

Webinar 4

# Cognitive Impairments that Affect Prison Adjustment: Impaired Information Processing, Organization, and Problem-Solving



# What are the Main Points of this Webinar?

- Brain injury affects our ability to process information and stay organized with our goals.
- People with brain injury have trouble doing what they say or intend to do.
- People with brain injury have decreased awareness of how they are going about something may not be working.
- People with brain injury may have difficulty solving problems.

# In this webinar, we will address:

How to understand and manage:

- a. Impaired Information Processing
- b. Impaired Organization and Problem-solving

# Information Processing

## Types of Information Processing

- Speed
- Capacity
- Duration
- Intensity

## Effects of Brain Injury

- Slows down speed
- Reduces capacity
- Cognitive fatigue much earlier
- Can't filter out multiple/intense stimuli

The only way you will “see” these impairments is through their effects.  
How do you feel when:

- You can't keep up when information is coming at you too fast?
- You can't absorb as much information that is coming at you at one time?
- You are so exhausted you can't think straight?
- You are in Walmart on Black Friday with 10,000 other shoppers when you are tired and have a headache?



# Information Processing Impairments

- Injury to any part of the brain can cause these impairments.
- Impaired information processing after brain injury “looks like”:
  - Problems with keeping up
  - Difficulties comprehending
  - The person doesn’t care
  - Frustration and irritability
  - Withdrawal
  - Easily overwhelmed with just normal levels of stimulation



# Management of Impaired Information Processing

- Avoid complex-intense (lots of noise, lights, movement, and multiple requests to do something) environments or keep it really short and when rested
- Take frequent breaks in a very quiet, calm environment
- Learn yoga, meditation or other relaxation techniques
- Anticipate problems in these situations and have a plan:
  - Keep checklists of what has to be done
  - Address when rested, relaxed and pain free



# Organization and Problem Solving

- We set short term goals (get to work on time) and long term goals (get a college degree).
- Accomplishing these goals requires that our behavior stay organized and focused, despite a complex world with constant internal and external changes.



# Organization and Problem-Solving

To adapt, we:

- Set goals
- Plan
- Initiate and Execute
- Monitor progress
- Make corrections based on need
- Revise goals as necessary





# Impairments of Organization and Problem-Solving

- Repetitively making the same mistake
- Getting off track in short-term tasks or long-term goals
- Not being aware that a strategy or behavior isn't working
- Having trouble getting started
- Impulsively starting something without a plan
- Not considering all of the factors that could impact how they should go about doing something
- Either setting no goals or setting goals that are unrealistic

# Managing Impairments of Organization and Problem-Solving

- Write down structured long-term goals and short-term steps to reach them
- Anticipate potential problems
- Plan possible solutions to these problems, practice them beforehand, and execute them when needed
- Set routine reminders to check on progress or “stop and think”
- Keep a notebook with:
  - goals and steps to reach them,
  - a list of possible problems and what to do when they occur,
  - a calendar with reminders to get feedback from others regarding progress

# What are the Main Points?

- Brain injury effects our ability to process information and stay organized with our goals.
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## In The Next Webinar, We Will Address:

- How brain injury affects regulation of mood





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