



How to deal with the overwhelm

brainstrust information sheet

Know Hows are published by *brainstrust* to help people living with a brain tumour to understand current topics. They are produced with input from relevant scientific and clinical experts and are written in a way that should help you to understand often complicated topics.

If you have an idea for a Know How, then please let us know.

If you have any queries, don't forget you can talk to one of our support specialists on **01983 292 405** or email **hello@brainstrust.org.uk**.

Why do we need this Know How?

When situations change, it is hard to know which way to turn. Things that you did so easily suddenly become overwhelming. If you are a patient living with a brain tumour, there may also be changes in your ability to function as you used to.

What does this mean?

When there is a shift in dynamic, it can be hard cope. Things around us change, but at times of stress, we hold on to what we know and what has worked in the past. This can cause more stress, and so the cycle of feeling overwhelmed continues.

Feeling overwhelmed does not reflect badly on your ability – it can show that you really care.

Focusing on looking after tasks can distract us from looking after ourselves so we have less energy and drive to perform at our best.

Ask yourself

- What specifically am I struggling with?
- Is there anything else?
- Is there anything else? Keep asking until there is nothing else.
- What have I found out for myself?
- What makes it hard?
- What's on the horizon
- Where's my sanctuary?
- What are the sources of information that will help me fill in the gaps?

Response

- Take the list of what you are struggling with and write each one on a Post-it note. Divide them into two groups – those you can't influence and those you can. Park the first. Focus on the second group. Map them into a timeline of when you are going to do them.
- Talk to someone who can help you to prioritise or share out tasks; this will help to change things straight away.

- Once you have agreed a realistic set of tasks, set some clear boundaries to allow you to achieve these.
- Build preparation time and downtime into your diary so you can perform well for the time that you need to and you don't feel as if you are always on the back foot.
- Make sure you ring-fence time for yourself to do whatever helps you to recharge: exercise, fresh air, time with friends. You need your body and mind to be on top form so you are better able to cope.

Contact

Talk to *brainstrust*. We can help. You can call, write, type, text.

Email for help and support:
hello@brainstrust.org.uk

Telephone: **01983 292 405**

Other helpful links

brainstrust.org.uk/mindfulness

Expertly checked and updated January 2019.



Production of *brainstrust*'s information is supported by the Anna Horrell fund. Anna, wife and mum, tragically passed away in August 2017 after a valiant fight against a glioblastoma. Throughout her life and her illness, she was an inspiration to us all, fighting bravely and cheerfully in the face of adversity. She was the beating heart of our family, and her loss left a hole in our lives that can never be replaced. In her incredible memory, we are passionate about helping others diagnosed with a brain tumour to navigate this most difficult of journeys.

Mike, Tom, Rebecca, Charlie & Sophie