



Physical and Sensorimotor

Physical and sensorimotor problems can include pain, blurred vision, difficulty hearing, and light or noise sensitivity. In day-to-day life, you may experience dizziness, headaches, difficulty reading, and difficulty concentrating. These problems can impact your performance and mood and can also disrupt sleep, resulting in daytime sleepiness. Some people describe this as cognitive overload. Using and practicing the following suggestions can be helpful:

1. Notice what aggravates your symptoms by keeping a journal of daily activity, substance use, diet, or sleep. With that information, you can more easily make changes to help lower your symptoms. Try not to use substances like caffeine, alcohol, and tobacco as they can make headaches, light sensitivity and pain worse.
2. Mindfulness has been shown to help pain as well as light and noise sensitivity. A common exercise is to place one hand on your stomach and then inhale slowly through your nose to the count of four. Feel your stomach expand with your breath. After the count of four, exhale through your mouth slowly to the count of four. Feel your stomach deflate with the release of your breath. Repeat this cycle three times.
3. Schedule 5-10-minute breaks after a difficult or mentally taxing task and minimize daytime naps to 20-30 minutes.
4. Engage in daily exercise to promote a more regular sleep cycle and make it easier to navigate daily tasks.
5. Advocate for yourself everywhere possible. Ask for large print options, for breaks, or to dim the lights or to close doors during meetings.
6. To maximize your field of view, sit at the front of the room during meetings or in group settings.
7. Poor sleep is the most important contributor to dizziness, headaches, difficulty reading, difficulty concentrating, and daytime sleepiness. Make the most of your sleep by using the attached sleep checklist materials.

Compiled by F. Meehan, C. Tassin, & A. Ward March 11, 2019