

Spontaneous Activities

These are treatment activities to use in the moment, when you do not have materials handy, when you are unable to get on wi-fi, your planned exercise is not working for the patient, or you just need some inspiration! Here are activities that will work for many different types of goals. Modify as needed to individualize for your patient...choose subject matter they are interested in (golf, fashion, cooking, etc.) and make the challenge easier or more difficult as appropriate for the patient to be successful. Many treatment exercises can be used for multiple types of goals - as long as you focus on what you are trying to achieve, and collect the correct measure, you can adapt any exercise to be work for almost any goal! One thing to remember is that the more engaged a patient is, the more they are able to pay attention, learn, retain and recall. So, be silly, have fun, smile, and be positive as much as possible. Your energy is contagious!

I. Attention, Sensory Memory, and Short-Term Memory exercises

** If a short-term memory exercise, make sure to ask the patient to recall and repeat within 30 seconds.*

1. Found objects:

Take a number of objects in the home (glass, fork, notebook, comb, pen, phone, etc.) and lay items out on a table and ask patient to study for 10/20/30 seconds, have the patient close their eyes, then cover or remove objects and then ask them:

- a. Name all the items that were displayed
- b. Name them in order (what was first, etc.)
- c. Name them and describe them with 1-3 details (i.e. black comb, blue pen, etc.)
- d. Name them in a certain order - by size (which was largest), color (which was blue), alphabetically (which started with the letter c), etc.
- e. Ask questions/give hints about the items:
 - i. Which object do you use for hair?
 - ii. Which object do you use to write?
 - iii. Which object do you use to eat?
 - iv. Which object do you use to contact people?
 - v. Which object do you drink out of?
- f. Point to objects in the room (picture, clock, chair, vase, purse), and ask the patient to label them. Then, ask the patient to name the items aloud with or without a delay. To “lower” the challenge, when pointing, ask the patient to say the item aloud (or you will) and to lower the challenge, only point to objects and have the patient silently think about each object they see.
- g. Take 3 cups in the patient’s apartment that are not transparent. Hide an object under the cup (like a coin) and then rotate the cups and ask the patient to track the hidden object. After 10/20/30 seconds, see if they can point to the correct cup.
- h. Place coins in a specific pattern on the table, cover the coins and ask patient to recite the pattern shown (penny, dime, nickel). For increased difficulty, add more coins, for easier use less. Ask the patient to recall the pattern with and without delay.

2. Auditory Exercises/Sounds:

- a. Make sounds (oh, ooo, ah, iii, ee, etc.) and ask them to repeat immediately and/or after a delay. Ask the patient to repeat them as heard (in order with the same tone and duration, i.e. ahhhhhhh vs. ah). Change the pitch, tone, duration of sound, vocalization – same sounds repeating or different patterns. For example, repeat these sound patterns after me:
 - i. Ee ee ee
 - ii. Ee ah oh
 - iii. Eeeee ee eeeee ee
 - iv. Ah oh ah oh
 - v. Ahhhhhhh oh oh oh ahhhhhh oh oh
 - vi. Boo bah boo
 - vii. La la laaaaa la la laaaaa
 - viii. Ha ha hoo hoo hee hee hi ha hoo hee hoe
- b. Make familiar sounds and ask patient to repeat and/or name. For example, ‘roar’ lion, ‘ring’ phone, ‘beep’ horn, ‘ribbit’ frog, ‘sssss’ snake, ‘chugga chugga’ train, etc. Ask patient to repeat the sounds immediately, and then after a delay, ask what the sounds were. (make the actual sounds, don’t say the words: grrr, toot, cluck, ding, creak) 30 seconds later, what did you hear: dog/growl, boat, chicken, alarm, door).
- c. Clap a rhythm and ask the patient to clap back the same rhythm (if clapping is difficult, use la, la or doo doo.) Start with a series of three claps and build to 4 clap sequences and 5 clap sequences. Add tapping knees, stomping feet, etc. to add challenge
- d. Teach them a new song, any song, line by line, could be a chorus only (an old song they are familiar with or a new song they may not know - tell them their kids or grandkids will know it!)

Also, verbal memory/language exercises:

3. Word recall:

- a. Say a word aloud ask the patient to repeat immediately, then after 5/10/20/30 seconds
- b. Say 1-10 words and ask the patient to repeat immediately as many as they can recall (add delay for more challenge)
- c. Say 1-10 words in a category aloud and ask the patient to repeat as many as they can recall (in order for more challenge) For example: Fruits, farm animals, things in a kitchen, things that are red, etc.
- d. Say a full sentence aloud and ask the patient to repeat immediately, then after 5/10/20/30 seconds (i.e., Mary Jones lives at 248 Fulton Avenue in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.)
Score: out of 10 words
- e. Say a full sentence aloud and ask the patient to write the sentence immediately, then after delay (The orange cat loved chasing black birds around the yard.)
Score: out of 10 words

- f. Have patients repeat one word at a time of a sentence and then put the whole sentence together. For example: The (the) tall (tall) man (man) helped (helped) the (the) child (child) reach (reach) the (the) cookies (cookies) on (on) the (the) top (top) shelf (shelf). Now say the full sentence (Score: out of 13 words)
- g. Write words or phrases (one at a time or in a series) and ask them to study the word(s) and then hide or erase the written words/phrases and recall. For example, write a word such as 'tree,' 'glass,' 'tape' or a phrase such as 'come and get me', 'finder's keepers', and 'bee in your bonnet' and with or without delay ask them to recall.
- h. Provide patient details describing a word and ask patient to identify what the word is. (i.e., It's a fruit, it's red, it keeps the doctor away – Apple) Or do this in the opposite way, give patient a list of words and prompt them to describe the word to allow clinician to identify which word is being described (pencil, flower, ocean).
- i. Provide patient with a sequence of words: duck, dog, cat, mouse or dad, mom, aunt, uncle, or shoe, sock, dress, bra (use "like" categories). Start with one word, then two, etc. Have patient repeat sequence after you. Each time, add one more to sequence. See how many words the patient can recall in the sequence. Repeat after 5/10/20/30 seconds for added difficulty
- j. Provide patient with a word and have them identify a synonym and/or antonym for the word (big/large and big/small, hard/tough, and hard/soft, happy/joyful and happy/sad, etc.)
- k. Give the patient a word and then a choice of two definitions and ask them to choose which definition is correct. For example, word: mint – is this a green herb or a soft, pillow-like object.
- l. For someone who has low self-esteem, you can use positive affirmations as a language exercise. One option: Ask them to state something positive about themselves. Ask them to think of a positive trait, positive thought, or positive accomplishment, and then say it out loud and then repeat it with or without a delay. You can keep a list of their positive affirmations and ask them to repeat them daily. Another option: Give them positive affirmations to say aloud, starting with shorter statements and graduating to longer ones. Some examples: "I am strong," "I deserve love," "I love myself," "Today is a beautiful day," "I am doing the best I can," "I forgive myself," "I am kind and loving," "I am grateful for every day," "I am getting better and better every day," "I will be calm and peaceful today," "I am in control of how I react to others," "I am deserving of love and respect," "I am an unstoppable force of nature," "I am confident in who I am." Ask them to repeat the statements back, and then add a short delay and ask them to recall and say the statement again.

4. Reading Exercises:

- a. Read an article from the newspaper or magazine found in the patient's apartment aloud and then either ask them to recall as many details as they can about the article or ask them a # of questions and see if they can answer. Or patient can read the article aloud and then recall details. To lower the challenge, read it twice.

- b. Read instructions to make something found in their kitchen (the toaster, soup, tea, etc.) and ask them to repeat the steps aloud in order. Or patient can read instructions aloud and then recall steps.
- c. Read ingredients from a food in the patient's apartment and then ask them to repeat, and then recall in 5/10/20/30 seconds.
- d. Read aloud (or ask patient to read) a paragraph from a novel aloud and then recall what happened in order. Ask questions such as the names of characters, how they relate to one another, and what they think will happen next.
- e. Read aloud (or ask patient to read) from the community calendar or their personal date/book calendar and then recall the day's routine, or appointments for the week/month, or activities scheduled for the week.

5. Stories/Jokes/Observations

- a. Make-up a short story and say it aloud and then ask patient to repeat it.
- b. Make-up a short story and tell patient. Ask patient 3-5 questions about the story.
- c. Make up a short story and ask patient to paraphrase each line back to you as you tell them the story. Then paraphrase the entire story back you.
- d. Make up a short story and ask patient to identify the sequence of events that occurred in the story e.g boy went to the playground. First played on the swings, next on the slide, then the monkey bars (add more details for difficulty). You can ask, what happened first? Second? Third?
- e. Make positive observations about the patient's appearance, the patient's personality or character traits, the patient's home, or the patient's history/experiences. Then ask patient to repeat it. Ask them to recall and repeat what you said after a delay. You can do this several times with different positive observations. For example, "I have a compliment for you...I love your pink shirt, it is very cheery!" They repeat it/paraphrase, "you love my pink shirt because it is cheery." Then add a delay... i.e. ask them to count to 50 by 3's, then ask what was the compliment I gave you?" Or "I was thinking about you yesterday and I wanted to tell you, I am so inspired by your kindness to your friends." Now, what was I thinking about you yesterday?"
- f. Tell the patient a joke you know and ask them to repeat it. Then start the joke again after a delay and ask them to recall and say the punchline.
- g. Ask them to tell you a joke/story/anecdote and then after a 20-30 second delay, ask them to recall and repeat the same joke/story/anecdote.

6. Back-and-forth Interactions / Conversations

- a. Engage patient in a conversation/interaction (about anything) and then ask them 3-5 questions about the conversation. You can do this at the end of the conversation or sentence by sentence.
- b. Engaged patient in a conversation/interaction (about anything) and then ask them to repeat 1-5 details about the conversation ("remind me, what did you just say?" or "that's interesting, can you repeat that to me?")
- c. Engage patient in a conversation/interaction (about anything) and then repeat details of the conversation back incorrectly and ask if you got it right. For example, patient shares "I am so excited to go to my son's house for the

holidays!” Clinician responds, “oh, that’s too bad that you are unable to go to your son’s house.” Or “Great, your son is coming to visit for the holidays!” Then, say, did I hear you right? Are they able to recall what they just told you and correct you?

- d. Engage patient in a conversation/interaction and then ask them to ‘write a note’ to repeat what they said. The note can be to themselves or to someone else. For example, they say that they met a new resident, Mary, at breakfast and enjoyed meeting her. You say, great! Let’s write a note, what was her name?
(Mary)Dear _____, It was great meeting you at (where did you meet her?) _____ . Welcome to our community!
Or the patient shares I am feeling so sad about being here, I miss my home and I miss my husband (etc.). Ask what the patient misses specifically. Now, write a letter to her husband and reiterate the details of the conversation. Dear _____ (husband’s name), I miss _____ (our home) and _____ (things we used to do) and _____ (things about him), Etc.
- e. Provide conversational prompts to the patient and have them respond. For example, If you need a pen and I give you my pen, what is the best response? You’re welcome, thank you, hello, or no? For added challenge, do not provide response options. (If I trip as I’m walking, what would you say?)

Also, visuospatial memory exercises:

7. Visualization:

- a. Say a word aloud and ask the patient to visualize it and describe it with five details. For example, the word is ‘house’ Patient visualizes and describes: white, green shutters, two-story, pitched roof, black door. (Ask questions about the visualization to prompt details if patient struggles to describe.)
- b. Say a sentence aloud and ask patient to visualize as they listen and then repeat. For example, the sentence is “The dog chased the cat up the tree.” After they repeat the sentence, ask them 1-3 questions about their visualization: what color was the dog? Where were they running, in the street or in a yard? What kind of tree? Etc.
- c. Say three words and ask patient to visualize the three words together in one image and then repeat the words to describe the image. For example, dog, fan, green. Visualization could be: a big green fan blowing on the face of dog, blowing back it’s hair OR a fan on a green table with a dog jumping up to get it
- d. Use visualization related to holidays: ask patient to visualize the specific holiday/time of year with five details E.g., Christmas: smells like a fire burning, cookies in the oven, white snow, Christmas tree etc. Prompt the patient to use all five senses in their visualization.
- e. Have the patient close their eyes and visualize what is behind them/in a specific room in their home/ their furniture, etc. Ask patient to describe a number of details and then ask them to open their eyes and see if they were correct.
- f. Remembering faces– Have the patient look at the clinician and say aloud each detail about the clinician’s appearance (hair/eye color, age, any feature), then have patient close their eyes and visualize and repeat the specific details. Ask the

patient to describe 5 details about what you are wearing on that day. Use prompts if necessary? (What am I wearing? To lower challenge, ask Am I wearing pants or a skirt/dress? What does my hair look like? To lower challenge, ask Is my hair up or down? Is it longer than my shoulders or shorter? Do I have bangs? Etc. Am I wearing earrings or a watch? Am I wearing glasses? What color? And so on...)

8. Image recall:

- a. Ask patients to study an image in their apartment, or in a magazine, or in the community, or you can draw an image, and then have them name up to 10 details with and without delay
- b. Ask patient to study environment/apartment, paying attention to colors of objects. Ask patient to identify as many items (or a number of items) that they can in the environment that are red, blue, tan etc. from memory.
- c. Draw a series of images (house, face, flower, hat, sun, cup, book, eye, glasses, heart, etc.) and ask the patient to study the images for up to 30 seconds. Then ask patient to name as many images as possible (with and without delay).
- d. Draw images (3-10) and show them one at a time very quickly and ask them to name all items shown at the end.
- e. Ask patient to draw 1-5 images and recall as many as they are able after a delay (i.e., count to 20). To lower challenge, label the images with a word. To up the challenge, add more images and a longer delay.
- f. Ask the patient to draw 3-5 images and then you give each image a label based on the image. For instance, the patient draws a square and then you label it as a book, the patient draws a circle, you label it as a ball, the patient draws a squiggle, you label it as a worm, etc. Then ask the patient to look at the images and recall the label it was given (with or without delay).
- g. Draw an image with a number of details (e.g a box, with an arrow through it, a number on left upper corner, heart on top). Have patient study the image, then remove the image and have patient re-draw with as many details as they can recall. For patients with motor impairments, they can name the details of the object.
- h. Draw two sets of symbols and have one set different from the other side and have pt identify which one is different. To up the challenge, make the differences subtle, or add several differences. To lower the challenge, have only one obvious difference.
- i. Look at photographs in patient's apartment and comment on each photograph (your daughter has lovely red hair, your husband has a wonderful smile, it looks hot out in this photo, etc.). Ask them to focus on the particular aspect of the photograph. Then review the photographs and ask them to recall the detail about the image that you admired.
- j. Look at a photo in the apartment, having patient study details then remove. Ask patient questions about the photo (who was in the photo, what were they wearing, what was the weather in the photo). You can include some trick questions for added difficulty e.g., what animal was in the photo even if there was not one.

II. Visuospatial Exercises:

1. Found objects:

- a. Find small objects around the home without the patient seeing what you are collecting (watch, frame, bowl, spoon, sock, key, etc.). Give patient the objects one at a time with eyes closed and see if they can name it by touch only.
- b. Use a series of coins: nickel, dime, quarter. Either ask patient to close their eyes and put a group of coins in their hand or on the table in front of them, or ask patient to put them in their pocket or a bag/coin purse, and see if they can discern each coin by touch.
- c. Take 3-5 objects in the home and hide them without patient looking. Then, give patient directions to find each item (3 steps to the left, behind the cushion, above the coffee maker, etc. etc.)
- d. Stack objects, like books, magazines, coins, cups, hand towels, etc. Ask patient to stack them in a certain order (color, size, shape) and you can create stacking patterns for more challenge (towel, book, towel, book or vertical, horizontal).
- e. Sort objects such as socks, silverware, fruit, jewelry, etc. (can use a timer for results.)
- f. Find items with different textures and have patient close their eyes and identify the type of material/texture.
- g. Have patient identify as many steps they believe it would take to get to the bathroom, kitchen etc. then could walk with patient to demonstrate. Add how many right and left turns for added challenge. Could be to the elevator or to the dining room.
- h. Use a spoon to scoop a food item e.g. marshmallows, cereal, candies, rice from one container to another without spilling. Count scoops. To up the challenge, place the containers farther apart or use a smaller spoon.
- i. Practice folding towels, washing dishes, pouring water from one cup to another cup, placing a key into the door to enter apartment.
- j. Play ISpy- Name the items and ask the patient to find them, for example, "*I see a pencil, a refrigerator, and a window.*" Then, the patient can point or walk to go and 'find' the object. They can look for all three, or one at a time. Create challenge by making objects more difficult to find, for example, "*I am thinking of a fork, a carton of milk, and an alarm clock (all objects that cannot be seen – fork in the silverware drawer, milk in the fridge, clock in the bedroom).*" Give hints as to how to navigate the space to find the objects. Give the patient clues on how to find items, for example, 'to the left' or '10 steps to your right' or 'next to the microwave.' Ask them to name object for you to find and give you directions of how to find them.

2. Pen and Paper

- a. Mirror images – draw half an image (house, face, square, circle, etc.) and ask them to draw the other half.
- b. Trace images – draw an image or line and ask patient to trace.

- c. Positions – draw a shape in the middle of a page and then ask the patient to draw a shape (the same or a different shape) above the shape, below the shape, to the left, and to the right, even inside or on top of the original shape.
- d. Using a sheet of paper, draw a large square or circle, and ask patient to draw something while staying within the lines.
- e. Draw dots on a piece of paper and have patient connect the dots to form a shape. Or draw dots and number or letter the dots and ask the patient to connect the dots in order. For added challenge, alternate numbers and letters and ask patient to connect the dots in order using first numbers and then letters (1, A, 2, B, 3, C, etc.).
- f. Create a pattern on a sheet of paper and see if they can continue the pattern e.g star, heart, square...star, heart, _____ what comes next?
- g. Draw images of different shapes on a page and have patient memorize the shapes (1-5). Then, remove the page and ask patient to recall, either immediately or with a delay, all of the shapes. For added challenge, add different colors, or ask them to name the shapes left from right or top to bottom, etc.
- h. Hide one hand behind your back and show one of your hands with something in the hand (pen, phone, quarter). Then, ask your patient to identify if it is your left or right hand. Ask patient to take the object with the same hand (if it's in your right hand, they must use their right hand). Continue asking them to give you the objects into a specific hand (hold both hands out and ask, place the pen back in my right hand.)
- i. Place both hands in front of you and ask patient to mimic your hand gesture with the same hand. For example, make a thumbs up with your left hand, now they must do the same. Continue asking them to mimic your movements with the same hand that you are using (now you give me the 'ok' with the same hand). Up the challenge and make gestures with both hands (left hand pointing and right hand with peace sign. Then they must mimic with the same hands.)
- j. Draw a plus sign and ask patient to identify N, S, E, W directions (or you can add). Then draw an 'X' in the middle of the page, and then an 'O' somewhere else on the page. Ask the patient to say which direction the "O" is from the "X" (North or Northwest, etc.). Keep going...
- k. Draw a line in the middle of a blank page. Then ask patient to draw images based on your directions. I.e., Draw a circle to the left of the line. Draw another line intersecting the first line. Draw a heart above the shape. Draw a square to the upper left. And so on.
- l. Tic Tac Toe
- m. You draw, I draw: you draw a line, then they draw a line connected to your line, and so on until there is a finished image. Count the number of turns and if they are able to connect their line to yours.

3. Visualization

- a. Visualize a specific time period or event in life: wedding day. Help walk patient through steps of visualization through cuing to recall details e.g what was the wedding location, etc., what were you wearing, what color were the flowers, etc.

- b. Draw numbers upside down (backwards and forwards) and ask patient to visualize rotating the number to an upright position and determining if the number would be correct or reversed.
- c. Ask patient to visualize how to complete a household task, such as putting away the laundry or making the bed, and describing each step required to complete the task in order.
- d. Ask patient to close their eyes and write a list of things they need to buy at the grocery store. Allow them to put the pen or pencil on the page before closing their eyes. They can write across the page or try to make a numbered list.
- e. Ask patient to draw an image as you describe it. For example, draw square, now draw a triangle on top of the square, now draw a square in the middle bottom of the first square, now draw an upright rectangle on the right side of the triangle. What do you see? Now switch and ask the patient to describe to you. For example, draw a circle, now draw squiggly lines coming from the top half of the circle. Now draw two circles inside the circle. Now draw a line in the bottom center of the first circle. What do you see?
- f. Ask patient to visualize math problems and calculate the answers. For example, 2 apples plus 3 oranges is how much? Or simply the numbers $9 + 15 = ?$ Or $12 \times 4 = ?$ All equations require visualization.
- g. Draw a map with a symbol for the start point and end point and many right and left turns in between. Then ask the patient to visualize themselves on the route and count how many left and right turns they would take to get to the end.
- h. Visualize what is needed from the store: For example, visualize your route, what does the building look like, the front doors, what you encounter first when you walk in, what item will you pick up first, what do you hear, smell, feel?
- i. Visualize items found on way to dining room. How many doors do you pass before you turn, are there decorations on any of the doors? What pictures do you see on the wall? Is there music playing? And so on.
- j. Visualize an animal of your choice, what color are is? Is it big? Bigger than you? Is it small? Could you hold it? Is it thin/thick/heavy/light? What does it feel like i.e., rough/soft? Does it make a sound? Does it have a smell? And so on...

III. Verbal Memory/Language

1. Spontaneous language exercises; pen & paper:

- a. Fill in the blanks: write a sentence or say a sentence and ask the patient to fill in a blank. These can be common phrases or titles, blanks related to the patient, or blanks about the environment. For example:
Common phrases/titles: Jack and Jill went up the _____. A friend in need is a friend _____. Gone with the _____.
Related to patient: My daughter's name is _____. I grew up in _____.
I love playing _____.
My favorite color is _____.

Related to current events and environment: Today is _____. The chair in the living room is _____. The president of the USA is _____.

- b. Give the patient a letter and ask them to name as many words in a category that starts with that letter. For example, name as many animals that start with 'A.' Then continue with each letter, either using the same category or different categories. I.e., name as many cars that start with 'B' and then states that start with 'C' and then boys names that start with 'D.'
- c. Point to objects in the environment and ask the patient to label it and name 3 adjective to describe it (table – brown, wood, hard). Or describe an object in the environment and see if they can guess it and find it. Take it one step further, and ask the patient to describe what the object is used for (table, dining).
- d. Write a list of word in a column, then write a list of words that relate to the first list in a different order. Then, ask the patient to match each word with the related word. For example:

Pot	Eye
Pants	Lid
Mascara	Quack
Duck	Candy
Sugar	Legs
- e. Say a word aloud and ask the patient to think of as many (or a number of) words that rhyme. For example: Cat (bat, rat, hat, fat, drat, stat, prat, brat, pat, frat, etc.)
- f. Write words scrambled and ask the patient to unscramble each word. For example:
ADRT (dart) OFOL (FOOL) RCA (car) NKIP (pink)
- g. Write words with a missing letter and ask patient to fill in the blank. Ask them for as many letters that they can think of that would make a word. For example: L_AVE (leave) DU_L (dull or duel) BA_K (bank or back or bark)
- h. Name words and ask the patient to name as many synonyms (or a number of) as they can think of. Also, antonyms. For example:
Funny: (syn) humorous, comical, laughable, strange, hilarious, hysterical, odd
Ugly: (ant) beautiful, pretty, gorgeous, lovely, attractive
- i. Name a word and ask the patient to define it and then use it in a sentence. For example: Jolly: (def) happy, jovial, sentence: The jolly man told jokes at the party.
- j. Make a story with your patient by asking them to say a word (or you can start with the word) and then the other person says another word to create a sentence and build a story. For example, you say "Head", they say "aches", you "are", them "the", you "biggest", them "problem", you "that", them "I", you "experience".
- k. Give a word to the patient and ask them one thing the word relates to. For example, sandals – beach. Cookies – cavities. Table – dinner. And so on. Another way to play is to give the patient questions to illicit a specific word. For example, 'what would I wear to the beach?' 'What do you drink with milk?' 'What do you find in the dining room?' And so on.

- l. Ask patients to name words that start with a certain letter or two letters, or end with a letter or two letters. For example, name words that start with 'R'. Name words that start with 'ST'. Name words that end with a 'P'. Name words that end with the letters 'TY'.
- m. If questions: Ask the patient a series of 'if' questions and allow them to answer freely. For example:
 - If you could have a super-power, what would it be?
 - If you could meet anyone, who would it be?
 - If you had to choose only one meal to eat, what would you order?
 - If you could choose any talent, what would it be?
- n. Find patients favorite artists/songs. Play a clip or sing a lyric from that song and ask patient to finish the lyrics
- o. Following directions: Give the patient directions to follow – one-step (raise your right hand), two-step (touch your nose, tap your foot), three-step (clap your hands, nod your head, look left), and so on.
- p. Following directions: break down a task into steps. You can write out the steps or ask patient to write out steps. A helpful task that a patient may need help with is using their electronics. Say each step aloud, demonstrate the step, write it out, and then ask them to follow the directions. Repeat as many times as necessary.
- q. Play hangman.
- r. I start, you finish: You start a word with a sound, and they finish the word. For example, you say 'sh' they say 'out'. Then ask the patient to say the whole word aloud. You say 'Frrr' they say 'ost' = Frost. And so on. This can also be done with sentences where you start the sentence, and they finish. For example, I wish I had a _____. You could also give the last start to a word, such as, I wish I had a pur.... They could finish with 'son' (person) or 'spective' (perspective) or sssss (purse).

IV. Long-Term Memory (recent)

1. Pen and paper

- a. Ask patient to write out their daily schedule with details. Include each part of the day including things like breakfast, lunch and dinner, naptime, TV time, brushing teeth and other activities of daily living, reading, activities like bingo or cards, calling family, writing in their journal, and so on. To up the challenge, be as detailed as possible, to lower the challenge, only list a basic schedule. Review the schedule aloud with reading the list and recalling the list. At the end of your session, ask them to recall as many items on the schedule as possible.
- b. Write out a list of the patient's daily schedule with each daily event on a different piece of paper. Ask the patient to put the pages in order of their daily routine. Feel free to throw in a curveball like 'feed the alligators' to add some humor.
- c. Ask patient who they have spoken to on the phone recently. With permission, check their recent calls on their cell phone. Go through the phone calls with them and create a call log together of the names of friends and family and their phone numbers. Ask the patient to log in the times that they speak with the people on

the call log. Practice with the recent calls from their phone to write the call on the log, use prompting for patient if they need assistance.

- d. Practice finding family and friends' numbers in the patient's phone and the instructions for making phone calls. If appropriate, at the end of the session, ask them to make a call to a family member or friend by recalling the directions from earlier in the session.
- e. Ask patient what they did yesterday. Then, review their schedule book/calendar, community calendar, or ask aide (if applicable) to confirm. If they are missing events or appointments that they attended, together with the patient, create a visual schedule from the previous day. Draw images to depict the events (breakfast – draw what they ate, music concert - make a picture of someone singing or musical notes, and so on). Then ask them to recall the previous day's events by looking at the images (no words.) You can add the times for added challenge.
- f. Review the patient's daily routine with them. If it is unknown, create a written list for their daily routine. Then, set it to the tune of a familiar song. For example, you are able to create a daily routine consisting of:

Breakfast

Gym

Rest

Lunch

Physical Therapy

Relax

Dinner

TV

Now sing to the tune of 'he's got the whole world in his hands':

First, I go to breakfast, breakfast
And then the gym, I go to the gym
And then it's rest time, then I rest
And then it's time to go to lunch.
After lunch, I have PT
And then I relax, I relax
And then it's dinner, with my friends
And then I watch the best TV.

Write it with your patient if you can, and then sing it with them while reading it. Repeat as many times as possible. At the end of the session, ask them to sing it again.

- g. Say 3-5 words or a sentence aloud and then ask them to repeat. Distract them for 1-5 minutes (conversation, color, math equations, computer exercises, etc.) and then ask them to repeat the words. Make sure to keep a timer on and keep extending the delay.
- h. Write a 'to-do' list of 2-10 tasks (pick up milk, cancel subscription, do laundry, call grandson, make dinner reservations, return Amazon package). Ask patient

what is on their to-do list or create an imaginary list together. Ask patient to read the list aloud (add silly items too, such as Give monkey a bath or Book the magician). Then, after a 30-second to 5-minute delay, ask patient to recall the list.

- i. Create a menu for what they will have for dinner (if possible, see if you can get the dinner menu from the front desk). Create choices for 2-5 categories (appetizers, entrees, sides, desserts, and drinks) Then, ask the patient to order dinner from the menu. After a delay, ask them what they ordered (list recall). If they have forgotten, read them the choices and ask them to recall which one they had chosen (list recognition).
- j. Tell patient that they are going to plan a dinner party (or birthday party or Easter brunch – whatever holiday is upcoming is fun). Options for party planning:
Ask them to choose a theme.
Ask them who will be attending and create a guest list.
Ask them where the party will take place? The beach, a restaurant, etc.
Ask them to choose what kinds of foods and beverages they will be serving, make a menu.
Ask them to choose what decorations they plan to have, colors, placement, etc.
Create a shopping list for the party
Ask how the party will be organized, create a schematic or floorplan
How much will they spend? Create a budget.
Create an invitation with time, location, and what to bring.
Then, at the end of the session, ask them to recall the details for the party. Over the next sessions, you can add to the party planning and see how many details can be recalled.

V. Long-Term Memory (remote)

1. Back-and-forth interactions / conversation / language based:
 - a. Engage patient in a discussion of life events. Ask them to name 5 important life events (i.e. going to school, first job, getting married, having children, moving, retiring, family reunions, etc.) Ask them to name them in order, or ask for 3-10 details from each event. Prompt with questions if having difficulty until you find an anchor that they are able to recall, and build from there. For example, your first job... was it in an office or outside or a store? Did you wear a uniform? Did you have a nice boss? What products did you use or handle? How did you get there – the bus? Drive? Walk? Who did you work with? And so on.
 - b. Give the patient a word or phrase and ask them to connect it to a memory. For example:
Flower – my father used to bring my mother flowers every Friday. Or my favorite flower is a rose.
Car – my husband drove a 65 Cadillac
Cake – I used to bake my children's birthday cakes from scratch – lemon cake!
Falling in love – my first love was a girl in the service when I was stationed in France
And so on...

- c. Give the patient numbers (in order or random) and see if they can connect them with a memory:
 - 1 – I have 1 brother, his name is Joe
 - 4 – I have had four dogs in my life...
 - 10 – I got a new model airplane when I was 10
 - And so on...
- d. Ask patient to name their ‘favorites’
 - Favorite toy growing up
 - Favorite game
 - Favorite aunt or uncle
 - Favorite actor
 - Favorite movie
 - Favorite food
 To up the challenge, ask them to name 1-3 details about the ‘favorite’ and/or a memory attached to it.
- e. Engage pt in a back-and-forth interaction to discuss their accomplishments (3-10). Prompt with specific questions if having trouble – accomplishment at work, accomplishment with athletics, accomplishments in school, accomplishments as a son/daughter or father/mother, and son. Ask questions for more details for each accomplishment.
- f. Engage pt in a back-and-forth interaction to discuss the best characteristics or personality traits. Ask what they were known for in their life. Ask what has gotten through tough times. Ask about each trait and try to illicit 1-5 details or memories associated with that trait.
- g. Engaged pt in a conversation to discuss 1-5 biggest challenges in their life and how they overcame them. Record details of each.
- h. Ask patient to tell you about a memorable book/movie/play/TV program and describe with detail the plot, characters, setting, and other details of the story. Or ask them to describe the beginning, middle and end.
- i. Ask patient to play two truths and a lie. This is where they tell you 2 things that are true about themselves and 1 thing that is a lie and you have to guess which is the lie. It can also be 2 lies and a truth.
- j. Play never would I ever. In this game, the players have to name experiences and the person who has had that experience has gets a point. The person who gets to 10 first loses. For example, never have I ever gone skydiving. If you have done it, you get a point. The object is to name things that you have NOT done, hoping the other person has. Another example, I have never lived in Florida. You both would get a point.

2. Visualization

- a. Visualize a specific time period or event in life: wedding day. Help walk patient through steps of visualization through cuing to recall details e.g what time of the year was your wedding, what were you wearing, who were your bridesmaids/groomsmen, what was the wedding location, etc.

- b. Visualize your home growing up or as an adult having a family, walk through the house and describe details for each room. Name a happy memory in the house or an important time in the house, provide details.
 - c. Visualize your loved one's appearance – go through face features, like what exact color is their eyes? How did their hair feel? (i.e. soft, thick, prickly, etc.), what was their skin tone? Did they have dimples? Freckles? Wrinkles when they smiled? How did they smell? What did their voice / laugh sound like? Did they have a certain way they would sit or stand? And so on.
 - d. Visualize the steps to a favorite game or hobby and ask them to describe each step in the game. Ask questions, like how long is the knitting needle? What color are the cards? How far would you hit the ball? What did the fish feel like? And so on.
3. Pen and paper:
- a. Create a timeline of sequenced life events with your patient. Make sure there is a lot of space between events so you can fill things in as you go. Or, make a notebook with each life event on a different page. Write details of each event.
 - b. Create a family tree with the patient's immediate family. For extra challenge, write details of each person (age, where they live, etc.)
 - c. Write fill in the blank lines for the patient to complete. For example:
 - I grew up in _____.
 - I like to listen to _____ on the radio.
 - I am known for being _____.
 - My children's names are _____.
 - And so on.
 - d. Write a choice list about the patient where they have 2-5 choices for each section, with only 1 pertaining to them:
 - For example:
 - I am:
 - 87 years old 53 years old 101 years old
 - I have:
 - 4 children no children 17 children
 - I used to work as a:
 - Nurse homemaker secretary
 - My favorite hobby is:
 - Reading baking marathons
 - *Don't forget, you can add silly choices to make it fun!