19	Thursday					
20	Friday 					
21	Saturday <small>International Day of Peace</small>					
22	Sunday					
23	Monday <small>Queen's Birthday (UK, Australia) September Equinox (US, UK)</small>					
24	Tuesday					
25	Wednesday					
26	Thursday 					
27	Friday					
28	Saturday					
29	Sunday <small>Rosh Hashanah begins at sundown</small>					
30	Monday					

What Not to Do...

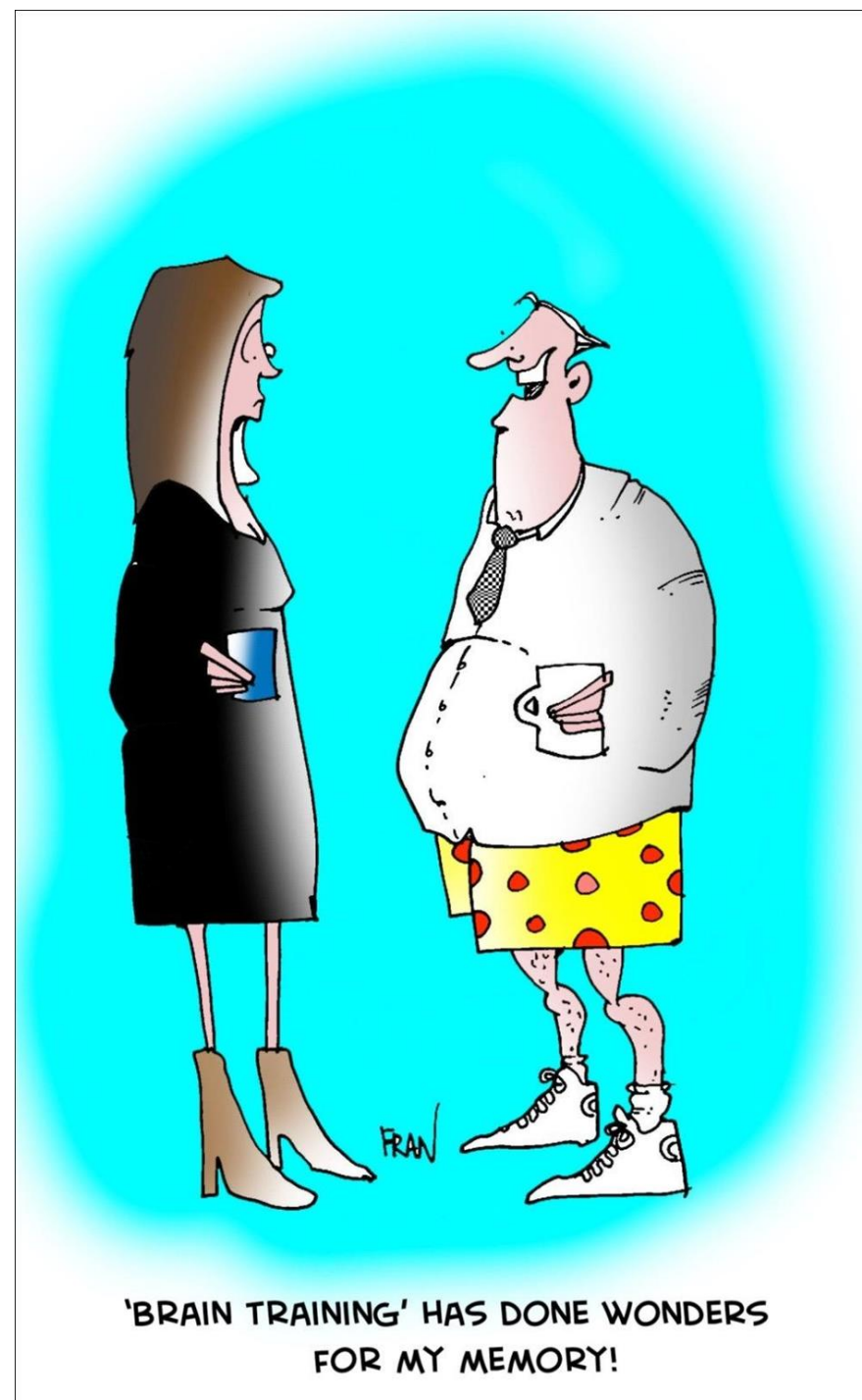


Be Aware of Fatigue

- Prioritize parts of a task: Do highest priority first and when less likely to be fatigued.
- Schedule time each day to attack large, overwhelming projects
- Put a time limit (e.g. 15 minutes) on a task, then take a break
- Limit visual and auditory distractions
- Don't try to push through cognitive or physical fatigue. Try to maintain consistency of energy

And about those brain games...

There is, "little evidence that playing brain games improves underlying broad cognitive abilities, or that it enables one to better navigate a complex realm of everyday life," according to a joint statement released by the Stanford Center for Longevity and Max Planck Institute of Human Development on 10/20/2014.



When to Get Help

- Difficulty finding the right words
- Trouble remembering what to do on the job or during daily routines at home
- Difficulty making decisions or showing poor judgment
- Difficulty keeping up with tasks or conversations
- Mild symptoms can have a big impact on ADL's
- People with MS leave the workforce because of cognitive and fatigue issues more than for mobility issues

How to Get Help

- Speak to your physician about your concerns
- Think about what problems you are having in terms of function. For example, if you have memory problems, do they manifest themselves in forgetting conversations? Forgetting appointments? Forgetting words?
- Depression has a significant effect on cognition. Treating your mental health can improve your cognitive health as well.

Key Take-Aways

- **Mood and cognitive changes** are common over the disease course
 - Being on alert & reporting to your healthcare provider will help ensure prompt assessment/treatment
- Individually and together, **mood and cognitive changes** impact daily life
 - Self-image, relationships, performance, quality of life
- **Mood and cognitive symptoms** are among the most difficult for support partners to understand
- Depression is one of the most treatable symptoms of MS

Key Take-Aways

- Compensatory strategies can improve function
 - Giving yourself permission to do things differently is the key to success
- Your support system and healthcare team can help -- there is no need to tackle these issues alone

Q&A



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CELEBRATING 5 YEARS OF

#MySupportHero

Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Month

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Join the Conversation!

Show appreciation for your support heroes on social media using **#MySupportHero**

Visit AboveMS.com
for more details

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KICK MS

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Webinar Series



Fatigue and Sleep

Tuesday, April 14, 2020

Presented by:



Genentech

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