

St. Jude's Brain Injury 101: Cognitive Training

WEEK 8

Executive Functions: Flexibility & Problem Solving



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Check-in's: How was your week?
Difficulties using these? Brainstorm solutions.

Strategy 1: Home for your stuff



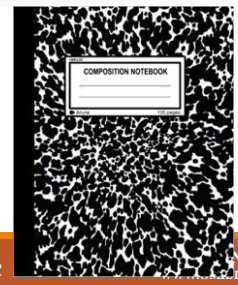
Strategy 2: Automatic Places



Strategy 3: Calendar



Strategy 4: Notebook (journal)



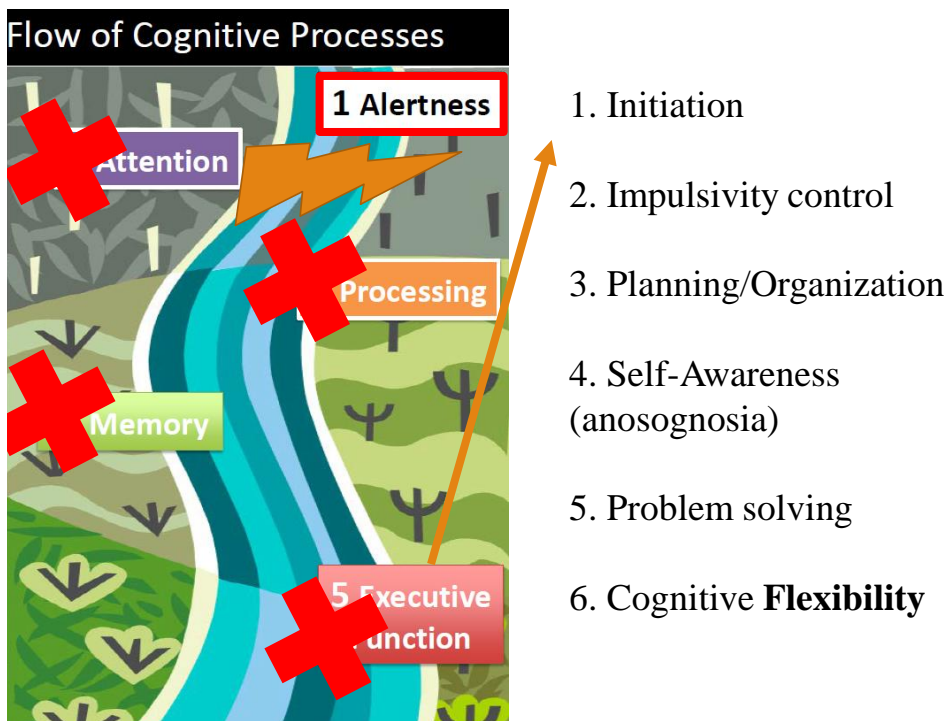
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Where is YOUR difficulty?

1. Processes reviewed thus far:
 1. Alertness
 2. Attention
 3. Information Processing (ENCODING)
 4. Memory (STORAGE)
 5. Memory RETRIEVAL)

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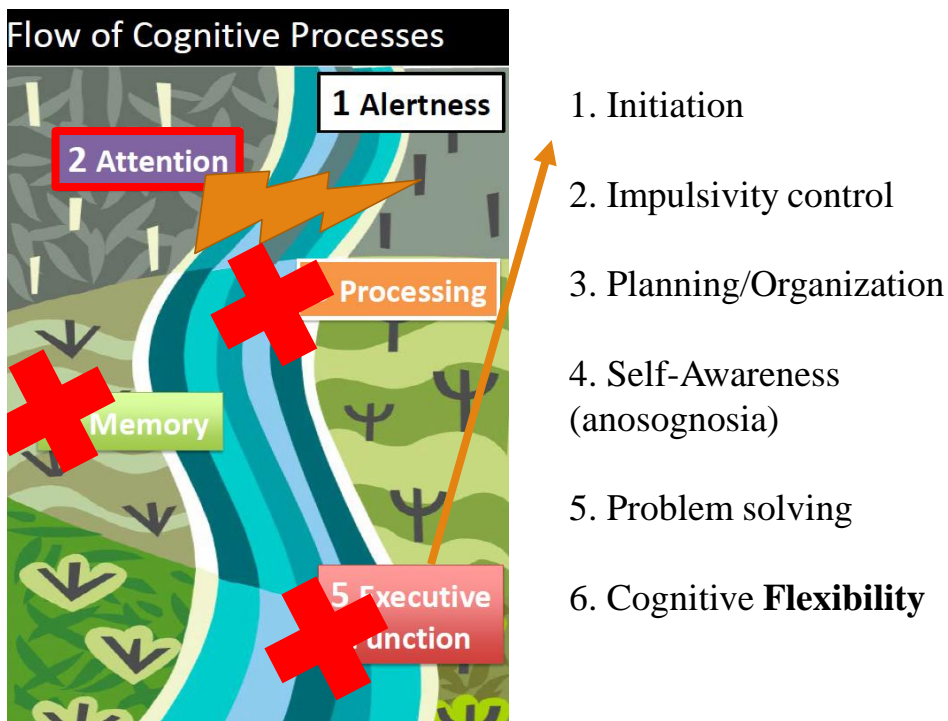


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How do you stay Alert:

1. Staying Awake
2. Sleeping adequately
 1. Falling asleep?
 2. Staying asleep?

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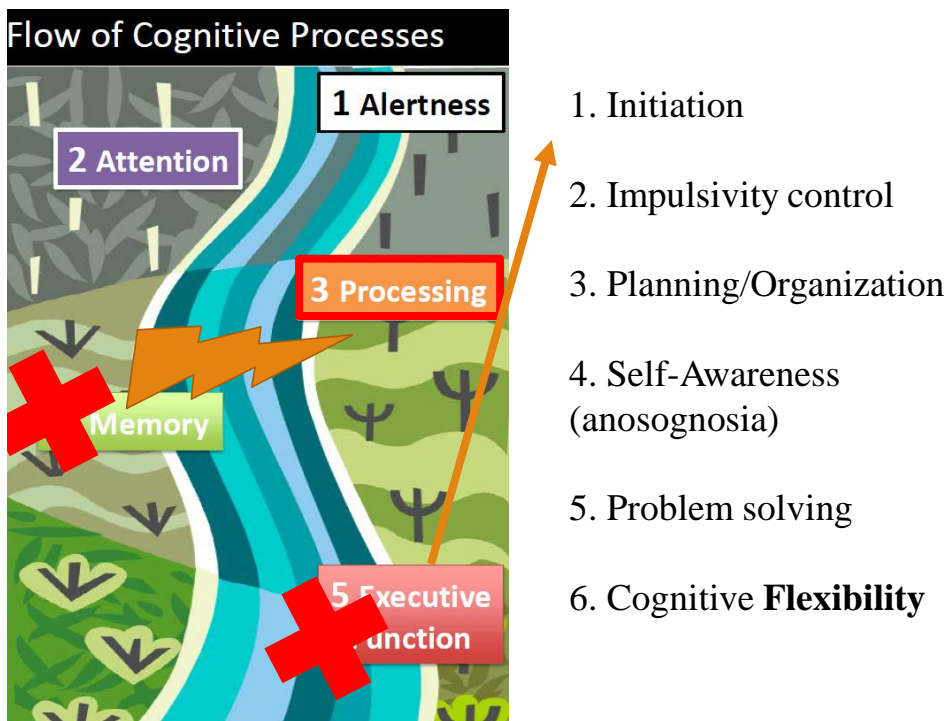


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How do you pay attention?

1. Listen Actively
2. Eliminate Distractions
 1. Pain can be a distraction (physical & emotional)
3. Asking questions
4. Paraphrase (reverse paraphrase)
5. Nootropics/supplements
 1. Rhodiola Rosea
 2. 5-HTP
6. Medications
 1. Adderall, Vyvanse, Concerta

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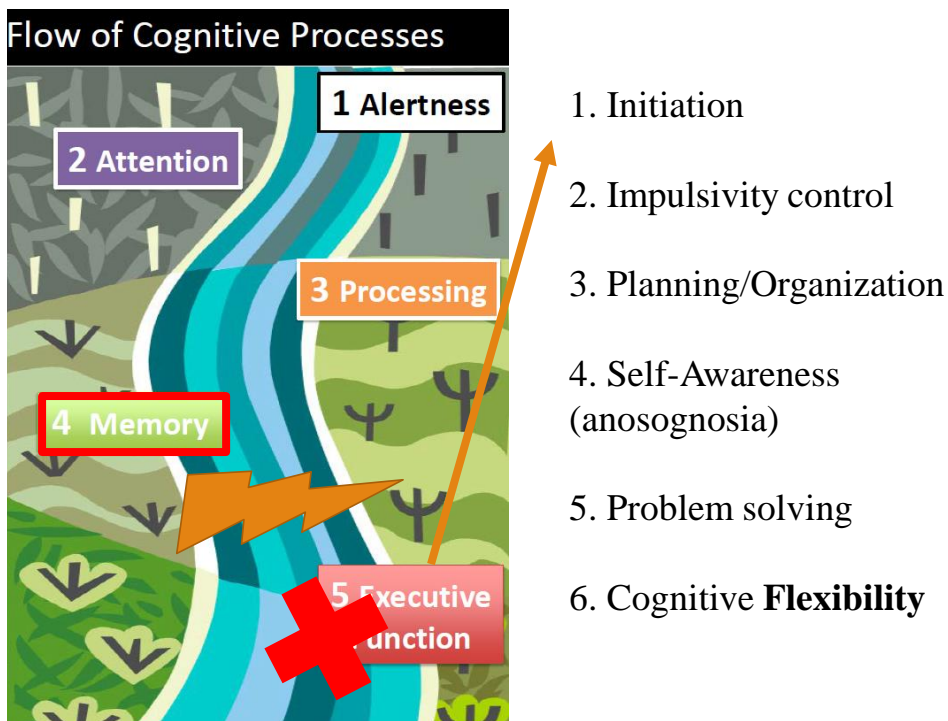


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What helps your info processing?

1. Encoding
 - 1.
2. Storage
 - 1.
3. Retrieval
 - 1.

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What helps you remember?

1. Reminders
 1. Stickys on the steerin wheel
 2. Bag on the door handle
 3. Dry erase marker on the bathroom mirror
2. Alarms
 1. Egg timer (every 30 minutes)
3. Journal/Notebook
 1. Practice the skills!
4. Calendar
5. Strategies
 1. Text/call a friend

Memory Retrieval

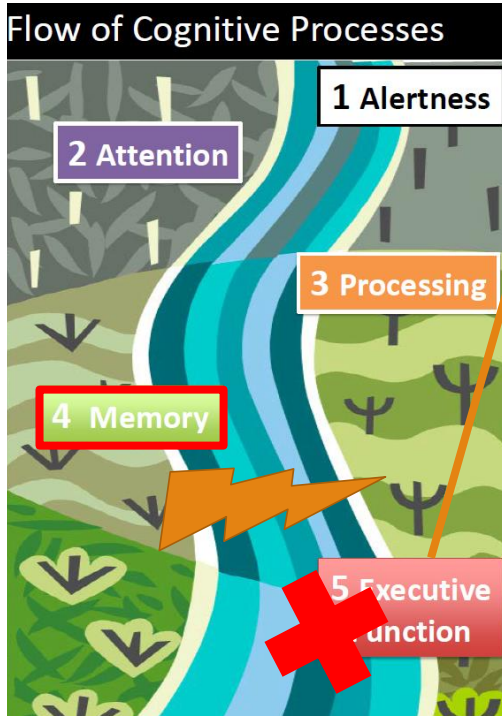
1. Retrieval problems mean that the information is in your brain somewhere
2. but you have difficulty getting it out
 1. Example: that “on the tip of your tongue”
 2. Or after someone yells at you, do you remember that they did say something like that??
3. If your immediate memory is good, then you can learn, but may have difficulties with recall
4. If delayed is good, then you may have difficulties managing stress/coping

Where is YOUR difficulty?

1. Where is your cognitive ability breaking down?
 1. Not sure??
 2. Use your journal to track Successes & “Learning Opportunities!”
2. Successes??
3. Learning Opportunities??

Break! =)

5 MINUTES



1. Initiation
2. Impulsivity control
3. Planning/Organization
4. Self-Awareness (anosognosia)
- 5. Mental Flexibility**

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COGNITIVE FLEXIBILITY

the ability to think flexibly

Problem-solving:

The ability to navigate through problem-space.

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Cognitive Flexibility and Problem-Solving

1. Sometimes, people have trouble with *problem solving* because their thinking style can be rigid.
 1. For example, getting “stuck” on an idea
2. Central to Flexibility:
 1. **RESILIENCE**
 2. **GRIT**
 3. **GROWTH MINDSET**

Cognitive Flexibility and Problem-Solving

1. We will use a *problem-solving method* that will help you think as flexibly as possible.
2. One of the key parts of the *problem-solving method* is **brainstorming**.

The 6-step problem solving method (DBESTE):

1. Define the problem.
2. Brainstorm solutions to the problem.
3. Evaluate each solution in terms of ease of implementation, costs and benefits, and likely consequences.
4. Select a solution to try.
5. Try the solution.
6. Evaluate the solution: Did it work? Do you need to try another one? If so, go back to step 4.

Brainstorming

1. **Brainstorming** just means coming up with as many ideas as possible on a particular topic. Keep these guidelines in mind for effective **brainstorming**:
2. Think up as many ideas as possible **without making judgments** about them.
3. Don't edit out any ideas because they seem silly or bad.
4. Just let the ideas keep coming because you never know when a "silly" idea will trigger a good one.
5. **Let's practice.** Try to come up with as many ideas as possible for...

Disclosing your brain injury:


Come up with as many solutions as possible

Write them down and remember not to evaluate your ideas.

You may notice that some silly or impractical ideas

- may trigger some good ideas.

1. Telling every detail about what occurred? Or just highlights?
2. Telling them I have a problem?
3. Telling them I have strengths?
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.



It depends on
the situation,
right?

Breakout Exercise: Introducing Your Brain Injury

1. We will break into groups of 3 and practice these skills in 3 ROUNDS:
 1. First, **only** talk about how it has made life difficult.
 2. Second, on **only** talk about how it has **made you stronger!**
 - A. Use your experiences of survival through the injury as a **STRENGTH** instead of a weakness
 3. Third, do the introduction again but for a job interview
2. How were your introductions? Did they differ from round to round?
3. What situations would change your answer?

The 6-step problem solving method (DBESTE)

1. **Define** the problem.
2. **Brainstorm** solutions to the problem.
3. **Evaluate** each solution in terms of ease of implementation, costs and benefits, and likely consequences.
4. **Select** a solution to try.
5. **Try** the solution.
6. **Evaluate** the solution: Did it work? Do you need to try another one? If so, go back to step 4.

Your Brain Injury experience (DBESTE)

**DIFFICULTIES WITH FORGIVENESS?
OTHERS? YOURSELF? FEELING UNFAIRNESS?
FALSE MEMORIES? CONFABULATION?
COGNITIVE INFLEXIBILITY?!**

Executive dysfunction

1. The most crippling and often the most intractable disorders associated with severe TBI
2. involve capacities for self-determination, self-direction, and self-control and regulation
3. depend on intact awareness of one's self and surroundings (anosognosia)



Jodi House Brain Injury Support Center and St. Jude
Brain Injury Network present

Weekly Virtual Support Group for Brain Injury Survivors

A unique opportunity for brain injury survivors across the state of California to connect with one another virtually, in a show of strength and solidarity. All are welcome as we come together to find out that we are not alone.

Every Friday
11 AM- 1:00 PM **PST**

To access the group via webcam, use this link:

<https://zoom.us/j/9956799150>.

Alternatively, you can call into the meeting at

1-669-900-6833.

The meeting ID is **995 679 9150**.

Email:

Daniel.Ignacio@stjoe.org

For updates/services/information

On Head Injury treatment in

Orange County

www.tbioc.org

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See you next Saturday
11-1 pm PST =)
& Individual during
the week!

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