

SUPPORTING AN INDIVIDUAL WITH BRAIN INJURY



EASY WAYS TO HELP A BRAIN INJURY SURVIVOR SUCCEED AFTER INJURY

Difficulty	Things you May See	How You Can Help
Speed of Processing Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take longer to perform tasks • Take longer to answer questions • Be unable to keep track of lengthy conversations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give the person extra time • Present one topic or issue at a time • Don't interrupt or fill in answers for the person • Confirm the person is understanding and keeping up with the conversation.
Fatigue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tire quickly both mentally and physically • Have reduced tolerance and ability to cope • Become Irritable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage breaks • Schedule more demanding activities when the person is at their best.
Mental Tracking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty Following Instructions • Lose track of what they are thinking or doing • Get confused easily 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep activities short and simplified • Ask specific or direct questions • Provide reminders of the next step or task
Memory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have difficulty learning new things • Forgetfulness • Losing Items • Having difficulty recalling things they have learned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeat information as necessary • Encourage use of external memory aids (journals, calendars, smart device alarms) • Designate a specific place for special items • Give reminders and prompts to assist recall

Difficulty	Things you May See	How You Can Help
Attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appears to not be listening • Misses details • Forgets what people have said • Have difficulty concentrating • Unable to cope with more than one thing at a time • Easily distracted • Change the subject often • Get bored easily 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shorten instructions and activities • Write down instructions in a way that can be easily understood • Encourage doing one activity at a time • Reduce external distractions (auditory, visual etc) • Bring the person's focus back to the current task
Problem Solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have difficulty working out solutions to problems • Be unable to generate new ideas • Have a disordered approach to problem solvin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the purpose of the task and the desired outcome • Avoid giving open ended tasks • Assist the person to break the task down into smaller components • Give one task at a time
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have trouble initiating conversation • Have trouble understanding non-verbal communication such as body language. • Difficulty interpreting nuances/take things literally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use open ended statements; "Tell me about...", "What do you think about..." • Use simple and direct language • Avoid talking in abstract terms and avoid the use of sarcasm
Planning and Organizing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have difficulty preparing for a task • Be unable to work out the steps involving a task • Have problems with organizing their own thoughts and explaining things to others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a written structure or outline of steps • Help develop a time table (weekly, daily) to establish a routine • Encourage the person to take time to think before they speak
Reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a rigid and concrete thinking style • Be resistant to change • Have a simplistic understanding of emotions • Show poor judgement and poor decision making sk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain changes in routine in advance with explanation • Avoid using emotional undertones • Provide real life examples when explaining things
Self-Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show poor adherence to rules • Not realize they've made errors • Dominate conversations • Low tolerance for frustrating situa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide feedback promptly and in a respectful way • Create and use signals to let them know they are talking too much • Encourage turn taking in conversations • Gently redirect behavior to a different topic or activity