

Thriving Through Cognitive Changes

CAN DO
MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

WEBINAR 
WEDNESDAYS

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UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Thursday, October 22

JUMPSTART

Managing Cognition Changes
in Daily Life

Tuesday, October 27

Your Questions Answered

MS and the Mind: Let's Talk Cognition

Wednesday, October 28

MS MOVES

Guided workout program

Wednesday, November 4

Can Do MS Summit

Health and Wellness Summit



CANDO-MS.ORG



2026 CAN DO MS SUMMIT

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4TH
12:00PM-4:30PM EST

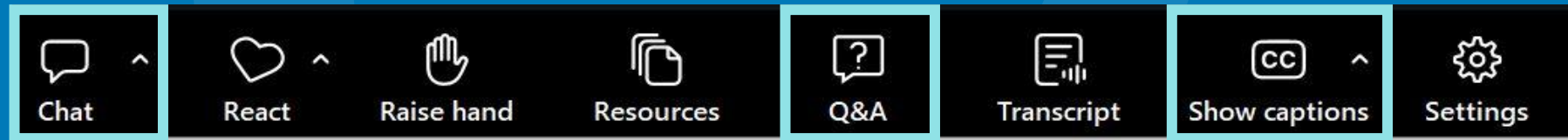
A half-day virtual event combining
cutting-edge MS science with
hands-on wellness practices



REGISTER HERE!

How to Ask Questions During the Webinar

Type in your questions using
the Questions Box



Provide comments and engage
with the speakers and audience
using the **Chat Box**

Closed captioning

YOUR SPEAKERS



Renee Madathil
Neuropsychologist

New York



Simon Carson
Occupational Therapist

New York

WHAT ARE COGNITIVE CHANGES?

Cognition = The mental skills we use to take in, process, store, and use information



Attention: staying focused, filtering distractions



Processing Speed: how quickly you take in and respond to information



Memory: learning, storing, and retrieving information

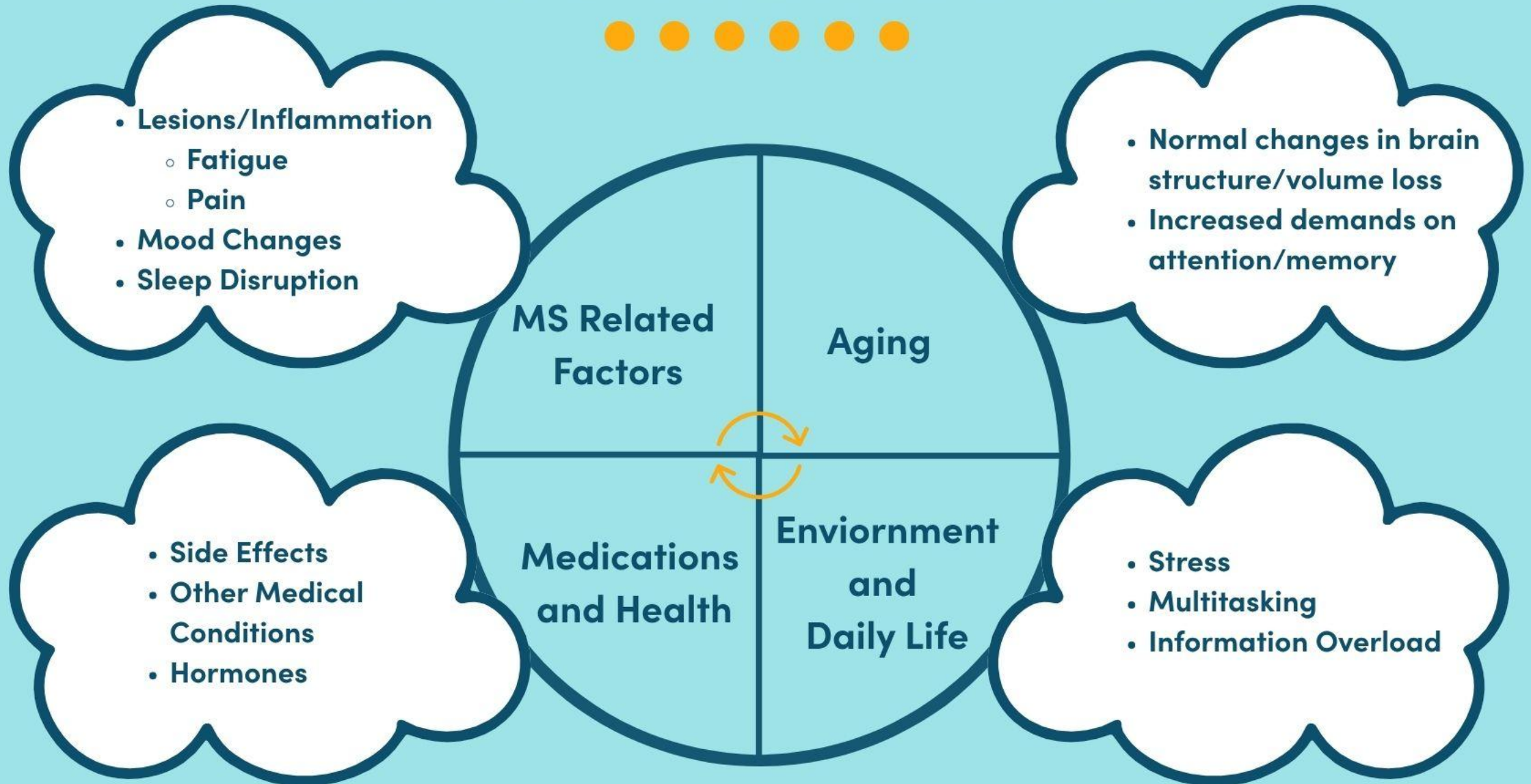


Executive Functions: planning, organizing, multitasking, problem-solving



Language: finding words, expressing or understanding information

WHY DO THEY HAPPEN?



WHAT IS “COGNITIVE RESERVE”?



The brain's ability to adapt and find different ways of accomplishing tasks



Move Your Body: Regular physical activity supports brain and overall health



Protect Your Sleep: Sleep supports attention, learning, memory, and emotional regulation



Keep Your Brain Engaged: Learn, create, socialize, work, play, and challenge yourself



Take Care of Your Whole Health: Manage MS symptoms and other health conditions; attend to mood, stress, pain, and fatigue

IF YOU'RE NOTICING COGNITIVE CHANGES...

Notice ➡ Understand ➡ Adapt

- Notice

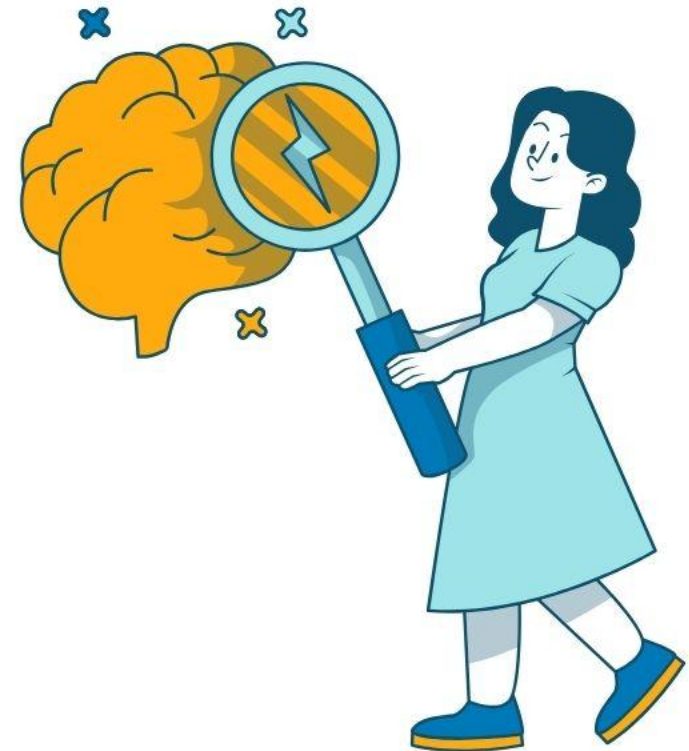
- What are you having trouble with?
- When does it happen?
- What makes it better or worse?

- Understand

- Talk with your MS Team
- Consider factors such as fatigue, sleep, mood, medications, pain, and MS disease activity
- Cognitive screening can be a starting point to understanding

- Adapt

- Use external supports
- Reduce multitasking
- Use compensatory strategies
- Take advantage of your best cognitive times of day
- Allow extra time when needed



Information Overload



YOUR SMARTPHONE AS A RELIABLE ASSISTANT



- Let your phone do the remembering so your brain doesn't have to
- Reduces the “mental load”
- Increases consistency for managing
 - To-Do's
 - Appointments
 - Information
- Boosts confidence and independence
- Conserves your precious energy

YOUR ESSENTIAL APP TOOLKIT



Calendar



Camera



Notes



Recorder



Tasks

Simple Apps
for BIG Wins!

ALARMS AND TIMERS: YOUR CUES FOR ACTION

WHY IT HELPS

For simple time-sensitive tasks to shift your attention to what matters most

- Turning off the stove
- Taking a break, drinking water
- Turning off the hose
- Switching tasks

RECOMMENDED APP

Your Phone's built-in Clock app

KEY SKILL 1

Set a daily repeating alarm for drinking a glass of water at 2pm

KEY SKILL 2

Set a timer for 30 minutes to 'take a break'



PRO TIP: Don't use an alarm for an important task. You risk shutting off before completing the task and risk not actually completing it!

THE DIGITAL CALENDAR: YOUR MEMORY FOR THE FUTURE



WHY IT HELPS



Remembers future events and helps you plan to conserve energy!

KEY SKILL



Creating an event with a reminder

- Tap the '+' button
- Add a title (ex: 'Test Event')
- Set the date and time
- Add a notification (ex: 1 day before and 1 hour before)
- Tap 'Save'

RECOMMENDED APP



Google Calendar

PRO TIPS:

- Avoid using calendar events as tasks as they will disappear into the past, even if you don't get to it!
- Events have a date/time/location (tasks just have a date and time)



TASKS:

YOUR CUES FOR ACTION

WHY IT HELPS: For time-sensitive tasks that keep a nagging reminder on the screen until it's done!

- Example: Taking daily medication, paying a monthly bill, getting your car inspected

RECOMMENDED APP: Your phone's built-in Task app or Google Tasks, TickTick, and Microsoft To Do

KEY SKILL 1: Set a daily repeating task for taking your vitamins at 8am

KEY SKILL 2: Set a repeating task to change car oil every 3 months

PRO TIPS:

- Leave the reminder on your phone notifications until it's done
- Combine the act of checking the item off as you finish the task to ensure it was completed

TO-DO LISTS: YOUR ROADMAP FOR THE DAY

- WHY IT HELPS: Makes all the “to-do’s” feel manageable. Get the satisfaction of checking them off!
- RECOMMENDED APP: Google Keep
- KEY SKILL: Create a daily list of tasks you want to get done in a day
 - Open Google Keep. Click new entry and select list
 - Title “To-Do”
 - Start making your list!

PRO TIPS:

-
-
- Rearrange tasks to help
- keep the important
- ones on top!
-
- Pin your note to the top to
- make it a higher priority
-

THE DIGITAL NOTEBOOK: YOUR BRAIN DUMP

PRO TIPS:

- Use voice to text to dictate your notes to avoid having to type
- Use a tag or label system to categorize notes for easy discovery
- Add a reminder to a note to alert you based on time or location
- Add a picture to your note
- Keep checklists in a note (such as closing down the house before leaving)



WHY IT HELPS: Captures thoughts and ideas before they disappear

RECOMMENDED APP: Google Keep or Apple Notes

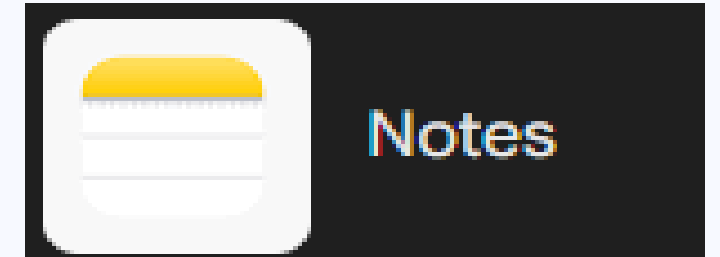
KEY SKILL: Creating a quick note

- Open the app
- Create a title
- Type your note

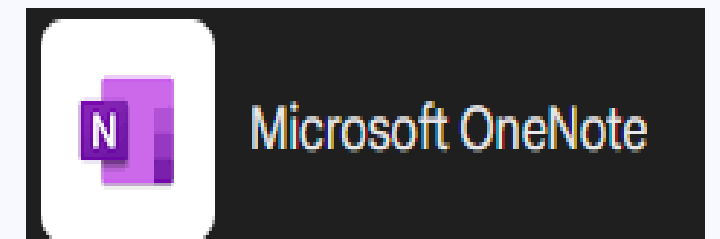
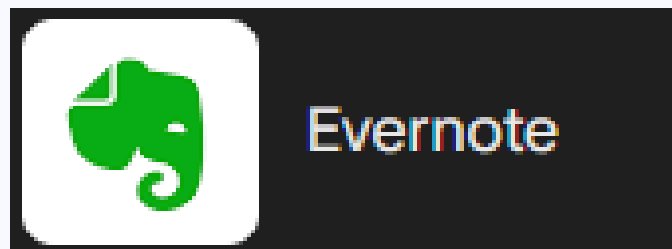
THE DIGITAL NOTEBOOK: YOUR BRAIN DUMP



- Suggested Apps:



- Other App Options:



VISUAL AND AUDITORY REMINDERS: YOUR REAL WORLD CUES ●●●●●



“Capture Tools” = Easily capture information for your process later



WHY IT HELPS: A picture or sound can provide useful information



RECOMMENDED APP: Your phone’s camera or voice recorder



KEY SKILL 1: Open your camera app, zoom in on this slide, keep it in focus, snap a picture!



KEY SKILL 2: Open your recorder app, create a voice memo about something you want to do in the future



VISUAL IDEAS

- Take a picture of your parking spot or the inside of your pantry
- Photos of receipts, business cards, products, furnace filter size, license plate, battery sizes, etc.

AUDITORY IDEAS

- Ask your doctor if you can record medical explanations so you can listen to it again later
- Use your recorder to capture your ideas as they come up

PRO TIPS:

- Create a reminder to periodically review your captured photos/voice memos to turn them into written/typed notes. Once you transfer the content to a different tool-delete the original

- Import photos to your notes app to save along with written content (a picture of your medicine bottles along with notes about what each medicine is for)

MAKING IT STICK: HOW TO STAY ORGANIZED

- Create a system of rules for yourself to work by
- The “One Place” Rule: use one calendar app, one note app, and one task app
- The “Sunday Sit Down”: Take 5 minutes on Sunday to look at the week ahead and review the past week
- Start Small: Pick just ONE tool to try this week
- Be Kind to Yourself: Progress, not perfection, is the goal!



IN CONCLUSION



- Your phone is a powerful assistant waiting to help
- Start with simple, built-in apps
- Focus on one new skill at a time
- You are capable, and these small steps can make a big difference
- Practice will increase your comfort and ability
- Finally-remember to take breaks to avoid mental fatigue
 - Adjusting to a new skill or routine takes time and energy!



Q+A



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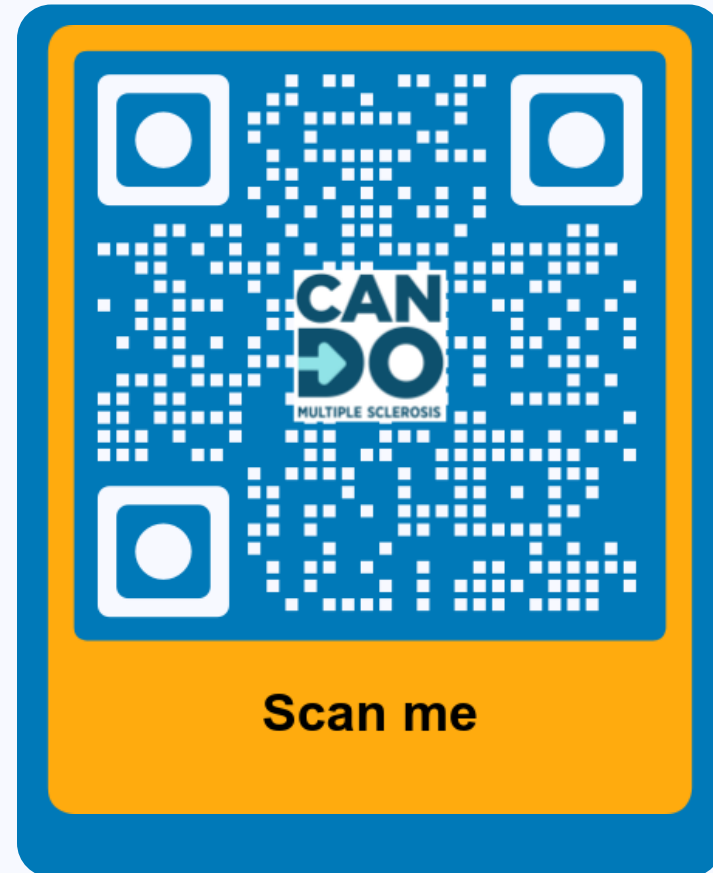


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Next Month:

Creating and Maintaining Meaningful Connections

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