



**Southeast Vancouver Seniors Arts  
And Cultural Centre Society  
S-53479  
Meeting # 60**  
**Champlain Heights Community Centre**  
**Thursday Nov. 21, 2013 at 10:30AM**  
**[www.SVSACS.org](http://www.SVSACS.org) – 604-325-0163**  
**Our Goal: a Dedicated Seniors Centre**

**Minutes**

Present: Lorna Gibbs, George Grant, Margaret Homonnay, Eddie So, Barbara Warner, Donna Davies, Des Burke, Manfred Hagen, Mabel Leung, Nelson & Belen Didulo, Sharon Tong, Tom Chin, Ramesh Kalia, Kamlesh Sethi, Jagjit Mann, Mohinder Sidhu, Abdul and Val Shaikh, Pat Deibert, Lilli Sinn, Roy and Margaret Wickland.

1. Call to Order – 10:00 am Lorna Gibbs in the chair
2. Approval of Agenda – Moved by Donna Davies, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Pat Deibert, carried.
3. Minutes of Meeting 59 – No issues
4. Approval of Minutes of Meeting 59 – Moved by Margaret Homonnay, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Pat Deibert, carried.
5. Reports - President – Lorna opened her remarks asking all to support relief efforts to those in the Philippines suffering the devastation wrought by Typhoon Hailyan. Donations should be channeled through the Red Cross. Our Federal Government will match donations made through Dec. 7, 2013. Lorna reported on two meetings attended by many seniors from our neighbourhood. The 1<sup>st</sup> was the Park Board meeting Oct. 21. Two buses transported about 50 seniors from Killarney, SVNH and Champlain to the meeting to support Commissioner de Genova's motion urging the City to seek alternate funding for our Centre. De Genova's motion was so substantially amended that speakers who came to support the original motion were severely disadvantaged. On November 6 many of the same seniors traveled to City Hall for a 9:30 am Planning & Transportation Meeting. A motion seeking Federal funds and additional Provincial funds was passed. The proceedings may be viewed at [2013-11-06 CoV Meeting](#). Lorna thanked all who gave of their time to attended meetings, including the Lak Tung Kuen Assoc., the Killarney Seniors Society and SVNH. Other meetings/events were: Mayor's Seniors Advisory Council Oct. 18 held at CHCC; HUB Meeting Oct 29 at SVNH; Diwali Celebration Nov 4 at SVNH – Lorna thanked Kamlesh and Ramesh for hosting this event; Better at Home Workshop Nov. 8 at the Victoria Drive Community Hall. The Champlain Heights Community Association is contributing \$200.00 towards our luncheon program and the Collingwood Policing Centre is funding two luncheons. We thank both these organizations for their wonderful support. Lorna thanked all for their participation and help throughout 2013 and looks forward to 2014. There is no regular meeting scheduled for December, only the luncheon and movie on Dec. 4. Our winter 2014 schedule of SVSACS luncheons/movies/meetings is attached.

6. Presentation by Lorill Garcea and Mirjana Srdanovic of COSCO: ***Memory and Aging***  
They gave a most interesting and informative talk and gave provided a hand out of their presentation. I have appended a truncated copy to these Minutes.  
Highlights are:

- Overview of memory; How memory works; Types of memory; How Memory changes as we age; Causes of memory problems; Tips for maintaining and improving memory; When to seek Professional help.

Memory decline is normal

- Memory process include *Encoding, Storage and Retrieval*

- Types of memory are *Implicit, Explicit, Long-Term and Short-Term*

- Long-Term Memory is divided into four types: *Semantic; Episodic; Remote or Autobiographical; Prospective.*

- Short-term Memory includes *Working Memory.*

- Memory functions that remain stable are Semantic, Procedural, and Remote/Autobiographical

- Memory functions that experience decline are: Working, Episodic and Prospective

- Causes of Memory decline may be substance abuse, dietary, vitamin deficiency or some medications.

- Stress, anxiety, dehydration, infections, flu and chemical imbalance may contribute to memory loss

- Alzheimer's Disease is not part of normal aging

- To maintain memory participate in physical activity, eat healthy, stay socially and mentally active,

- Manage stress; get adequate sleep; pay attention, if necessary wear glasses and have your hearing tested, maintain a positive attitude, be consistent, use memory aids (make lists, etc.)

- Seek professional help and advice if necessary.

7. New Business – Meeting and Movie Schedule for winter/spring 2014 – attached.

8. Adjournment – 12:00 pm Moved by Pat Deibert, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Des Burke, carried.

A reminder: 2013/2014 memberships (\$5.00) may be paid now.

SVSACS Memberships run from AGM to AGM. Next Meeting Nov 21 10:30 am

Fall movies: December 4<sup>th</sup> - A Christmas Story Reg. Nov 20 – Nov 27

Attachments: Winter/Spring 2014 Meeting 7 Movie Schedule

Truncated COSCO Presentation on *Memory and Aging.*

January 8, 2014 movie ***Bucket List*** – 2007 – 97 minutes – Adventure/Comedy/Drama

Luncheon registration: Dec 18 – Dec 23, call CHCC 604-718-6575 to reserve.

January 16, 2014 – Meeting 10:30 am CHCC – **Financial Literacy, Preventing Identity Theft**

**SPCA Annual Craft Fair** Saturday November 30, 2013 at Army & Navy Club, 3917 Main Street starts at 10:30 am. Lots of gorgeous stuff and Gail McKay's jams and jellies.

**Kensington CC Craft Fair** Saturday December 7, 2013 – 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

**SVSACS PARTNERS** are all working together to get a real Seniors Centre for you!



**KILLARNEY**  
COMMUNITY CENTRE



# COSCO Presentation on MEMORY AND AGING

Presented by the Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of British Columbia (COSCO)  
Seniors Health & Wellness Institute

COSCO believes that seniors helping seniors can make a great deal of difference to the health and well-being of people in our communities

Copied from the handout provided at SVSACS Meeting of Nov. 21, 2013.  
Presentation by Lorill Garcea and Mirjana Srdanovic of COSCO

## **(1) Presentation Overview**

The following topics [were] discussed in this presentation:

- Memory and Aging
- How Memory Works
- Types of Memory
- Changes in Memory as we Age
- Causes of Memory Problems
- Tips for Maintaining and Improving Memory
- When to Seek Professional Help

## **(2) What is Memory...Memory is**

- The result of complex networks and systems within our brain that allows us to capture, retain and retrieve information
- This information helps us shape our behaviour and the world around us
- Simply put, memory is one's ability to remember information and experiences
- It is what connects us to the past, present and future

## **(3) Memory and Aging**

- Memory loss is a great concern for many seniors
- There is no doubt that our brain's change as we age - with this also comes changes in our memory systems
- However, this doesn't mean that memory loss is an inevitable part of the aging process

## **(4) Memory and Aging (cont.)**

- We all have memory lapses from time to time:
- Misplacing keys, forgetting an acquaintance's name, forgetting what your spouse asked you to pick up on the way home, are common experiences for people of all age groups

## **(5) Memory and Aging (cont.)**

It is important to understand what changes in memory are associated with normal aging and those that are more serious and require medical attention

## **(6) Memory and Normal Aging**

- Generally speaking, our memory peaks when we are in our 20s and then gradually begins to decline
- However, research shows that some types of memory decline, various stay constant, and with training, others can even improve as we age

## **(7) Memory Decline Versus Memory Loss**

- Memory lapses and declines in certain memory systems are a normal part of aging
- In contrast, memory changes that negatively affect one's daily functioning are

much more serious:

- These are typically associated with memory loss (not a normal part of aging)
- Example - Not being able to find your way home while in your neighborhood
- Example - Repeatedly leaving the stove on

### **(8) How Does Memory Work?**

Researchers studying memory focus on three main areas of memory processing. These include:

- Encoding - Getting information into memory
- Storage - How information is represented and kept in memory
- Retrieval - Getting information out of memory

### **(9) Encoding**

- Research suggests that there are declines in encoding as we age (information processing declines with age)
- Learning new things may become more difficult, but not an impossibility (e.g., may take more time, attention, etc...)
- Doing more than one task at a time reduces the ability of information to be encoded within our memory

### **(10) Retrieval: Types of Memory**

- There are various memory systems within our brain
- Each system is affected slightly differently as we age
- Let's explore some memory types and how they are affected by aging

### **(11) Implicit Memory - Implicit/Procedural Memory**

- This is memory associated with doing things (For example, riding a bike).
- Here information has been gained at some previous point in time and does not require you to explicitly remember all the steps necessary to carry out the given task
- Procedural memory does not decline with age

### **(12) Explicit Memory**

- These are memories that require us to consciously remember information that is learned and remembered at a specific point in time
- These can include long-term memories (e.g., remembering a famous landmark) or short term memories (e.g., dialing a phone number)

### **(13) Long-Term Memory**

- Includes remembering a wide-range of information spanning from minutes to decades

Long-term memory types include:

- Semantic
- Episodic
- Remote or Autobiographical
- Prospective

### **(14) Semantic Memory**

- The accumulation of facts and experiences gained over a life-time For example - The location of a famous landmark
- Semantic memory remains stable as we age normally

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- It can even be improved by exercising your brain and engaging in new experiences

### (15) **Episodic Memory**

- Conscious recollection of information from a specific event or point in time. For example:
- 9/11 ("nine, eleven")
- Death of Elvis Presley
- Death of Marilyn Monroe
- With age, recollection of these events become less detailed
- Compared to younger adults, seniors omit more information

### (16) **Remote or Autobiographical Memory**

- Information that needs to be kept for a long time or involves information and events about your life (e.g., events or information about you; knowledge or facts about one's past).

Examples - 50th Birthday or a First Job

Your Graduation

- Remote or autobiographical memory changes very little over the life course

### (17) **Prospective Memory**

- Ability to remember something you have to do in the future
  - Example - The date and time of an important doctor's appointment
- Research shows mixed results - some studies show declines with age, whereas others do not.
- The truth is, no one at any age remembers all the appointments and things they have to do - making a habit of using a calendar or daily journal benefits people of all ages

### (18) **Short-Term Memory**

- Includes remembering pieces of information spanning a few seconds, to minutes or even days

Types of Short-Term Memory Include:

### (19) **Working Memory**

- Active process involved in holding information in the mind and simultaneously using that information (i.e. to make a decision, solve a problem)

Examples -

- Reading
- Planning for a party, an encounter with your neighbour

- The capacity of working memory increases gradually over childhood and declines gradually with old age

### (20) **Memory Changes – A Review**

- The following represents what we would summarize as memory changes that occur as we age (normal aging)

**Remain Stable:** Semantic Memory\*; Procedural Memory; Remote/Autobiographic memory

**Experience Decline:** Working Memory; Episodic Memory; Prospective Memory (this decline can be effectively managed by using cues – writing down tasks or events)

\* Because semantic memory is related to experience, it is possible that this type of memory may improve as people grow older (e.g., people are constantly gaining experience)

**(21) Possible Causes of Memory Problems**

Research has found that there are many potential causes of memory problems. Being cognizant of these can help you mitigate some of these risk factors.

- Alcoholism / Substance Abuse
- Vitamin Deficiency
- Low Vitamin B12 (found in meat, fish, poultry, milk, cheese eggs and fortified cereals - broken down by microwave cooking)

**(22) Possible Causes of Memory Problems (cont.)**

- Some Medications
- Side effects and drug interactions
- Types of medications that may cause memory problems:
- Some anti-depressants
- Some anti-histamines
- Anti-anxiety and blood pressure
- Anti-epilepsy

Note: Educate yourself on what you are taking. Be aware of the known side effects and potential interaction effects of medications on your memory, but do not stop taking your medication as prescribed by your medical doctor without discussing it with him or her first

**(23) Possible Causes of Memory Problems (cont.)**

- Poor Diet/Nutrition
- High fat, high cholesterol or too little cholesterol
- Not drinking enough water
- Mild dehydration can affect cognitive function and mental performance.
- Older adults are at an increased susceptibility to dehydration

**(24) Possible Causes of Memory Problems (cont.)**

- Prolonged Stress/Anxiety

- Releases cortisol into the bloodstream

**How does cortisol influence memory? .**

- Creates fats and can restrict energy supply to certain brain cells involved in memory

**(25) Possible Causes of Memory Problems (cont.)**

- Hormonal Changes
- Menopause
- Chemical imbalance
- Abnormal thyroid
- Not enough potassium (eat bananas and or potatoes regularly)
- Abnormal blood sugar levels
- Sudden Illness
- Flu
- Bacterial infections

Note: If you suspect that any of the factors discussed are causing you memory problems, talk to your doctor

**(26) Memory Disorders**

Serious medical conditions are also associated with memory loss

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- these disorders are not a part of normal aging:
- Alzheimer's Disease - a degenerative disease of the brain that causes memory and thinking to become severely impaired
- 1 in 11 Canadian seniors aged 65 or older have Alzheimer's Disease or a related dementia

### (27) Memory Disorders (cont.)

- Depression
- Can cause people to feel persistently low in spirits (sad or hopeless) over a sustained period of time
- Up to 11% of seniors are affected by depression, however this is likely under-diagnosed
- Difficulty concentrating and short term memory loss are considered symptoms of depression
- It is normal to feel sad from time-to-time, however when it is prolonged, this is a problem

### (28) Maintaining Memory - Good News:

- There are several things that we can do on a daily basis to mitigate the risk factors for memory decline and loss ... and it's not too late to start!
- By engaging in these healthy behaviours and using memory aides, you can maintain (and even enhance) your memory!

### (29) Participate in Physical Activity

Being physically active and eating healthy are a proven formula for living healthy - it's even good for your memory!

Health Canada recommends - A minimum of 2.5 hours of physical activity per week

- Participate in activities you enjoy doing
- Walk in your neighborhood
- Make it a social activity

### (30) Participate in Physical Activity (cont.)

What are some reasons why physical activity is good for your memory? .

- Increases blood flow and oxygen to the brain
- Exercise can reduce the likelihood of developing depression

Remember...

- Health effects from physical activity are cumulative
- For beginners - start off slow and increase the frequency and duration of physical activity over time

### (31) Eating Healthy

Eating healthy and keeping hydrated is important for maintaining memory

- Ensure you eat nutritious food
- Food that is low in fat and salt
- Omega-3 Fatty acids - These are found in whole grain foods and fish
- Omega-3 fatty acids are concentrated in our brain
- They help improve communication between brain cells, lower blood pressure and improve cholesterol [levels]

### (32) Staying Socially Active

Being socially active is associated with a multitude of health benefits - including improvement in memory function

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- Engage in activities with friends and family
- Socialize while exercising
- Volunteer/work
- Participate in social or community activities

### (33) **Staying Mentally Active**

"The mind is a bit like a garden. If it isn't fed or cultivated, weeds will take it over"

- Erving G. Hall

Engage in activities that allow your mind to stay active and think quickly:

- Learn new things
- Reading
- Crosswords
- Puzzles
- Trivia games

### (34) **Manage Stress**

Learning to manage stress is important for reducing the impact or exacerbation of memory loss

- Exercise
- Learn how to say 'no'
- Express your feelings
- Avoid hot button topics
- Don't try to control the uncontrollable
- Reframe problems - Try to view stressful situations from a positive perspective

### (35) **Adequate Sleep**

**Lack of sleep has been found to negatively affect memory**

- Getting an adequate amount of sleep each night is important
- Most people need 8 hours but some people do well with only 6 hours - everyone is different
- Optimal sleep is the amount that allows you to feel awake and alert all day long

### (36) **Adequate Sleep (cont.)**

Tips for sleep

- Avoid alcohol, caffeine and nicotine before bedtime
- Be predictable (have a routine, go to sleep around the same time each night)
- Exercise early in the day
- If light bothers you, make the investment in heavy drapes to keep light out

### (37) **Paying Attention**

- Avoid distractions
- Do one task at a time - try not to do too many things all at once
- Multi-tasking divides our attention and increases the likelihood forgetting something
- Don't rush - Working memory declines with age and deficits here are more pronounced when we rush or don't pay attention

### (38) **Using Sensory Aides**

Hearing or visual impairment

- Sensory information does not get encoded - can't be stored or retrieved
- Leads to stress

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- Wear glasses
- Wear [a] hearing aid
- Have your eyes and ears tested regularly

### (39) Be Positive

Forgetfulness is often attributed to being old. In reality, all people forget. This is a common experience across all age groups

- Try to maintain a positive attitude
- Identify negative assumptions or language that you often use
- Transform your language and the way that you "speak to yourself" to the positive
- Be confident in your abilities (use memory aides to gain/maintain abilities)

### (40) Be Consistent

- Routine and consistency can help protect against forgetfulness
- Develop the habit of keeping things in their place (e.g., where you keep your glasses, keys etc...)
- Reminder: go slow, you can only change one habit at a time  
(don't try to change all habits at once)
- It takes 21-days to change a habit

### (41) Memory Aids

- Be Organized
- Write things down
- Make a To Do List
- Keep a calendar
- Making things meaningful
- Make associations between new information and what you already know  
("Her name is Marilyn, like Marilyn Monroe")

### (42) Memory Aids (cont.)

- Use Mnemonic strategies
- For example, if you ever learned music you probably know that "Every Good Boy Deserves Fudge" – this represents the lines on the Treble Clef
- Create your own Mnemonics for things that are meaningful to you
- Repeat information to yourself

### (43) When to Seek Professional Attention

When memory problems affect your daily living, it may be time to seek out professional help. Likewise, you may also notice changes in friends and family members that require further medical assistance

For example:

- Not recalling names of loved ones
- Forgetting what keys are used for or how to unlock your door. . . . .
- Not being able to learn new things (e.g., an alternate route, :Using a new TV), . . . .
- Forgetting how to do everyday things (e.g., handling money)