

General Communication Strategies

In order for someone with aphasia to be an effective communicator, the individual often needs the support and encouragement of understanding communication partners. The following tips and strategies will hopefully help YOU to help someone who has aphasia.

- 1. TRY to put yourself in the other person's shoes**
If you are feeling uncomfortable or unsure, try to imagine how the individual with aphasia is feeling.
- 2. Do not be quick to judge**
Challenges with speech or language do not reflect intelligence.
- 3. Communicate in the best environment possible**
Try to communicate in quiet places with adequate lighting.
- 4. Observe the individual's non-verbal messages**
Oftentimes an individual with aphasia MAY be able to use gestures to communicate. Try to encourage and interpret gestures.
- 5. Use age appropriate intonation and vocabulary**
Remember that you are communicating with an adult: avoid baby talk, or a patronizing tone.
- 6. Maintain eye contact and remain in close proximity (arm's length away)**
- 7. Prepare yourself to communicate**
Do not have anything in your mouth like candy or gum and do not cover your mouth while talking.
- 8. Give the person TIME to communicate!**
- 9. Confirm that you understand the person's message or that the individual with aphasia understands your message**