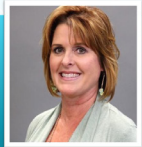


**Functional Communication, Storytelling, and Identity:  
Incorporating LPAA Goals to  
Take AAC to the Next Level**

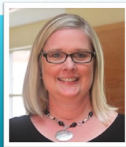
Kelly Cantrell, MS, CCC-SLP

Katie Strong, PhD, CCC-SLP

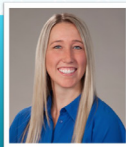
Brianne Bieger, SLPD, CCC-SLP-ATP



**Kelly Cantrell, MS, CCC-SLP**  
Clinical Consultant,  
Lingraphica



**Katie Strong, PhD, CCC-SLP**  
Assistant Professor,  
Central Michigan University



**Brianne A. Bieger, SLPD, CCC-SLP-ATP**  
Customer Experience & Engagement Manager,  
Lingraphica



## Disclosures

Kelly and Brianne are full-time, salaried employees at Lingraphica, and thereby receives financial compensation from the Company

Brianne is a contracted speech-language pathologist at TalkPath Live, and thereby receives financial compensation from the company.

Katie Strong -

- Financial: Receives salary for employment as an Assistant Professor at Central Michigan University
- Non-Financial: University Liaison for Virtual Connections for Aphasia



## Learning Objectives

Participants will be able to:

1. Identify three ways an AAC device can be customized to target functional conversation goals
2. Describe the importance of storytelling in relation to identity in adults with aphasia
3. Identify two methods for using AAC to support storytelling in adults with aphasia



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## Agenda

- Customizing AAC Devices and LPAA Goals
- Importance of Storytelling and Identity
- High-tech AAC to Support Storytelling
- Questions and Answers



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## Introduction



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## Who is Appropriate for AAC?

- Persons with Aphasia from CVA
- Degenerative Disease Processes
- Primary Progressive Aphasia (PPA)
- Parkinsons Disease with Voice
- Head and Neck Cancer
- General Voice
- Articulation Disorders
- Any Issue Where a Person is Unable to Effectively Communicate Verbally




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## Negative Impact of Aphasia

(Simmons-Mackie, 2018)

Adverse impact  
on quality of life

Negative impact  
on community  
engagement

Depression

Sense of  
helplessness

Reduced  
participation in  
former activities

Reduced,  
limited, or no  
friends




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## General Effects of Social Isolation

Social isolation can have direct effects on cardiovascular disease risk factors, brain deterioration, and mortality.

(Cacioppo, et al., 2014)




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## Feelings Attached to Aphasia...

Aphasia is associated with feelings of alienation, inferiority and shame in social setting.

(Nystrom 2006)




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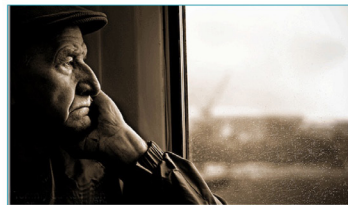
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## Social Isolation

One year post CVA, 80% of people with Aphasia report having "no friends"

(Hilari & Northcott 2006)




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## Research

Friendships and rich social networks are highly associated with levels of participation, life satisfaction, physical health, and overall quality of life.

(Brown et al, 2013)




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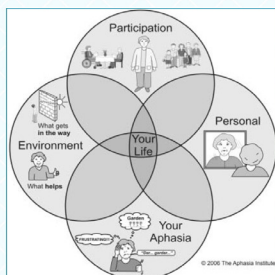
## Customizing AAC Devices and LPAA Goals

Small Stories

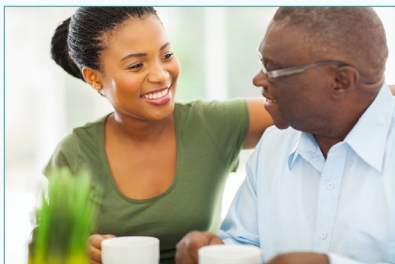


## BIG STORIES

## Life Participation Approach (LPAA)



## What Goals Incorporate LPAA?



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## Small Stories - Family



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## Small Stories - Maddie



Lingraphica®

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## Small Stories – Entertainment (Football)



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Lingraphica®

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## Importance of Storytelling and Identity

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**“Words are how  
we think, stories  
are how we link.”**

– Christina Baldwin

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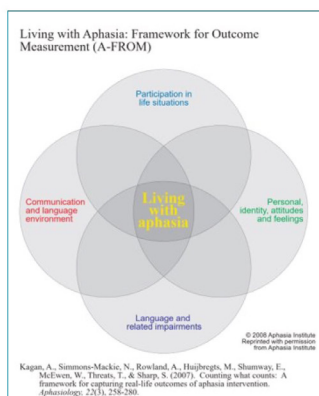
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## A-FROM




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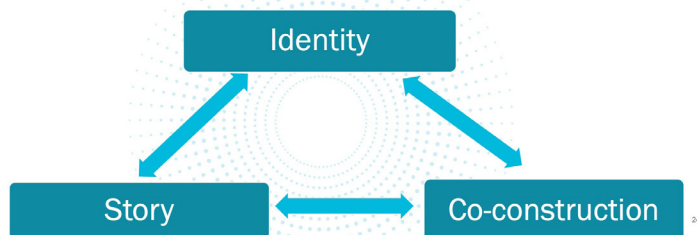
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## Storytelling




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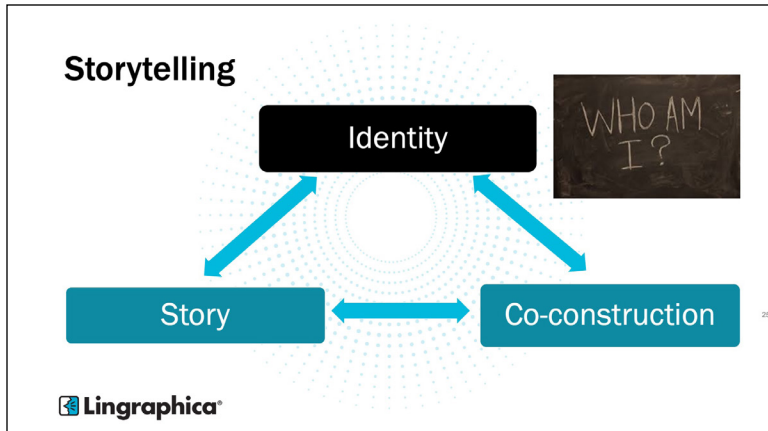
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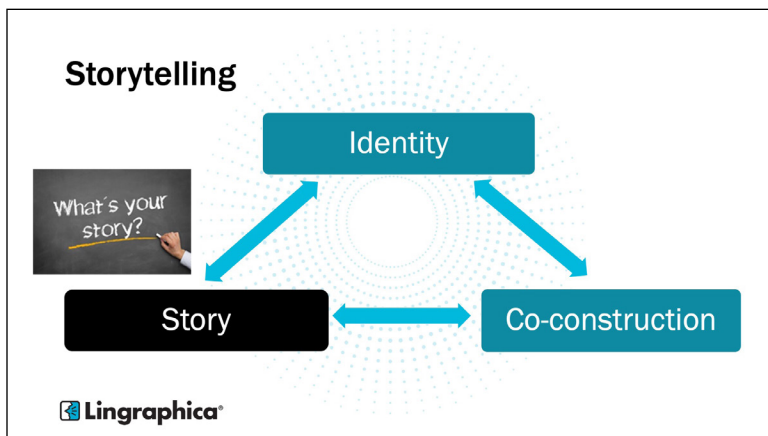
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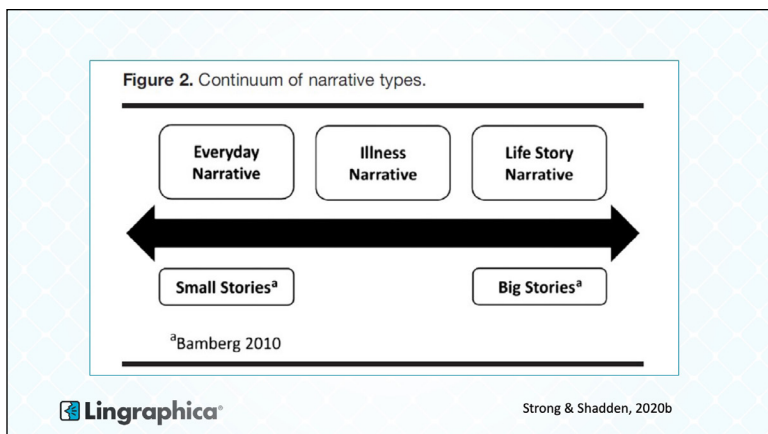
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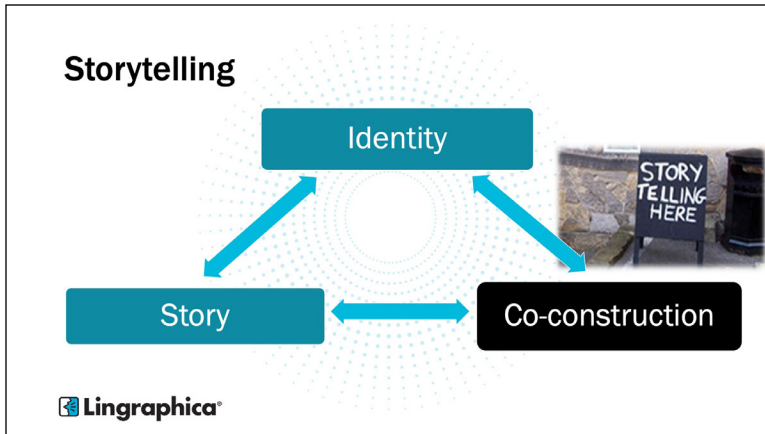
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## Importance of Story

- Story can be a vehicle to make meaning  
(Romanoff, 2001)
- Stories are told to cultivate relationships.  
(Frank, 2007)
- Story contributes to a healthier identity  
(Lucius-Hoene et al., 2018)
- Story relies heavily on language.

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## And Then Comes Aphasia: A kind of identity theft

- Aphasia strikes at core of who we are – our sense of *identity and self*
- It disrupts continuity of our life story
- Making sense of life change and its impact is usually negotiated through sharing of revised *stories* but...
- Aphasia damages critical communication tool we use in this process

(Shadden, 2005)

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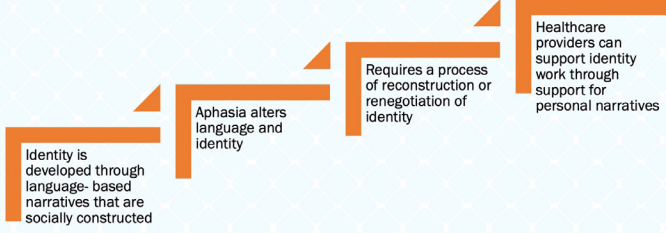
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## How Healthcare Providers Play a Role in Narrative Processes and Identity Reconstruction




Identity is developed through language-based narratives that are socially constructed

Aphasia alters language and identity

Requires a process of reconstruction or renegotiation of identity

Healthcare providers can support identity work through support for personal narratives

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## Interventions for Aphasia that Use Narratives to Support Identity

- Guided Self-Determination  
(Bronken et al, 2012; Kirkevold et al, 2014)
- Biographic Narrative Intervention  
(Corsten et al, 2013, 2015)
- Guided Autobiography (Birren et al, 1996)  
Adapted for Stroke Keegan 2013; Adapted for Aphasia Richman & Hartman 2013
- Your Life Looking Back, Moving Forward  
(Sinden, 2015)
- 'My Story' Project  
(Strong, 2015)

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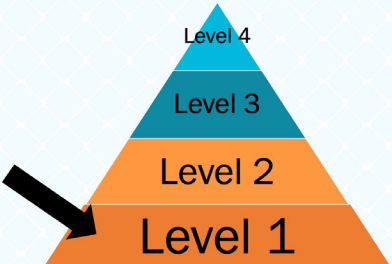
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## Stepped Psychological Care




Biographic narrative therapy identified as a Level 1 intervention to address depression in individuals with aphasia

Level 4

Level 3

Level 2

Level 1

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(Baker et al., 2018)

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May not be fully aware  
of power of narrative in  
reconstructing identity  
(Hinckley, 2008)

## Challenge For Us As Clinicians

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## Story as Product



## Story as Process




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(Strong & Shadden, 2020b)

### Partnerships

All relationships are opportunities for co-constructing stories in support of identity  
Clinician relationship particularly crucial to those with aphasia

### Uniqueness

Type and severity of aphasia and associated stroke challenges; Experience of the stroke and aphasia; Impact of aphasia on identity and life story – past, present, and future

### Listening

No clinical role may be more important than listening  
We must listen for...  
The stories  
The expressions of unique aspects of self  
The experience of aphasia and its impact

### Supporting

Be prepared with collection of supporting materials that assist in telling stories about a person's life, interests, and daily interactions

### Exploring

Develop a genuine interest in learning more than just the etiology, the nature of the language deficit, response to cueing, etc.

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## My Interest in Story



Chris, Nikki, Katie




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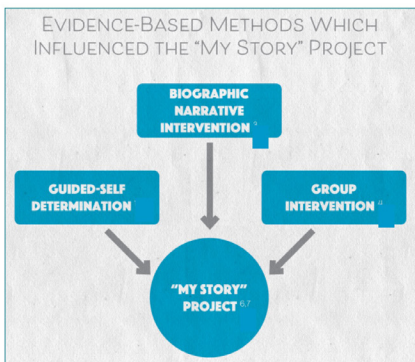
## 'My Story' Project

Protocol for co-constructing a personal narrative with persons with aphasia

Story framework based off McAdams (2008)

- Who I was before my stroke and aphasia
- My stroke and aphasia
- Who I am today
- My future/goals

6 individual sessions and 1 group 'story sharing' celebration over 4 weeks




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## Reflections From a 'My Story' Participant



"I was stoked to do it. Yeah, I didn't know it would be a be a choice my [XXX] my words. It did. It really did it came out great. You know? I loved. The whole thing just blows my mind it's an amazing story. Not the story, just the whole, not the story, my story is just a story, my life. But the whole the whole thing we did here, it changed my life. It really did. It's amazing."




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## High-Tech AAC to Support Storytelling

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## Using High-Tech AAC to Support Storytelling




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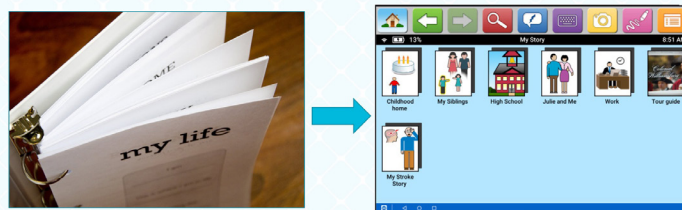
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## Paper Book to High-Tech AAC Device




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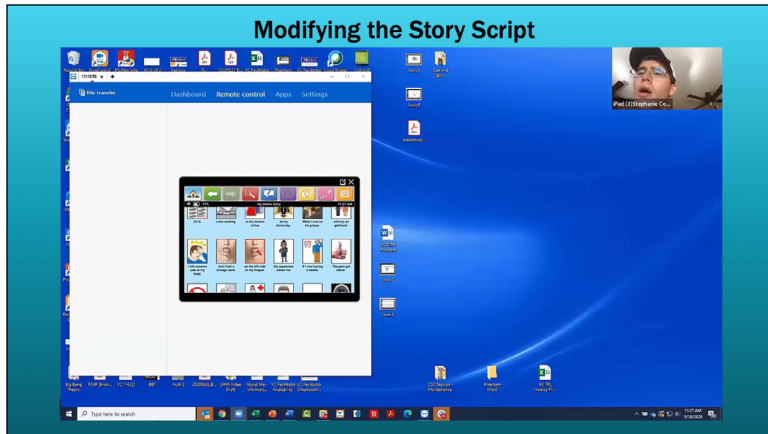
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## Practice

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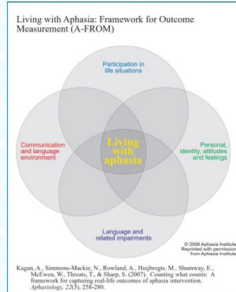
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## Outcomes

- Renegotiation of identity
- Improvements in speech
- Increased confidence
- Increased participation
- Improved relationships



## Concluding Thoughts

- Social isolation is very real, and we can change a client's narrative with communication alternatives.
- Developing communication goals based on LPAA help a PWA remain an active participant in their own lives.
- Small and Big stories are important vehicles for making meaning out of life events.
- The process of story co-construction can be transformative in moving forward.
- SLPs may play a powerful role in supporting stories about life in persons with aphasia.
- Using High-Tech AAC to support storytelling can be a powerful tool

## How Can You Work with Lingraphica?

### SLP Device Trials

- When you **CAN** see your patient
- Submit for a trial at [Aphasia.com](http://Aphasia.com)
- Device shipped to SLP
- SLP completes trial with Lingraphica assistance
- SLP does Language Assessment and determines device appropriateness

### Patient/Care Partner Trainings

- When you **CANNOT** see your patient
- Lingraphica does a Needs Assessment
- ID LPAA goals for both patient and Care Partner
- Customize device based on goals
- Refers patient back to you for Language Assessment and to determines device appropriateness

❖ Smart Paperwork

## Next Steps

Visit [AACBeyond.com](https://aacyou.com)

- Earn your CE credit /certificate of completion for today's course
- Schedule a consultation or call to learn more or begin a trial

Join the Conversation on Slack

- #storytelling



## Questions & Answers



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