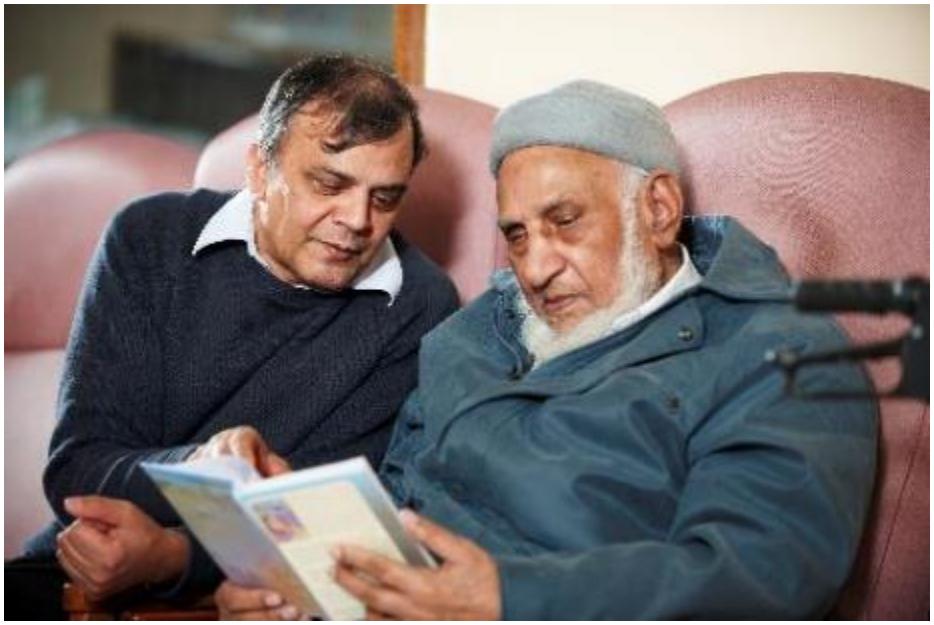
START

Str**a**tegies for **R**ela**t**ives

Session 2:

Reasons for changes in behaviour



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Plan for today's session

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Recap on session 1: Stress and wellbeing

We talked about:

- Memory loss
- Behaviour and emotions
- Managing the stress that caring can bring
- Social support
- Managing stress 1: The signal breath

Q! **Did you have a chance to complete the behaviour record?**

• How did it go? • What went well? • Did you notice any patterns?	• What do you think got in the way? • What would make it easier in the future?

Why Is The Behaviour Occurring?

- For someone with memory problems, there may be several reasons why a behaviour occurs. Trying to understand why they are happening, helps understand how to reduce these behaviours.

- Some people with memory problems have trouble understanding their feelings or expressing themselves.

- Your relative may check repeatedly when you are coming home because they feel lonely, bored or worried when they are on their own.

> *Key Point:* **Behaviours have a cause, it does not mean they are done on purpose.**

- Often there will be several causes. Working out what is causing each behaviour helps us to know what to do. Some common causes are:
  - Forgetfulness
  - No longer knowing what is acceptable
  - Frustration
  - Boredom and not being able to think of or organise something to do
  - Difficulty communicating when they are upset

Understanding the Causes of Behaviour

Key Point: **Describing in detail what is happening can help us to understand behaviour and work out how to make it happen less.**

Talking point:

Now let's look at the behaviour record again, and try to answer these questions. Which behaviour would you like to focus on?

- *Q* Does the behaviour happen around the same time of the day?
- *Q* What is your relative trying to communicate?
- *Q* Is your relative frustrated, frightened or upset?
- *Q* Is your relative restless and trying to find something to do?
- *Q* Is your relative trying to get away from something you are asking her/him to do?

Thinking of Physical Problems

- There may be physical problems that are causing changes in your relative's behavior, but they may not always be able to tell you or know what is wrong. These may include:

1. **Medical conditions:** e.g. urinary tract infections (symptoms are burning pain on passing urine, urinating more frequently, cloudy or different smelling urine), constipation, pain or fever.

2. **Medication side-effects,** do they have any new medication?

3. **Sensory impairments,** e.g. hearing loss or poor vision

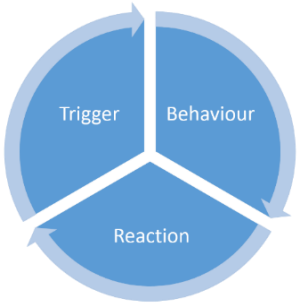
Key Point: **It is important that these problems are diagnosed and treated so *always* contact your relative's doctor if there is sudden change in their functioning.**

The Trigger-Behaviour-Reaction cycle

The first step in identifying the cause of someone's behaviour is to pay attention to what happens before and after the behaviour.

TRIGGERS occur before the behaviour and can be any of the following:

- An event or activity, such as *noise* or a *demand* on the person (e.g. bathing).
- General things that affect a person for a long period of time (e.g. time of day, season, and physical illness).
- Cues in the environment, such as keys to the car may remind someone of driving or the presence of another person.



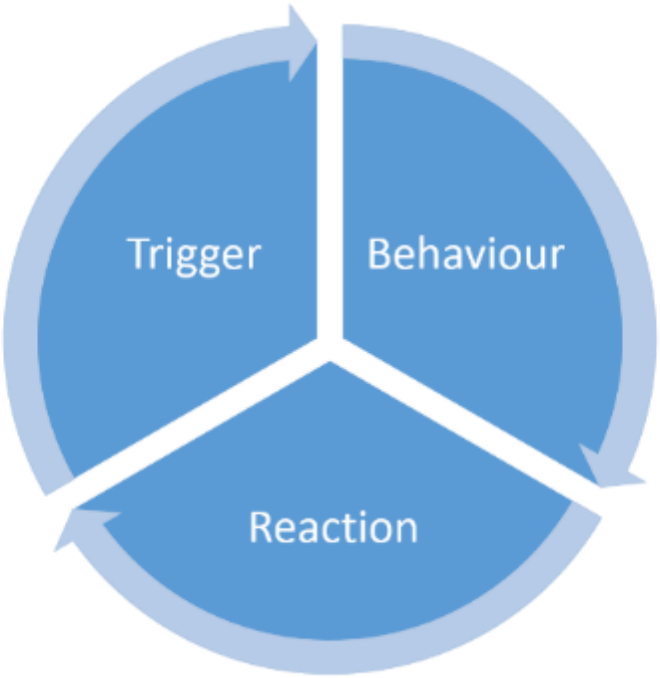
BEHAVIOUR is what your relative does or what you do.

REACTIONS occur immediately after the behaviour.

They include what you do, how you feel, what the person you care for does. In other words, what happens after the behaviour.

Key Point: **Changing how we react to behaviours can help change the behaviour.**

It is helpful to think about this as a **Trigger-Behaviour-Reaction Cycle:**



The only things you have control over are triggers and reactions. Occasionally, we can't change the triggers. During these times, changing how *you* react to the behaviour may improve the situation.

Key Point: **Many people with memory problems struggle to change behaviour as learning new information and judging what is happening is hard.**

Example

When John goes to the shops with his brother Peter, it is often busy or noisy. Peter finds this confusing, gets upset and wants to go home. Although John cannot change the environment, he can reassure Peter and remain calm. As a result, Peter is less distressed and is able to continue shopping with John.

Recording the Trigger-Behaviour-Reaction cycle

Let's look at the example below and think about it in more detail:

Example

Every morning at 8am, Jim gets the car keys from the key hook and tells his wife Pat, "I am going out for a drive"
Pat reminds him that he no longer has a driving license and is not allowed to drive. Jim responds by shouting "I don't know what you are talking about" and walks towards to car. Pat says, "Alright, let's go for a ride but let me drive". Jim lets Pat drive. Pat is upset with herself".

Date/Day of week	Time	Person(s) present	Trigger	Behaviour	Reaction
Every morning	8am	Pat Jim	Jim sees the car keys on the hook	Jim takes keys and says he is going out	Pat feels upset and reminds him he can't drive
			Pat reminds Jim that he has no driving licence and is not allowed to drive	Jim shouts and walks towards the car	Pat takes Jim for a drive

Exercise: Let's complete this Behaviour Record now, using the behaviour you identified earlier (see page 6). There are some questions on the next page to help.

Day	Morning/Afternoon /Night	Who was there?	Trigger	Behaviour	Reaction	What strategy did you try?	What happened?

Extra Behaviour Record

Day	Morning/Afternoon /Night	Who was there?	Trigger	Behaviour	Reaction	What strategy did you try?	What happened?

When completing the Behaviour Record, keep in mind the following questions:

To work out the **triggers**:

1. What time of day was it?
2. Was the environment quiet or noisy?
3. Was the environment dark or bright?
4. Was your relative alone? If not, who else was there?
5. What was happening? e.g. bathing, giving medications, or having a meal?
6. Did your relative want something such as food or drink, company or quiet?
7. Did they seem upset?

To work out the **reaction**:

8. Did you stop what was happening (e.g. bathing, giving medications, and having a meal)?
9. Did your relative get what they wanted (e.g. food or drink, company or quiet)?
10. Did your level of stress increase or decrease?

Changing Behaviour

Let's talk about how we can change behaviours:

Changing the ***trigger***

Changing our ***reactions***

Changing the ***trigger and our reactions***

We will begin with an example:

Example

It is three o'clock in the morning and Susan wakes up and begins to walk around the house. Jane, her daughter, is sleeping. Susan paces throughout the house and wakes Jane up. Jane is upset, she has a long day at work tomorrow. Jane says, "Mum, you need to go back to bed, it is 3 am." Susan says, "I am not sleepy." Jane shouts, "I can't take this anymore." Susan starts to cry.

Trigger	Behaviour	Reaction
Susan wakes up at 3 am. Jane is sleeping. Susan does not want to go to bed, she is not sleepy	Susan wanders at 3 am Jane wakes up.	Jane tells her Mum to go to sleep. Jane shouts. Susan cries.

Talking point:

If Jane wants to keep her Mum from wandering at 3am, what can she do?

1. Change the T (*trigger*):

* If the waking is new, make an appointment with Susan's doctor to find out if there is a medical reason for her trouble sleeping (e.g. urinary tract infection, pain).

If there is no medical problem, then:

* Plan some activities to keep Susan awake during the day so she is tired at night. Don't let her nap!

* Encourage Susan to exercise during the day (e.g., walking, stretching).

* Develop a bedtime routine that takes place at the same time every night.

* Do not give Susan caffeine after midday (have decaffeinated tea or coffee instead).

2. Change the R (*reaction)*:

* Gently remind Susan that it is dark outside and time to go to sleep; lead her back to bed; play soothing music or do something else that will help Susan to relax.

* Jane could remind herself to approach calmly and focus on the goal (getting Susan back to sleep). This way, she will use her energy in a positive manner to problem-solve the situation, rather than reacting emotionally.

Example
Behaviour: Repetitive questioning

After breakfast Joe asks his wife, Sandy, “What are you doing?” Sandy says, “I am cleaning up.” Five minutes later, Joe asks Sandy, “What are you doing?” Sandy says, “Washing the dishes.” Five minutes later, Joe asks, “What are you doing?” Sandy begins to get annoyed and says, “I just told you, I am doing the dishes. Stop asking me the same question.”
Five minutes later Joe asks, “What are you doing?” Sandy is frustrated and feels helpless.

Using Joe’s example, let’s work through this together:

First, identify the: **T**rigger → **B**ehaviour → **R**eaction

What could be the purpose of Joe’s behaviour?

If Sandy wants to reduce the questioning, what strategies could she use to prevent Joe’s behaviour from being triggered?

How might Sandy react differently?

Managing Stress 2:

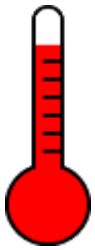
Focused breathing

Focused Breathing is a useful stress reduction technique:

- It can relax you, reducing the tension and stress that can come from caring.
- It can help you to briefly focus on yourself, and not on caring.
- It can help you sleep after a stressful day.
- Focused breathing may also be a way for your relative to get relaxed before bed time.
- It can help you continue to care well

Stress Rating Before Exercise

First, please rate your stress or tension right now before we practice **Focused Breathing**.



5 = Terribly tense
4 = Really tense
3 = Moderately tense
2 = Slightly tense
1 = Not at all tense

Q! **On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate your tension? _____**

Focused Breathing: Practice Session

"You should begin this exercise by getting yourself into a comfortable position in your chair... Just settle back, and let the chair completely support your body… Feel yourself sinking into the chair, allowing all of your muscles to go loose and relax...

Now, take in a deep, signal breath, filling your lungs with air... holding it in until you notice a little tension building in your chest and then let the air out slowly, relaxing as you do... Close your eyes and take in another breath, holding the air in until you feel the tension, and then relax, let go completely... Now, let your breathing return to a normal and natural rhythm...

Start to focus your mind on your breathing... Become very aware of your breathing. Pay close and careful attention to each and every breath... Just watch it... Observe it... Simply become aware of how easily and naturally your body breathes by itself, free and easy, in and out...

At all times your body is breathing by itself, you don't even have to think about it, your body breathes automatically, at all times, whether you are sound asleep or wide awake, aware or unaware... as long as you are alive, you are constantly breathing...

And all you have to do right now is to simply become aware of this process, this process of your body breathing by itself... Notice the steady rhythm... the air coming in and going out again... *[Pause]*

Allow your breathing to be natural and free... without trying to change and without trying to interfere... If your breathing is slow, let it be slow... If it is deep, let it be deep... If your breathing is shallow, let it be shallow... Just watch your body breathing by itself...

Be aware of the cool air coming in through your nostrils... and then the warm air flowing out...Notice the slight pause between each inhalation and each exhalation... Notice your chest as it ever so slightly rises and falls with each automatic breath... as your lungs expand when the air flows in and then contracts when the air flows out...

You may also notice your abdomen rising... and falling... each time you breathe in and breathe out... Experience the natural tides of your breath, as the air comes in... and flows out again...

If your mind should wander or your attention is pulled somewhere else, simply catch yourself and refocus on your breathing... refocusing again and again if necessary... Do your best to keep your mind focused on your breathing... Just watching and observing...

Nothing to change, nothing to hold onto, nothing to do... just awareness... watching... observing...and allowing your body to breathe free and easy... natural and automatic...*[Longer pause]*

And now, as you continue to observe your body breathing by itself, you can begin to add a simple mental suggestion, a suggestion aimed at helping you

experience even more relaxation and comfort...

Right now, as you focus your mind on your breathing, you can begin to imagine that each time you breathe out, each time you exhale, you are letting go of unnecessary tension, letting go of negative thoughts or worries, letting go of more and more discomfort... Just let it all go...

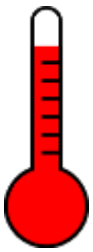
Allow yourself to breathe in fresh, positive, and healthy thoughts and feelings... Breathe in the good... Breathe out the bad... And so with each complete breath cycle, you can allow and experience both your body and mind becoming more comfortable, more relaxed, and more at ease...

Enjoy the natural mental and physical cleansing that your breathing can bring you, letting it carry you into a deeper and deeper state of relaxation and comfort...Take a minute to enjoy the mental tranquility and the peacefulness that this breathing can bring to you...*[Longer pause]*

In a moment, you are going to open your eyes and return to a more normal, alert, and wide-awake state… *[Pause]* Ok, I would like you to take in a nice, deep, refreshing, and energising breath, stretch comfortably and open your eyes, to end this relaxation..."

Tension Rating After Exercise

How would you rate your tension level now after the **Focused Breathing**?



5 = Terribly tense
4 = Really tense
3 = Moderately tense
2 = Slightly tense
1 = Not at all tense

Q! **Now, please rate your tension or stress level from 1 to 5 _____**

Summary

Today, we have talked about:

- The purpose of behaviour
- Ruling out physical problems
- Trigger-Behaviour-Reaction Chain
- Stress reduction technique: *Focused Breathing*

FOR NEXT WEEK: Putting it into practice

Key Point:

It is important for you try out a record of the trigger-behaviour-reaction patterns for your relative. Recording this regularly will help understand what is causing difficulties and help to make further changes if it is not helping.

Focused breathing:

- Try to practice this every night before bed and with your relative if that is possible. See if it helps.

Behaviour record:

- Try to complete the behavior record on page 21 for three separate episodes of your relative's behaviours that you would like to change.

START: Behaviour record

Putting it into Practice

- When will you have an opportunity to do this?
- What might get in the way?
- What might make it easier?

Behaviour Record

Please use these pages to write down the things your relative does (or that you do) and the strategies that you try out.

Day	Morning/Afternoon /Night	Who was there?	Trigger	Behaviour	Reaction	What strategy did you try?	What happened?

Extra Behaviour Record

Day	Morning/Afternoon /Night	Who was there?	Trigger	Behaviour	Reaction	What strategy did you try?	What happened?

Notes