

7.1 Carer Wellbeing and Support 1



Recap of last session

Last week we agreed that you would try:

Q! Did you get a chance to try this out? How did it go?

The goal this session is working towards:



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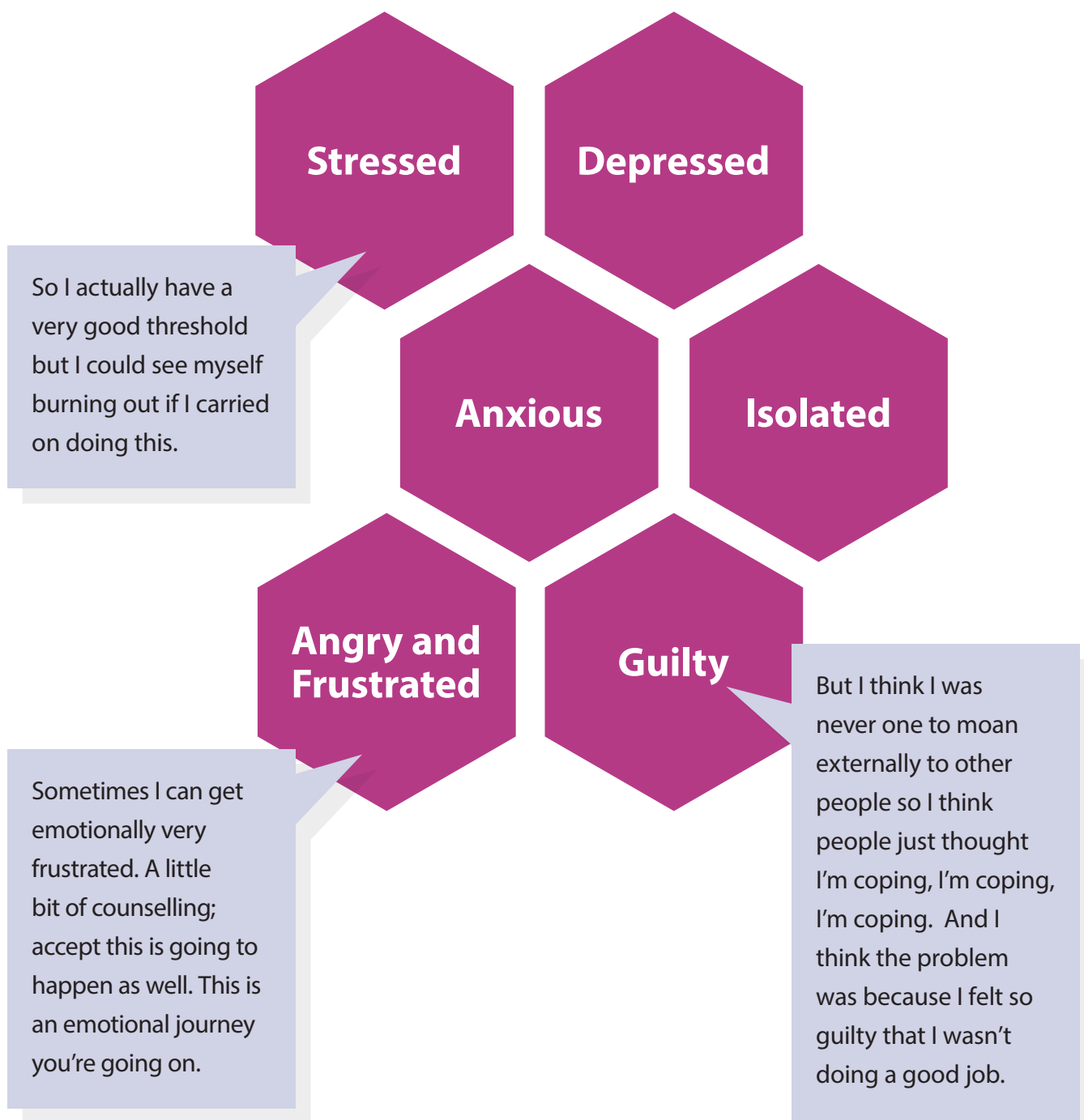
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Caring and negative emotions

Caring for a person with dementia can be stressful. Family members caring for people with dementia have told us that they sometimes feel:



Looking after yourself: making a BASE plan



It's important, but it can be hard to make time for your own wellbeing while caring for someone living with dementia.

BASE stands for four different types of activity. Balancing these is good for wellbeing:

- **Being healthy:** exercise, healthy eating and drinking, rest
- **Activity** – work, chores, study, caring
- **Social** – with friends, family, community
- **Enjoy** – play, fun, pleasure



Talking Point

Do you think you balance these four different types of activities?

Which do you do least?

What could you add to your usual activities?

Let's have a look at the suggestions on page 6 – tick those you might enjoy and add any others.

▶ Being healthy

- Go for a walk
- Relaxation
- Exercise e.g. yoga, swim, chair based exercise, stretching
- Have a leisurely bath
- Have hair done / manicure / pedicure
- Hand or foot massage
- _____
- _____

▶ Activity

- Exercise
- DIY / Sewing
- Gardening
- Memory books / boxes
- Learn something new
- Drawing, painting, crafts
- Make a playlist for life
- Housework
- Cook or bake
- _____
- _____

▶ Social

- Write letters or cards etc
- Visit family, friends, neighbours
- Write or telephone someone
- Sit with person you care for or someone else for a tea and chat
- Go to a support group
- Join a social or sports club
- Online support groups, blogs and forums
- _____
- _____

▶ Enjoy

- Listen to music/ radio
- Look at photos
- Go to the shops/ museum/ gallery
- Do something you used to enjoy
- Read/listen to books, newspapers,
- Watch a film
- Go into the garden or balcony
- Have a picnic or a BBQ
- Watch a favourite TV programme
- Watch wildlife or be with animals
- _____
- _____



Talking Point:

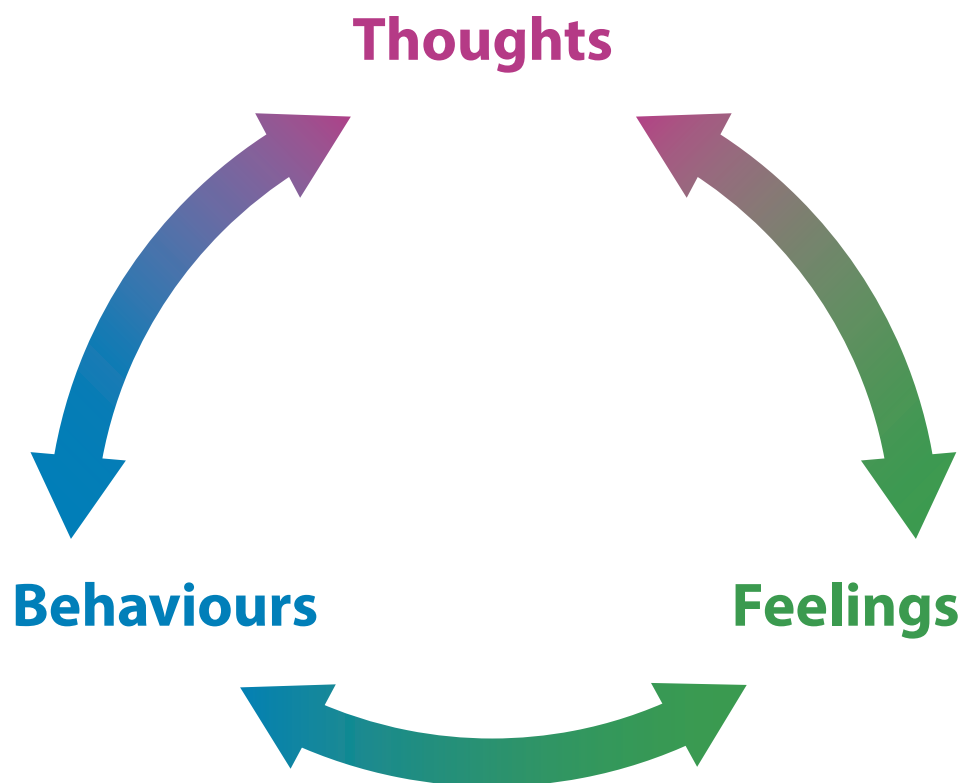
Now pick two of the activities you listed that you do not currently do or are not doing as much as you would like to. Let's think about them and answer the questions below:

Two activities you might try (name activities in boxes below)

What preparations will you need?		
When will it take place?		
How often can it be done?		
How long will it take?		
What might make it easier?		
What might get in the way?		

Noticing thoughts, feelings and behaviours

Most of us simply react to thoughts and feelings rather than noticing or questioning them. In stressful situations, like those that arise while caring; behaviours, thoughts and feelings can be like a vicious cycle.



Mary is caring for her husband, John. A friend invites her out. She thinks “There’s no point”, “I’m too tired to be good company”, “I won’t enjoy it and I’ll feel guilty for having fun while John is at the day centre because he’d rather not go”.

Fill in the boxes on page 9 with the answers to these questions:

If she thinks and believes these thoughts, what is she likely to feel?

What is she likely to do?

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Mary's thoughts



There's no point, I'm too tired to be good company, she doesn't like me, I will feel guilty

Mary's behaviours

Mary's feelings

Can you think of a time recently when you've felt distressed, anxious, angry, or depressed while caring?

SITUATION What happened? When and where? What else was going on? Does it happen often? Who was there?

THOUGHTS What thoughts or images went through your mind just before or during that time? If your thought was a question, try to answer it. What disturbed me?

FEELINGS What distressing emotion/s did you feel? What else? What bodily feelings did you have? *e.g. Anger, anxiety, depression, frustration, guilt, shame, irritable*

BEHAVIOURS What did you do? What didn't you do? What helped? How did you cope?

Summary and next steps

In this section we have talked about:

- Caring and emotions
- BASE planning
- Noticing thoughts, feelings and behaviours

FOR NEXT SESSION: Putting it into practice

▶ **BASE activity planner:**

Please use the BASE activity planner on page 13 to make a note of at least one activity that you have done each day.

▶ **Thoughts, feelings and behaviour record sheets:**

Before your next session, identify a situation, and practice noticing your thoughts, feelings and behaviours - the more you notice them, the more you will be able to make helpful and effective changes. Use the planning record on page 14 below to record them.

Next session we will

Q! Who will attend the next session?

- ▶ **Finally: Let's look over your goals and add in any actions you plan to make.**

Planning Record: BASE activity planner

	Being healthy	Activity	Social	Enjoyment
MON	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
TUES	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
WEDS	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
THURS	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
FRI	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
SAT	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
SUN	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____

Planning Record: Thoughts, Feelings and Behaviours

SITUATION What happened? When and where? What else was going on? Does it happen often? Who was there?

THOUGHTS What thoughts or images went through your mind just before or during that time? If your thought was a question, try to answer it. What disturbed me?

FEELINGS What distressing emotion/s did you feel? What else? What bodily feelings did you have? *e.g. Anger, anxiety, depression, frustration, guilt, shame, irritable*

BEHAVIOURS What did you do? What didn't you do? What helped? How did you cope?

