

CAIS HANDOUTS

Information and Suggestions

for

Improving Everyday Life and Reducing Distress

by

Supporting Cognitive Abilities

Please properly cite when using any part of these handouts, as follows: Weaverdyck, Shelly E. (2020). *Cognitive Abilities and Intervention Strategies (CAIS) Handout*: [insert number and title of handout] *In Asking Why with the CAIS: A Guide to Supporting a Person and Their Cognitive Abilities: Volume I*. Improving MI Practices.

<https://www.improvingmipractices.org>

Disclaimer:

These CAIS handouts are not sufficient for the understanding, assessment, or intervention regarding any individual person or situation. In each individual case, a health professional must be consulted. These handouts suggest ideas from which to draw and apply as appropriate. The suggestions here will not be appropriate for every person in every situation.

Introduction to the CAIS Handouts: Information and Suggestions in Volume I
From Cognitive Abilities and Intervention Strategies (CAIS) Manual: *Asking Why with the CAIS: A Guide to Supporting a Person and Their Cognitive Abilities*. By Shelly E. Weaverdyck, PhD 2010. Revised 6/30/20. On website at <https://www.improvingmipractices.org>

INTRODUCTION TO THE CAIS HANDOUTS

Information and Suggestions for Improving Everyday Life and Reducing Distress by Supporting Cognitive Abilities

This is an introduction to the **CAIS Handouts of Information and Suggestions**.

The 43 CAIS handouts, handout list, and this introduction are available on the Michigan **Improving MI Practices (IMP)** website at this link: <https://www.improvingmipractices.org>

A **list of the handouts** follows this introduction. There are 43 handouts. The list organizes the handouts by general topics. A common focus is on **cognitive abilities** and **ways to improve everyday life and reduce distress**.

Each handout has a **number** in the upper right corner and in the footer that corresponds to its number in the list.

“CAIS” refers to the Cognitive Abilities and Intervention Strategies (CAIS). The **CAIS Questions to Ask** and the **CAIS Intervention Strategies** are a set of questions and intervention strategies that address a person’s **cognitive abilities**, to help this person **think, understand, communicate**, interact with their **environment**, and **perform tasks** more easily, to **improve everyday life**, and to **reduce distress and distressing situations**. They are presented in Volume II of the three-volume CAIS manual and posted on the IMP website in an interactive format and as pdf documents at <https://www.improvingmipractices.org>

These handouts reflect many of the assumptions made by the CAIS Questions and Interventions and present many of the concepts and intervention strategies that are in the CAIS Questions and Interventions in an alternative and for some, **more accessible format**. Some of these assumptions and concepts are discussed throughout the three volumes and in the introduction of this manual.

Topics

The CAIS Handouts provide **information, tips, and suggestions** on a variety of topics, some of which are not elsewhere in this manual. Other handouts go into **more detail** and more depth about topics that are discussed in the manual. Some of the handouts are **similar** in topic but address the topic in **different ways** for a **different reader or purpose**.

Some examples of **specific issues** addressed are, **how to recognize** a person’s **cognitive strengths and needs**, how to assist with **making decisions**, how to **touch** a person who is

hypersensitive to touch, preventing and responding to **distress** and **distressing situations**, **problem solving** methods, and understanding **behavior** and **emotions**.

Other topics include the **brain**, specialized intervention strategies, issues **specific** to **cognitive intervention**, brain disorders, cognitive abilities, the environment, communication, and the task and daily routines.

For example, Handout #5 “Recognizing Cognitive Abilities” is useful with the CAIS Questions for suggestions of how to recognize cognitive abilities while observing a person performing a task.

Variety of Styles and Purposes

The handouts are written in **various styles** to appeal to readers with a **variety of needs**. Some readers will be busy or exhausted and others may be reading this material more leisurely. So some handouts are easier to read quickly or to be scanned for information or tips, and others invite more contemplation and thought. As was said above, some handouts address a similar topic but with different emphases, style, or presentation.

Using the Handouts

The Handouts can be used in a variety of ways.

- They can be **read** to gain more clarity or understanding of specific topics or general concepts.
- They can be **distributed** to people who might find them helpful, including families, friends, colleagues, and people who assist a person you relate to in some way. They can also be given to a person with cognitive changes when this person is interested.
- They can be **consulted** before advising or engaging in a problem-solving session.
- They can help **generate ideas** for planning support strategies or interventions.
- They can be **handouts** to have available in an office or public venue, to link to online, to informally offer someone, or to distribute during a presentation.
- They can be distributed during a **group presentation** on a specific topic or as **additional handouts** when presenting the **CAIS Educational Series** curriculum described at the end of this introduction. They can be distributed **formally** to a class, meeting, or any audience, or **informally** in a one-on-one conversation or a small group setting.
- They can be background and in-depth information to **review for yourself** before using the **CAIS Questions and Interventions**, presenting the **CAIS Educational Series curriculum** sessions, or viewing the CAIS Beyond Behavior **online course**. All three of these are described at the end of this introduction under the subheading “Resources About the Topics in these Handouts and the CAIS”.
- They can be given instead of the CAIS Questions and Interventions if someone is too fatigued, stressed, or worried to try to read the Questions and Interventions. A brief handout on a single topic may be more manageable.
- Regardless of the occasion, the handouts can be information given to someone who can later review it when they are less fatigued, or have a moment free of distractions to focus on it, or to remind them of information shared at an earlier time.

Easy to Use

Each handout is **independent** of the others, so each can be used and given individually. They are not a set. They do not need to be read in any particular order.

Most handouts are **two to five pages long**, though some are longer.

Most handouts are **free of technical language** and present content in a simple easy to read style. At the same time, they do not oversimplify complex topics or oversimplify the language.

Some of the handouts have the information listed in a **numbered format**. This makes it easier to refer to specific points of content when discussing the handout, for example in a group or over the phone with someone.

The information and suggestions apply to adults in any setting and who are living with most types of brain disorders. The handouts are particularly useful regarding persons with a **moderate to severe** brain disorder, since relatively little is written about them with respect to support and intervention.

The focus of most of the handouts is information that can lead directly to intervention. The handouts are intended to help the reader know what to do and how to figure out what to do.

As one who is sharing these handouts, you may find **Handout #39** titled “**Sharing Ideas with Others: Suggestions for Sharing Information, Support, & Intervention Ideas**” helpful.

More About These Handouts

Someone of **any type** or **level of experience** and **expertise** may find these handouts useful, including care partners, direct caregivers, family members, friends, supervisory and administrative staff, health care professionals, general professionals, teachers, and others.

They can be useful in **any setting**, including, for example, a private family home, a long-term care setting, a day program, a community program, a support group, problem solving session, a restaurant, store, or office.

The concepts and suggestions in these handouts apply to **all of us** since none of us has a perfect brain and we all have cognitive weaknesses and strengths. Most of these handouts address cognitive abilities, the brain, and related topics. They also apply to anyone with a **neurological** or **psychiatric** disorder, at **any stage, level, or type** of cognitive change.

Some of these handouts provide **basic** and general information that can be helpful to read before trying to understand the **analytical** parts of the Educational Series curriculum content, the online course, or the CAIS Questions and Interventions. Reading information about the brain or brain disorders, for example, may help orient some readers and prepare them for problem solving or for analyzing conditions regarding challenging situations. The interventions provided in the handouts then might make more sense.

Some of the handouts **combine various parts** of the **CAIS Intervention Strategies** that address a specific topic, such as handouts #32 “Making Decisions”, #27 “Touch”, and #28 “Movement”.

These handouts highlight and draw attention to some of the interventions that are organized under various headings, or are less easily noticed in the lists of the CAIS Intervention Strategies.

An important benefit of these handouts is the **variation** among the handouts. So the choice of which handouts to use at any given time can match the type and level of information or format needed or wanted by each **individual** using them.

Original Sources

1. Weaverdyck, S.E. (1990) “Neuropsychological Assessment as a Basis for Intervention in Dementia”. Chapter 3 in N. Mace (Ed.) Dementia Care: Patient, Family, and Community. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press.
2. Weaverdyck, S.E. (1991) “Assessment as a Basis for Intervention” and “Intervention to Address Dementia as a Cognitive Disorder”. Chapters 12 & 13 in D. Coons (Ed.) Specialized Dementia Care Units. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Resources About the Topics in these Handouts and the CAIS

For more information about the topics in these handouts and the CAIS that is easily accessible and easy to read see:

1. The list of handouts called “**CAIS Handouts: Information and Suggestions for Improving Everyday Life and Reducing Distress by Supporting Cognitive Abilities**” in this Volume I. It is a list of all 43 handouts that identify the number of each handout, its title, number of pages, and filename.
2. The Michigan **Improving MI Practices (IMP) website** at <https://www.improvingmipractices.org> Many resources regarding the brain, mental health, brain changes, and cognition are on this IMP website. This IMP website also has the entire three-volume manual, all of the 43 handouts and the handout list, along with five background chapters, the entire *CAIS Questions to Ask* and *CAIS Intervention Strategies*, the CAIS curriculum, and the CAIS online course described below.
3. The *CAIS Questions to Ask* and *CAIS Intervention Strategies* and instructions for all four parts: Cognitive Abilities, Environment, Communication, Task and Daily Routines in Volume II. The entire CAIS Questions and Intervention Strategies (in an **interactive format** and as pdf documents) with instructions and introductions and all of Volume II are posted on the IMP website at <https://www.improvingmipractices.org>
4. The five-session CAIS **curriculum**, called the “**CAIS Educational Series: Understanding and Supporting a Person’s Cognitive Abilities**” in Volume III, for you to use informally or to present more systematically as an instructor. The sessions and content can be used **informally** for **your own learning**, or for **sharing** or **advising** in a one-on-one conversation, with a family, or a small group setting. They can also be used more systematically as a presentation to a class, meeting, or an audience in any other venue. Sessions 1-5 address the brain, cognitive abilities, the environment, communication, and the task, respectively. These sessions encourage asking “Why?”. They include **informal questions** to ask that are similar to those more formally structured in the *CAIS Questions to Ask*. Each one-hour session has a script, objectives, PowerPoint slides, handouts, and evaluation forms. **Adaptations** of six of the seven handouts from these sessions are included in the **CAIS handouts**. The entire curriculum of five one-hour sessions is available on the IMP website at <https://www.improvingmipractices.org>
5. The **Online Course** of five one-hour modules called “Beyond Behavior: The Cognitive Abilities and Intervention Strategies (CAIS): Modules 1-5”. They address the brain, cognitive abilities, the

environment, communication, and the task respectively. They explore concepts and give tips and examples from the *CAIS Questions to Ask* and *CAIS Intervention Strategies*. They also **show how to use** each of the four parts of the **CAIS**. The online course can be viewed or taken on the IMP website at <https://www.improvingmipractices.org>

6. The **CAIS Handout #39** in this Volume I “**Sharing Ideas with Others: Suggestions for Sharing Information, Support, & Intervention Ideas**”.