



## Brain Tumour Australia Information

# © FACT SHEET 42

## Self Control

### The Brain– Self Control

Be aware of limitations to the ability to make sound judgements

The tumour may affect the part of the brain that normally makes you stop and think before acting on impulse

***The brain tumour may affect awareness of the needs and rights of self and others.***

***Individuals may display the following behaviours:***

- Be selfish about their needs
- Be demanding or unreasonable when interacting with others
- Have difficulty communicating with others
- Show poor social awareness of appropriate behaviour
- Become self-absorbed
- Fail to see other people's point of view
- Become jealous
- Not appreciate carers

***Self-Control may be affected by the brain tumour causing one to:***

- Become frustrated or annoyed easily
- Show aggression
- Be unreasonable or irritable and lose temper easily
- Have a low tolerance for frustration (not only as a result of the tumour but also as a result of lengthy stays in hospital and lack of control)
- Become agitated at being kept waiting for appointments
- Lose patience with children, pets and noise
- Show anger that may be completely out of proportion to the situation
- Speak or behave impulsively
- Make silly mistakes (sometimes repeatedly)
- Behave in an embarrassing or dangerous manner

***Energy, drive or motivation may be affected and individuals may:***

- Know how to do something, but not do it spontaneously
- Have difficulty doing or finishing everyday activities/jobs
- Have no interest or ability to perform previous enjoyed activities
- Have no energy or concentration
- Get tired easily
- Not wish to get out of bed, shower, dress or participate in conversations

- Not act until prompted
- Only act when prompted
- Sit around all day watching TV
- Complain of boredom and be restless and agitated

***Be clear that no-one gets all their demands met (even if they do have a serious illness)***

**Self Control—If you are a family member**

**Helpful hints/tips/strategies**

- Separate the person and the behaviour
- Try not to take angry words personally
- Keep a detailed account of what happens and when there may be some specific things that trigger the anger
- Develop strategies to compensate
- Cue individuals to slow down, to think the action through before acting
- Help with learning self control
- Set goals and rewards
- Give consistent messages
- Assistance may be needed to complete various activities
- Schedules are preferable to constant nagging from support persons
- Set things out, step by step
- Prompt the first step
- Provide encouragement to commence activity
- Use written daily schedules
- Use alarms or timers as reminders
- Try to find things/activities that are most interesting
- Provide reminders of usually enjoyed activities
- Promote physical activity which may expend some energy
- Provide consistent support to help learn appropriate ways of dealing with situations
- Practice ways of responding prior a social event
- Give clear and consistent feedback
- Set limits
- Coach or role play the situation of concern
- If behaviour is unacceptable, give clear calm feedback
- Be aware inappropriate behaviour can be about not knowing how else to behave
- Families, children's, friends, colleagues, even strangers rights and priorities also need to be respected
- Recognise that loneliness and low self-esteem can combine with difficulties in self-control (to make this a major problem area for an individual)