



Brain Tumour Australia Information

© FACT SHEET 43

Managing Conflict

The Brain- Managing Conflict

Managing conflict requires time and a conscious effort to communicate carefully. Stick to the topic, and think before you speak.

All relationships experience conflict. As long as there are some ground rules for managing them, disagreements are not a problem. It is only if conflict is allowed to go on without being resolved/contained that it becomes destructive.

Helpful Ground Rules

- Make a commitment to control the difficult issues, rather than letting them control you
- Take time to deal with the difficult issues. Working through problems takes time. It is a good idea to have regular meetings to discuss issues even before they get out of hand and become a problem
- Ensure it is a suitable time for a discussion. Negotiate a suitable time for all parties
- Never allow a destructive argument to continue.
- When things start to get out of control, agree to take 'time-out' so all can calm down. Take a break, try again later if necessary

Basic guidelines for managing behaviour change

If you are a family member

Helpful hints/tips/strategies

- Be patient
- Be consistent in managing behaviour
- Model calm and controlled behaviour
- Try not to over stimulate
- Reduce demands made on individuals
- Help educate the family/friends about any concerns in relation to behaviour, mood changes, diagnosis etc
- Let people test rules, but don't break them without a very good reason
- Stick to the facts in all conversations. You may need to bring the conversation back to the facts quite frequently
- Keep goals compatible with cognitive, physical and behavioural limitations and allow enough time for tasks to be finished
- In the case of agitation redirect attention from the source of frustration to another topic, stimulus or person

- Individuals may show differing behaviour during the course of treatment ; with increasing awareness can come increasing anger, frustration, anxiety, depressed mood etc
- People are more sensitive to disruptions of routine, surprises, lack of sleep or changes, drugs and fatigue
- Too many demands can add to confusion and frustration
- The condition may cause tiredness when undertaking complex tasks eg. balancing the cheque book, gardening, shopping etc

Explain what you are doing and why

- Separate the behaviour from the person by adopting a calm manner
- Be detached if behaviour is inappropriate
- Avoid conflict
- Give non-judgmental feedback
- Never assume yours is the only/correct perspective

Don't

- Take abuse personally
- Panic or overreact
- Argue the point or force compliance
- Ignore or dismiss concerns

Do use Community Resources for support

Your social worker can assist with phone numbers and types of services available

NOTE:

Community agencies such as Community Health, the Commonwealth Rehabilitation Services, The Royal Blind Society and the Brain Injury Unit may be able to assist with information, resources or advice (see local telephone book for contact numbers)