

## **Self-Management Strategies**

# **Motivation**

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- Set specific, attainable goals
- Breakdown large goals into small ones
- Think of it as doing a favor for your future self
- Establish a routine
- Prioritize tasks based on urgency
- Reward yourself- this could be anything from an iced coffee to a weekend away
- Surround yourself with supportive people
- Ask yourself: How can I make this task more enjoyable?
- Focus on progress, not perfection

## Self-Management Strategies Organization & Time Management

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- Recognize what works for you– do you prefer a paper calendar or a phone calendar?
- Use typical office supplies like Post-its, desktop calendars, markerboards, etc.
- Rely on support from family and friends
- Try using a family calendar so everyone knows about upcoming appointments.
- Prioritize tasks based on urgency
- Set alarms using your phone
- Create a schedule or routine that works for YOU

## Self-Management Strategies Memory & Attention

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- Brain games such as sudoku and word finds
- Listen to music and try to remember the lyrics, or consider music therapy
- Setting boundaries that allow you to manage distractions
- Limit how many tasks you have in one day, i.e. planning your day around doing one thing at a time to avoid overstimulation
- Practice meditation and deep breathing
- Create an association in your brain with the thing you are trying to remember, i.e. creating a rhyme, singing a song, relating the task to a bigger task you won't forget to do.

## **Self-Management Strategies**

# **Memory & Attention**

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- Set up your routine to include things you tend to forget, such as putting your morning medicine next to the coffee pot and your evening medicines next to your bed.
- Exercise! Moving your body is also great for your brain.
- Minimize multitasking
- Listen to others with as little distraction as possible
- Consider seeking professional assistance

## **Self-Management Strategies**

# **Cognitive Processing**

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- Take notes or draw diagrams
- Slow down, give yourself time to process the information
- Pause and ask yourself if you have fully completed a task before moving on
- Break down tasks into small chunks
- Eat right and stay hydrated.
- Practice deep breathing exercises
- Get a good night's sleep. If sleep is a struggle be sure to talk to your doctor.
- Engage in brain-stimulating activities

## Self-Management Strategies

# Problem-Solving

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- Think of the problem as being “over there”. It is not a problem with you, anyone, or anything else.
- Work collaboratively with others to address the problem
- Approach the problem with a calm and rational mindset, focusing on facts.
- Prioritize tangible solutions. What actions can you take?
- Lean on your support system
- Take breaks to gain perspective

## **Self-Management Strategies**

# **Problem-Solving**

**(continued)**

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- Brainstorm solutions and evaluate the pros and cons of each solution
- Test solutions through trial and error
- Reflect on past successes. What worked previously? Can this be applied here?
- Recognize if the issue is something you don't have control over or cannot be changed
- Determine your goals and the steps it will take to get there.

## **Self-Management Strategies**

# **Social Interactions**

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- Inform others of your injury
- Set boundaries that make you feel comfortable
- Recognize what works for you and what doesn't, i.e. large crowds, music, etc.
- Pace yourself to maintain energy, focus, and positivity
- Use visual aids or other adaptive tools if verbal expression is challenging
- Take breaks to prevent social fatigue
- Use relaxation techniques such as meditation, breathing, etc.



## **Self-Management Strategies**

# **Social Interactions**

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- Prepare topics or questions for an upcoming social interaction
- Seek out support environments such as support groups
- Use humor and positivity to develop healthy connections
- Pay attention to non-verbal cues like body language and facial expressions
- Reflect on past social interactions, what worked and what didn't?

## **Self-Management Strategies**

# **Motor Skills**

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- Go as fast or as slow as you need
- Evaluate your comfort level with each movement
- Research adaptive equipment that can make movements smoother and safer
- Consider compensating with the other side of the body, i.e. learning to write with your other hand
- Engage in activities that promote hand-eye coordination, or movements that cross the mid-line of the body
- Include stretching to increase flexibility and range of motion

## **Self-Management Strategies**

# **Motor Skills**

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- Include stretching to increase flexibility and range of motion
- Consult a physical therapist or occupational therapist for a personalized treatment plan
- Practice persistence and patience
- Celebrate little victories because any progress is still progress!
- Stay consistent with your exercises

## Self-Management Strategies Cooking & Grocery Shopping

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- Use all of your senses! Pay attention to temperature, smells, sounds, and movement.
- Take advantage of grocery pickup or delivery services
- Look for stores that offer sensory-friendly hours
- Make a list in a form that works for you (paper, phone, etc), Organize the list to match the store layout to ensure you don't miss anything.
- Have support on standby for assistance or support. Whether that's a friend waiting in line at the register or a spouse to help stir things.
- Consider using tools such as earplugs, headphones, or sunglasses to reduce sensory overload

## **Self-Management Strategies**

# **Cooking & Grocery Shopping**

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- Use adaptive kitchen equipment such as large grips on utensils, cutting boards with built-in prongs, etc.
- Experiment with grocery environments that work best for you, such as going to a smaller market, or a large “club” store.
- Schedule shopping trips for when you feel the most energized
- Take breaks as you need them
- Adjust meal planning so that it works for your skills. Does it need to be 5 ingredients or less? Does it need to be fast? Do you only use the stovetop?
- Involve family members in meal planning and meal prep

## **Self-Management Strategies**

### **Driving**

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- Plan your trip to include breaks and rest in order to minimize fatigue
- Travel with someone who understands your needs
- Adjust your environment to your comfort such as turning the music on or off, adjusting your seat, etc.
- Consider the type of roads you are comfortable driving on, i.e. city, rural, or interstate
- Utilize technology such as GPS
- Stay up to date on weather and road conditions
- Avoid distractions
- Ensure you are alert and well-rested
- Consider enrolling in a defensive driving course to enhance your skills

## Self-Management Strategies

# Fatigue

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- Understand your limits and respect them.
- Take breaks, even when you think you don't need to
- Talk to your doctor about your fatigue
- Practice good sleep hygiene. Create a relaxing bedtime routine, avoid screens before bed, etc.
- Eat a balanced diet, avoid consuming caffeine or sugary foods near bedtime
- Engage in regular physical activity such as walking, swimming, cycling, yoga, etc.
- Learn your body's warning signs of physical or cognitive fatigue
- Avoid overfilling your schedule
- Maintain structure in your day to conserve energy

## **Self-Management Strategies**

# **Emotional & Behavioral Regulation**

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- Consider counseling to develop health strategies to managing emotions
- Journal to process feelings and gain insight into emotional patterns or triggers
- Use meditation or breathing exercises to practice mindfulness and reduce stress
- Practice self-care everyday by engaging in activities that bring you joy
- Identify negative thought patterns and work towards replacing them with positive thought patterns



## **Self-Management Strategies Emotional & Behavioral Regulation**

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- Cultivate a strong support network
- Set and enforce boundaries that protect your emotional well-being
- Engage in physical activity that releases pent up emotions
- Practice gratitude by writing down three things you are grateful for everyday
- Seek out meaningful connections
- Be patient with yourself