



# BRIGHT Workshop

Building Resilience &  
Inner Strength for  
Caregivers of Persons  
with Memory Loss

Session 2

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## Today's Topics

01



**Caregiving  
and  
Your Mood**

02



**Positive  
Activities**

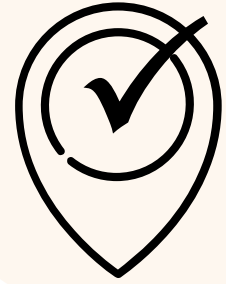
03



**Memory Loss  
and Mood**

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## Check In



### Session 1: Power of Balance – Week One

- ✓ Is everyone journaling?
- ✓ Is it getting easier to find things to note in each category ?
- ✓ Has anyone reviewed what they've written at the end of the week ?
- ✓ What did you notice?

### Session 1: Relaxation Diary/Mindful Breathing

- ✓ Did you work on your mindful breathing all week?
- ✓ If not, what prevented you from doing it?
- ✓ Are there ways to work around it?
- ✓ If you did, did it change your level of tension?
- ✓ What was this experience like for you?
- ✓ Can you think of when this skill might have been helpful during a stressful caregiving situation?

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## Caregiving and Your Mood

### Characteristics of caregiving can lead to depressive symptoms

- Unexpectedly becoming a caregiver
- The intensity of the caregiving
- Severity of the memory loss disorder

### It is more common than most realize

- 40 to 70% of caregivers have symptoms of depression

### When is it a problem?

- Depressive symptoms = some negative feelings
- Depression = 5 or more of these symptoms every day for most of the day for over two weeks
- When it starts to effect your functioning it is time to seek treatment

Caregiving may make you feel like you have little to no control over your life

### Depressive Symptoms

- Feeling sad, empty, irritable or hopeless
- Loss of interest or pleasure in activities you used to enjoy
- Appetite change – eating more or less
- Sleep change – too much or not enough
- Restlessness or feeling slowed down
- Loss of energy
- Feelings of worthlessness
- Slowed thinking or loss of concentration
- Thoughts of suicide

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## Taking Back Control with Positive Activities

One very effective way of dealing with this is to make time in your schedule for positive activities

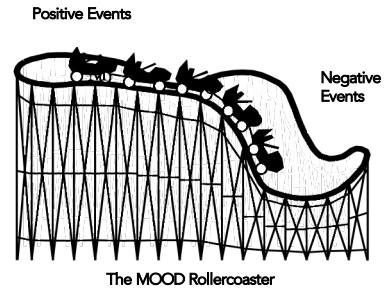
- Evidence-based
- Non-pharmaceutical treatment for depressive symptoms

If all you do is related to caregiving, you may experience:

- Burnout
- Frustration
- Resentment

All which can lead to depressive symptoms.

It is the lack of balance between challenging and positive activities in your life that can make you feel like you have no control – it's time to add more positive activities!



"What's the use?"  
"It seems like there's nothing I can do to make things better."

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## What are Positive Activities?

They are activities which give you a sense of pleasure, meaning, or purpose

- They can be big or small
- Require some planning as they must be scheduled
- Be done alone or with others
- Can be brief lasting only a few moments or take all day

### Examples:

- Reading
- Going for a walk
- Listening to music
- Helping a neighbor
- Doing a kind act
- Meeting a friend
- Being creative
- Taking a hike
- Gardening
- Watching children play
- Shopping
- Planning a trip
- Trying out a new recipe
- Watching a sunset
- Baking
- Listening to the bird sing
- Doing a puzzle
- Visiting a museum
- Volunteering
- Being needed
- Playing a game
- Yoga
- Smiling at a neighbor
- Being creative

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## Making the List

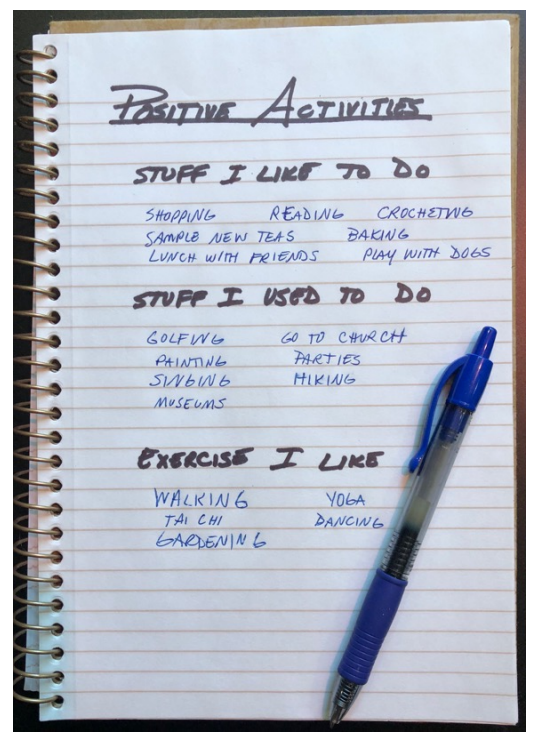
How are you currently spending your time?

What did you enjoy in the past?

- Can you do it now?
- Can it be modified to work now?

Brainstorm a list of activities you can do now

- Should be simple and easy to do.
- Make sure you have a few items that get your blood moving
- Think about barriers to doing each of these things
- Try to problem solve and devise a plan around the barriers



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## Importance of Exercise

### Mental Health

- Effective as antidepressants
- Improved sense of well being
- Improve or maintain - some aspects of cognitive function, like your ability to shift quickly between tasks or plan an activity
- Improve sleep

### Physical Health

- Manage or prevent - arthritis, heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, and 8 types of cancer, including breast and colon cancer

### Goal for these benefits

- 150 minutes (2 ½ hours) a week of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise

### New to exercise?

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/exercise-physical-activity>

### 3 Questions to Ask Your Doctor About Exercise

Are you considering adding exercise to your daily routine or significantly increasing your level of activity? Talk to your doctor about the exercises and physical activities that are best for you. During your appointment, you can ask:

1. **Are there any exercises or activities I should avoid?** Your doctor can make recommendations based on your health history, keeping in mind any recent surgeries or ongoing health conditions such as arthritis, diabetes, or heart disease. This would be a great time to check with your doctor about any unexplained symptoms you've been experiencing, such as chest pain or pressure, joint pain, dizziness, or shortness of breath. Your doctor may recommend postponing exercise until the problem is diagnosed and treated.
2. **Is my preventive care up to date?** Your doctor can tell you if there are any tests you might need. For example, women over age 65 should be checked regularly for osteoporosis.
3. **How does my health condition affect my ability to exercise?** Some health conditions can affect your exercise routine. For example, people with arthritis may need to avoid some types of activity, especially when joints are swollen or inflamed. Those with diabetes may need to adjust their daily schedule, meal plan, or medications when planning their activities. Your doctor can talk to you about any adjustments you need to make to ensure that you get the most out of your new exercise routine.

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# PAL: Positive Activities Log

## Move your list to PAL

- On the Positive Activities Log (PAL) you'll see a numbered list from 1-10, put your top 10 there

## Schedule

- Try to schedule at least 4 per day by marking the PAL with a slash for the days you will do them

## Do the Task

- During the week as you complete your activity you can add the other slash to make an X.

Practice Record 2.1: Pleasant Activities Log

**PAL: Positive Activities Log**

Schedule (/) and mark (X) each day you do a positive activity. At the end of the day note your mood.

Activity	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
1.							
2.							
3.							
4.							
5.							
6.							
7.							
8.							
9.							
10.							
Total # of Activities Done							
Mood Score for Day							

Mood Rating Scale

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Very Sad So-So Very Happy

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# Using Positive Activities

## For effective use of this skill

- **Scheduling** is key to success of this process - don't look back over your day and count things you already did. It has to be scheduled.
- Don't wait to do things until you feel like it or wait until you are motivated - just **follow the plan and trust the process.**
- Research has shown that the **best "dose"** of positive activities is **4** per day - that will improve mood and help you to maintain good mood over time, despite the ups & downs of caregiving.
- The important thing is to get 4 positive activities scheduled into your day, just about every day, do them & notice how they affect your mood.
- **Activities change over time**, for many reasons. Be open to being flexible about what's positive for you at this point.
- Often, **obstacles**/ barriers can come up that interfere with plans. That's when problem solving is key for finding a way to get around the barrier - or, changing the activity, if that makes more sense.



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## Going Forward

### Figuring Out Your Dose

You may notice:

- Connection between how many PA in your day and your mood
- Some types of activities may work for you more than others

On average:

- 4 positive activities a day keeps the blues away!

### Revising Your List

After the first week:

- Which activities were done?
- Which ones were not?
- What stopped you from doing that activity?
- Can the activity be modified?
- Should you switch it out for another one?

The goal:

- To find 10 solid activities you can use to lift your mood whenever you need it.

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## Memory Loss and Depression

Depression is common, especially in the early stages.

Positive activities are helpful for your care recipient too, but generally they need your help to follow through.

We recommend:

- Think of activities you can do together
- Be flexible: if one thing doesn't work, try something else.

Exercise is strongly encouraged

- Helps regulate sleep
- Improves mood
- In early stages, it can help to maintain cognitive function

Optional Practice Record 2.2: Shared Positive Activities

**Shared Positive Activities**

Over the next week, every other day do a shared activity with the person you are caring for. Schedule (✓) and mark (X) each day you do a positive activity. At the end of the day note any changes in their mood.

List of Positive Activities You Can Do Together	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
Total # of Activities Done			
Mood Score for Day			

Mood Rating Scale

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Very Sad So-So Very Happy

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## Take Away



- Depressive symptoms are common during caregiving.
- Scheduling and then doing an array of everyday positive activities can help to improve mood.
- It is important to do the scheduled activity, even if you don't feel like it. Make a plan and do the plan – trust in the process.
- Taking the time to enjoy yourself will help you feel less stressed and a better caregiver.
- Doing Positive Activities together with the person being cared for can help to manage their mood as well. However, it may take time and a trial-and-error process to get this to happen on a regular basis.

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## Home Practice: Making It Work for You

### **Positive Activity Log**

- If not done in class, schedule your Positive Activities each day and then do them.
- At the end of each day note your mood rating for that day and the number of activities you completed.

### **Shared Positive Activities**

- Identify and schedule Positive Activities that you and the person you are caring for would enjoy doing together each day and then do them.
- At the end of each day note your mood rating for that day and the number of activities you completed.

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# See you next week!

**Do you have any questions?**

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