



Thinking, Attention and Memory

MODULE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

- Understand how COVID-19 affects your thinking
- Recognize & appreciate how changes in your thinking may impact you
- Apply strategies to help you manage changes in your thinking



COVID-19 and thinking

What challenges have you had with thinking?



Why is thinking and remembering hard?

This might be because of:

- A lack of oxygen
- Effects of the virus on your brain
- Feelings of depression or anxiety
- Fatigue and lack of sleep
- Pain



What is brain fog?

Describes cognitive and communication challenges people experience with Long COVID and other conditions.

When your thinking feels slow, fuzzy, less sharp, “spaced out”.

If you have brain fog, you may:

- Have trouble remembering things
- Find it hard to think clearly or as quickly
- Have trouble concentrating or focusing on a task
- Find it hard to make decisions or start tasks
- Have trouble with communicating



What makes brain fog worse?

Your brain fog may be worse if you:

- Have a hard time sleeping or feel fatigued
- Are struggling with depression, stress or anxiety
- Don't have proper nutrition to fuel your brain
- Find it hard to do physical activity
- Are taking certain medicines
- Feel lonely
- Pain



Your daily activities

Your daily activities

Changes to your thinking might make it hard for you to:

- Manage your chores at home
- Work
- Engage in social interactions
- Enjoy leisure activities
- Take care of other people

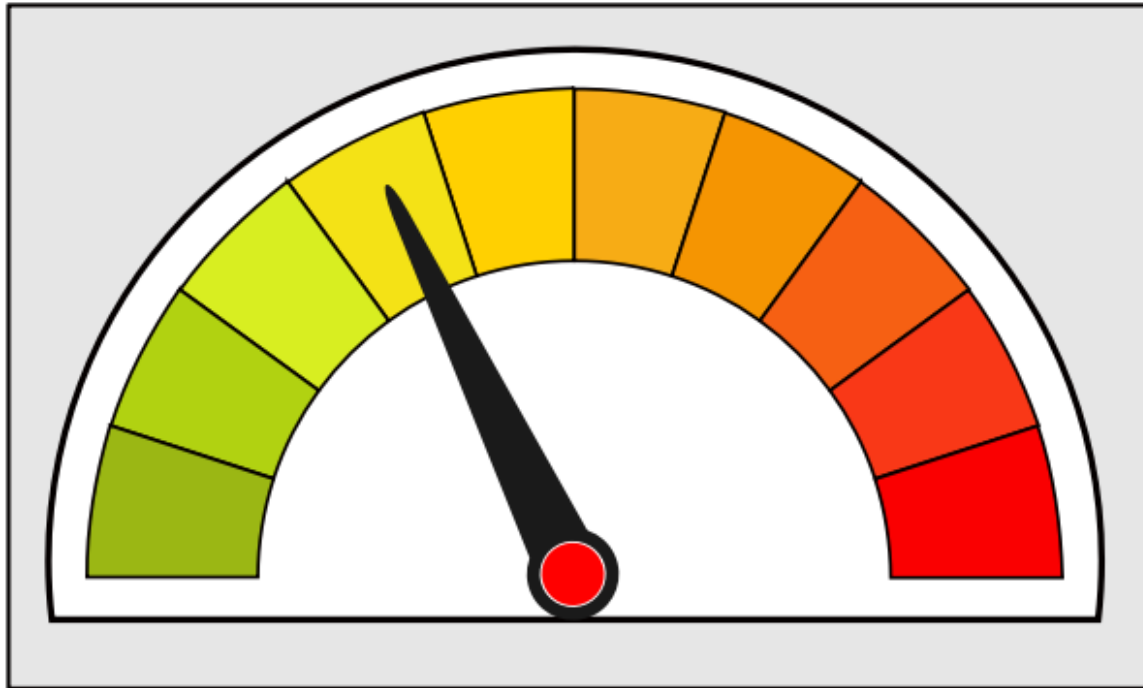


How to help your thinking

Your energy level

“How much fuel is in your tank?”





Remember:
Mental tasks require energy the same as physical tasks.

Conserve your energy: 4 P's of Energy Conservation

Prioritize

Plan

Pace

Position



Help your memory

- Take notes
- Always put things back in the same place
- Keep a steady routine
- Use a planner or calendar
- Ask someone to remind you about important tasks or appointments



Help your memory



Make associations



Repeat the
information out loud
to yourself

ABC

Run through the alphabet



Group information



Form a visual image

Help your attention

You can concentrate better if you limit distractions:

- Find a quiet place
- Turn off the TV or radio.
- Focus on one thing at a time
- Turn off notifications on your phone (only use calendar notifications)
- Mark the spot where you left off



Take Breaks

- Use a timer to remind you to monitor your symptoms
- Focus on *how you feel* rather than finishing a task
- Rest before you feel tired or before symptoms get worse
- Break up tasks into manageable pieces



Conserving your fuel

Healthy habits and good self-care is good for your body and brain:

- Protect your health
- Be kind to yourself & give yourself credit for things you accomplish
- Keep track of your stress level and emotions
- Don't overload yourself & remember that no one can do everything
- Avoid alcohol and drugs
- Take time to do restful things you enjoy
- Talk to a friend and ask for help

Summary

- Your thinking can be affected by things like lack of oxygen, fatigue, or your mood.
- When your thinking has changed, you can find it hard to manage even simple daily tasks like chores or conversations.
- To help your thinking, conserve your energy, take breaks and use strategies like what we reviewed today to help you do the things you want to.

Reflective activity:

1. What are some ways you can simplify your daily tasks to save energy?
2. What 1 or 2 strategies can you adopt to help you with your memory and attention?





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