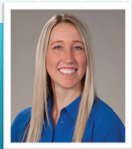


Virtual Now!
**Serving People with Aphasia and
Their Families in a Changing World**

Brianne Bieger, SLPD, CCC-SLP-ATP
Carol Dow-Richards, BS
Lindsay Milgram, MS, CCC-SLP
Ellen Bernstein-Ellis, MA, CCC-SLP
Katie Strong, PhD, CCC-SLP





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



Carol Dow-Richards, BS
Founder and Director
Aphasia Recovery Connection

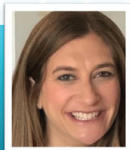


Katie Strong, PhD, CCC-SLP
Assistant Professor
Central Michigan University





Ellen Bernstein-Ellis, MA, CCC-SLP
Director of the Aphasia Treatment Program California
State University, East Bay



Lindsay Milgram, MS, CCC-SLP
Clinical Instructor / Diagnostics Coordinator
Teachers College Columbia University



Disclosures

Brienne Bieger, SLPD, CCC-SLP, ATP

- Financial: Full-time, salaried employee at Lingraphica, and thereby receives financial compensation from the Lingraphica Company
- Non-Financial: Volunteer and Advisory Board Member for The Aphasia Recovery Connection, a 501(c)3

Carol Dow-Richards, BS

- Financial: Receives compensation as a support group facilitator, Dignity Health, Las Vegas; Receives income as Director of The Aphasia Recovery Connection; Receives royalties from ARC's *Guide to Living with Aphasia: Practical Advice for People with Aphasia & Their Loved Ones*
- Non-Financial: None relevant

Katie Strong, PhD, CCC-SLP

- Financial: Receives salary for employment as an Assistant Professor at Central Michigan University
- Non-Financial: Facilitates the Lansing Area Aphasia Support Group; University Liaison for Virtual Connections for Aphasia



Disclosures

Ellen Bernstein-Ellis, MA, CCC-SLP

- Financial: Receives salary for employment as Director of the Aphasia Treatment Program at Cal State East Bay
- Non-Financial: Volunteer Facilitator for Virtual Connections; Volunteer for Aphasia Access as Podcast Committee Co-chair

Lindsay Milgram, MS, CCC-SLP

- Financial: Receives salary for employment as a Clinical Instructor at Teachers College, Columbia University.
- Non-Financial: None relevant



Learning Objectives

Participants will be able to:

1. Describe how Virtual Connections is meeting the needs of people with aphasia and their families worldwide
2. Identify examples of aphasia support programs that were transitioned to online platforms
3. Describe at least two lessons learned from providing virtual support to people with aphasia and their families in response to COVID-19



Agenda

- Why Virtual Support Services are Needed
- The Evolution of Aphasia Recovery Connection (ARC)
- Creation of Virtual Connections
- Preparing Students at Columbia University
- Going Virtual at Cal State East Bay
- Going Virtual at Lansing Area Aphasia Support Group
- Launching Aphasia! This is Our World
- Questions and Answers



Aphasia Recovery Connection (ARC)

Learn. Share. Connect.





Aphasia Recovery Connection (ARC)

- Nonprofit started in 2013
- Facebook Group - 10,500 members
- Caregiver Group - 2,500 members
- Facebook Page - Post Reach up to 100,000 month



Aphasia Awareness. Community. Education.

www.aphasiarecoveryconnection.org





Profound
Isolation



High Incidence
of Depression

 **Lingraphica**[®]



Stress and
Frustration

 **Lingraphica**[®]



Withdraw
from Activities

 **Lingraphica**[®]



Needs of Family
Members and
Caregivers



Barriers to
Accessing
Services



Need for Resources
and Activities
that are Suitable
for Aphasia

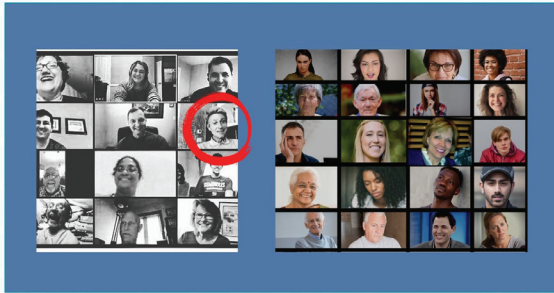


Meet David Now!



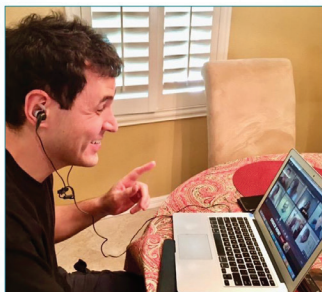
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The Transition to Video Conferencing



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ARC Saturday Jeopardy Game



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Aphasia U Boot Camps - Las Vegas



1 week in Las Vegas
3 weeks on Zoom - every day



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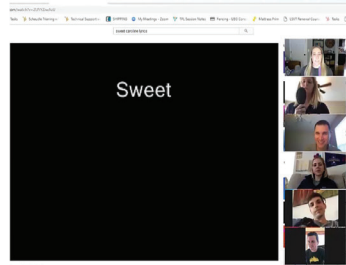
Aphasia Cruises - Las Vegas



Collaboration with:
USF
Lingraphica
Aphasia Center
TactusTherapy
Fontbonne University

Lingraphica®

Karaoke: ARC Cruise → Virtual



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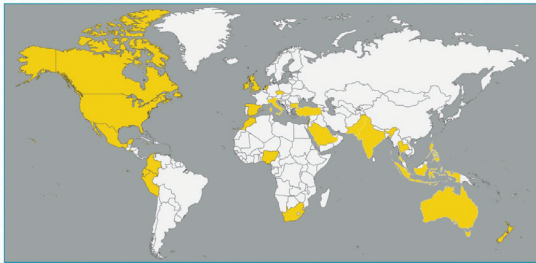


Virtual Connections



Lingraphica®

1300+ Members in 35+ Countries



Lingraphica®

Our Mission

- Build a community
- End the isolation
- Create a safe place
- Provide engagement
- Encourage LPAA
- Promote acceptance

Lingraphica®


VC Sessions




- ✓ BUILD A COMMUNITY
- ✓ END THE ISOLATION
- ✓ CREATE A SAFE PLACE
- ✓ PROVIDE ENGAGEMENT
- ✓ ENCOURAGE LPAA
- ✓ PROMOTE ACCEPTANCE


 Lingraphica®

**50+ Volunteers
in 6 Countries**



**550 Sessions Delivered
in 7 Months**



 Lingraphica®

60+ Students & 15 University Faculty

- California State University East Bay
- Central Michigan University
- Duquesne University
- Fontbonne University
- Hofstra University
- Nova Southeastern University
- Pacific University
- University of Essex



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PATHWAYS

VIRTUAL CONNECTIONS


**Weekly Webinars
Virtual Connections**

- Better Understanding of Aphasia
- Motivation / Inspiration
- Community
- Setting a Goal

Helps Navigate a PATHWAY




Pathway Session Attendee : Manav

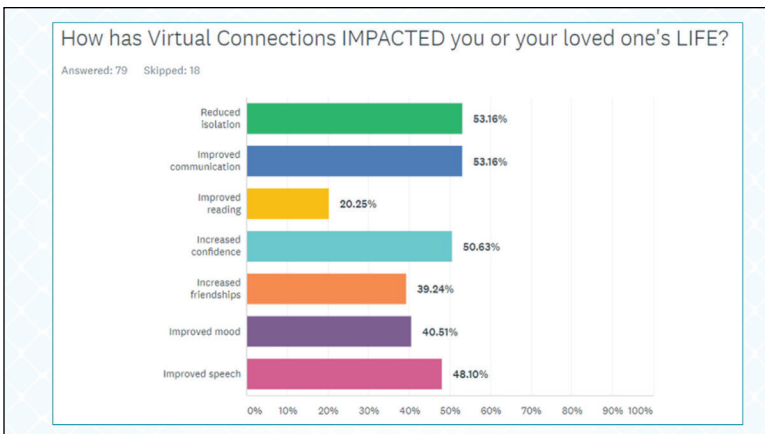


Manav Shah

A compliment to Speech Therapy - not "in place of"

Clients want more education & information in simple, visual teachings





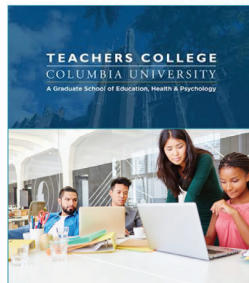


Teachers College, Columbia University: Preparing Students for a Virtual World



Let's Go Virtual NOW

- **MISSION:**
 - Provide quality service to our clients
 - Educate students
 - Provide quality training opportunities
- **SOLUTION:**
 - Transitioned 93% of clients to tele-services in JUST 1 WEEK!
 - Developed a Telepractice Workshop
 - Held individual meetings to prepare/plan/execute



Nuts and Bolts: Telepractice Workshop

ASHA's Position Statement

Efficacy research for a variety of populations

- Using ASHA's Evidenced Based Maps

Licensure regulations

Security & privacy

- Adopted ZOOM provided by TC

Ethical considerations



Telepractice Workshop: Who am I Working With?

Digital Immigrants	Digital Natives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopters of the web technologies • Prefer to talk in person • Logical learners • Focusing on one task at a time • Prefer to have interaction with one or few people rather than many • Get info from traditional news sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Born during or after the digital age • Always on, attached to a phone or other device • Intuitive learners • Multitask and rapidly task-switch • Extremely social • Multimedia oriented

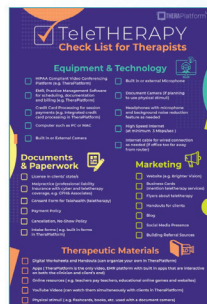


(Rosenzweig, 2017)



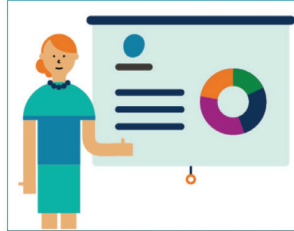
Telepractice Workshop: Training the Clinicians

- Recipe for Success: The Clinician's To Do List
 - Pre-session preparation
- Telepractice Readiness Checklist/Questionnaire
 - Identification of support/facilitator, technology



Lessons Learned

- Regular meetings with clinicians
- Careful review of plans and materials
- Dry-runs!
- 100% supervision during live sessions
- LIVE feedback using CHAT
- Models



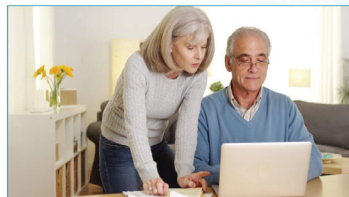
Lessons Learned

- Thoughtfully consider:
 - Digital Immigrant Vs. Digital native
 - Cognitive and linguistic abilities
- Welcome the surprises from your clients!
- Never underestimate the power of visual cueing



Lessons Learned

- Capitalize on opportunities to:
 - Work with support persons
 - Work in a natural environment
- Give all clients an equal chance
- YOU CAN DO IT!
DIVE IN and HAVE FUN!



Cal State East Bay Goes Virtual: Resources, Training & Lessons Learned



Cal State East Bay Aphasia Treatment Program



Aphasia Treatment Program (ATP)

What we did for 23 years:



COVID closed services

- Two weeks to figure out how to transition program



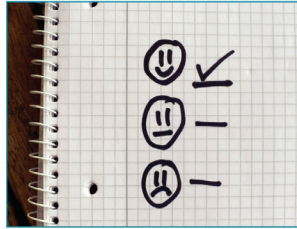
Aphasia Treatment Program

Priorities

- Maximize student training hours
- Provide access to quality training
- Provide access to quality services

Critical needs

- Telepractice expertise for supervisor
- Telepractice training for clinicians
- Telepractice coaching for ATP members and their E-helpers



Telepractice Expertise for Supervisors

Learning through experience



Telepractice Education Resources

Telepractice Webinars



Telepractice Education Resources

Websites

- La Trobe University CRE resource sheet:
 - Telegain Program (Rachelle Pitts)
- ASHA Telepractice resource page
- SIG 18: Telepractice
- Aphasia Access COVID19 Resource page
- Aphasia Techramps (FaceBook Group)



Telepractice Education Resources

Supporting Online Aphasia Groups: Lessons We've Learned (Sather, T. 2020)



"Online groups provide a way of reducing some of the barriers that may be present in face-to-face groups....distance, transportation, uncertainty, etc. There can be additional barriers—such as technology and access to devices, however, we feel that online groups are an excellent way to support communication, connections and relationships." (p. 2)

Telepractice Education Resources

Speech Therapy in the Virtual World of People with Aphasia
(Walker, 2020)



The intersection of telepractice and LPAA: A conversation with Judy Walker
(Walker, 2020)

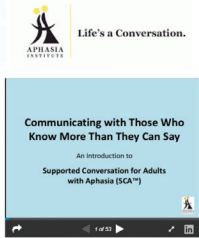


Promoting Social Connections in a Synchronous Telepractice Aphasia Communication Group
(Walker, Price, & Watson, 2018)



Clinician Training

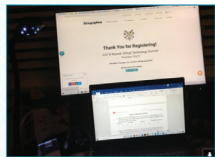
Communication Partner Training



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Clinician Training

Tech Competencies



Home equipment



Platform:
Advanced features



“Tri-lingual”

Lingraphica®

Clinician Training

Telepractice Foundation

1. Best Practices
2. Professional Etiquette



Sandbox Guided “Playtime”

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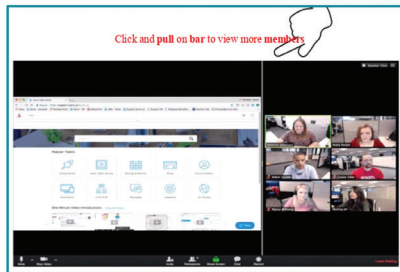
Lessons Learned: Getting Members Onboard

- Familiarity varies
- Plan on-boarding process
- Ongoing tech tutoring
- Step-wise skill building



Lessons Learned: Getting Members Onboard

- Identify an e-helper
- Aphasia-friendly guides by device
- Confirm what they see



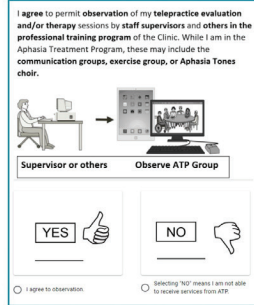
Lessons Learned: Getting Members Onboard

- Create community: main and breakout rooms
- Online "toolbox" of visuals
- Re-vision goals: Tech, Participation, Theme



Lessons Learned: Getting Members Onboard

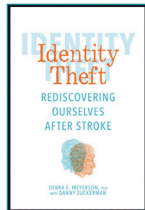
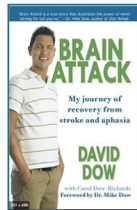
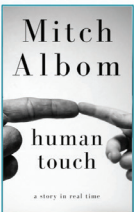
- Google forms – aphasia-friendly “hack”
- One link all groups!



Virtual Groups Examples & Lessons Learned



Virtual Book Clubs



Lessons Learned: Virtual Book Clubs

Reading ramps support the story across severity continuum for IWA

- Share portion of screen via advanced function
- Adapted materials
- Visual Summaries
- Video recaps

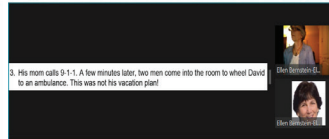


Lessons Learned: Advanced Settings

CSU East Bay Aphasia Treatment Program

Brain Attack by David Dow
Summary: Chapter 1, The Stroke

1. David is 10 years old. It is the first day of his family vacation. His mom, stepdad, brother, grandpa and David are all at a hotel in Las Vegas. They are about to drive a few hours to go camping at Zion National Park in Utah.
2. Suddenly, David feels unwell. His head hurt. His arm felt funny. His mom stays with
3. His mom calls 9-1-1. A few minutes later, two men come into the room to wheel David to an ambulance. This was not his vacation plan!
4. They go to the hospital. David is scared. He does not understand what anyone is saying to him. He's afraid. Then he starts to have seizures.



Lessons Learned: Virtual Book Clubs

Power in community & cohesion

- Explore annotate key words
- Stop screen share; maximize gallery
- Check-ins & track participation

QUESTION 2

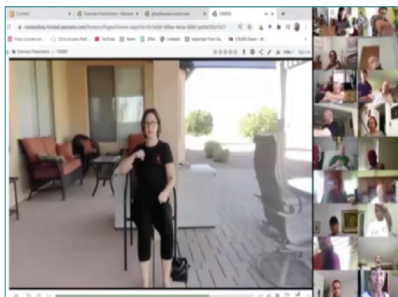
Debra has many athletic hobbies. What are some of your **favorite activities**?



Key Words:



Virtual Exercise Class



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Lessons Learned: Virtual Exercise Class

- Post-stroke barriers to exercise for individuals with aphasia (Blonkski et.al 2014)
- Interprofessional practice and education opportunity to increase access
- Joined with Kinesiology Department Faculty and Students

Dr. Michelle Gravier



Dr. Albert Mendoza



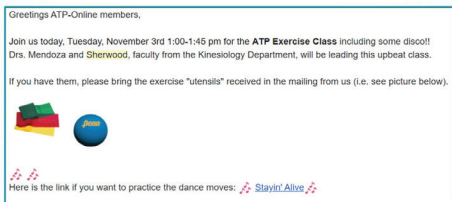
Dr. Jennifer Sherwood



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Lessons Learned: Virtual Exercise Class

- Telepractice Bonus: No room limits!
- Provide equipment (bands, balls, visuals)
- Aphasia friendly e-mail reminders



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Lessons Learned: Virtual Exercise Class

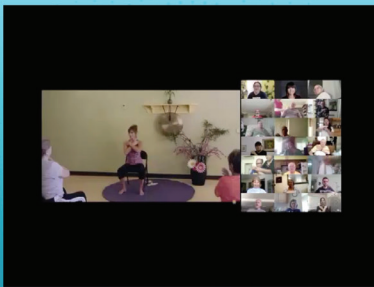
- Visual context allows for participation of individuals with severe aphasia
- Online chair exercise and yoga classes at .75 speed
- Adapt: Provide sit and stand options
- Step by step rehearsal → Full sequence
- Rock out to music!
- *Shout outs



Yoga Chair Dancing
Sherry Zak Morris
<https://sheryzakmorris.com/>



Virtual Exercise Class



Virtual Aphasia Choir



Lessons Learned: Virtual Aphasia Tones Choir

Tech-based Tips:

- Internet speed matters!
- Provide clear visuals to assist with camera and mic
- Use mute/unmute strategically:
 - Unmute during warm-ups
 - Mute during song singing
- Use a combination of visual supports
 - Chat, Whiteboard, Zoom tile



Lessons Learned: Virtual Aphasia Tones Choir

Participation tips:

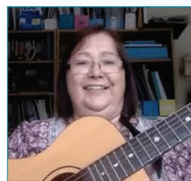
- Ask members to lead vocal warm-up given a model
- Encourage solos of high repetition segments of songs
- Provide supported lyric PowerPoints
- Provide exaggerated facial cues
- Include scaffolded conversation break



Lessons Learned: Virtual Aphasia Tones Choir

Participation Tips:

- Break-out rooms for more connection
- Include "member shout outs" after songs
- Novelty: Use of props, special themes, virtual backgrounds

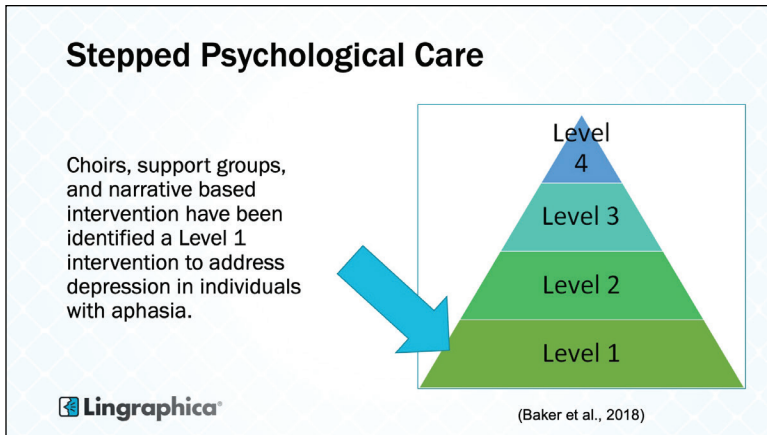


Talmadge, A., Purdy, S., Rakens, T., Rickson, D. (2020) "Online Choir is Better than No Choir at All": Responses of Adults with Neurological Conditions to an E-Choir Initiative during Covid-19 Lockdown in New Zealand.







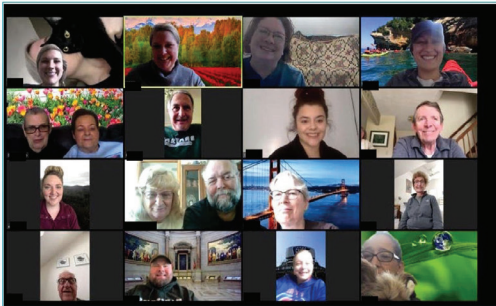


Lansing Area Aphasia Support Group: Pre-pandemic



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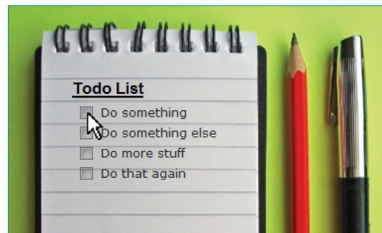
Virtual Now! Meeting on Zoom



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Lessons Learned

Facilitating a support group takes a lot of work regardless of format



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Lessons Learned

It takes a village to create a village, involve other colleagues and students



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Lessons Learned

Virtual format

- Allows ease of meeting more frequently
- Not for everyone, challenges with access to technology or apprehensive about online format



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Lessons Learned

Develop a sense of community, social connectedness



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Resources: Support Group Finders



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Resources: Support Group Finders



Action Step: REGISTER your own support groups on these websites!

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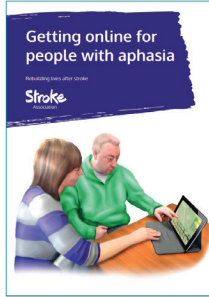
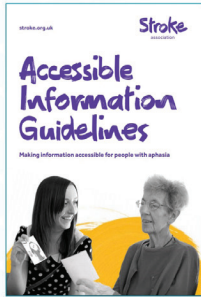
Resources: NAA Become AN Affiliate

- Join the NAA network of affiliates!
- As an affiliate you'll have a listing on the free online resource directory, which is searched by thousands of people looking for therapies, support and resources related to aphasia each year.
- Affiliates can be professionals, aphasia advocates, or persons with aphasia who manage a support group.



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Resources: Stroke Association UK



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The Power of Story and Launching Aphasia! *This is Our World*

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Power 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)
- Using stories to process life after stroke is a Level 1 support for addressing depression in persons with aphasia (Baker et al, 2018)



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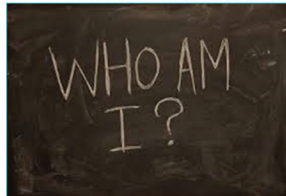
Story relies heavily on...

LANGUAGE



Aphasia and Identity Theft

- Aphasia strikes at core of who we are – our sense of *identity*
- 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)



Aphasia! This is Our World



- Private 'club' for invited Virtual Connections members to develop a story about their personal journey with aphasia.
- Opportunity to education the community about aphasia
- Time to celebrate hard work and success



Aphasia! This is Our World

Who?

- 6 storytellers
- 6 SLP graduate students coaches
- 2 SLP coaches
- 1 experienced storyteller with aphasia

What?

- 8 weeks of 60-minute coaching sessions
- Homework between sessions for storytellers & coaches

Why?

- Developing and sharing a story about their own aphasia journey
- Advocate for aphasia awareness



Student Coaches

6 SLP Masters students

Training conducted

- Connection between narrative and identity
- Supported communication techniques
- Using technology to support storytelling

Additional members of coaching team

- Avi Golden, person with aphasia who has experience in developing and sharing his story
- Bri Bieger and Katie Strong supervision and support for coaches



THE HERBERT H. &
GRACE A. DOW COLLEGE OF
**HEALTH
PROFESSIONS**
CENTRAL MICHIGAN
UNIVERSITY



Encouraging
Inspiring
 Uplifting Fulfilling
 Fun Musical Fantastic
Rewarding
 Empowering Joyful Humbling
 Awesome Eye-opening
 Enjoyable Inspirational
Powerful



Student Reflections: The VC Experience



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Volunteer Reflections: The VC Experience



VIRTUAL CONNECTIONS
Aphasia Recovery Connection
& Lingraphica

What have you enjoyed most about participating in Virtual Connections?

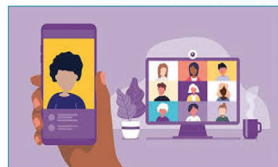
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Putting this all together

Virtual format has allowed social connection on new level

Transition to online has not been without challenges but many supports are available

Our role as clinicians to connect our clients and their families with others who have similar challenges - groups identified as Level 1 evidence-based intervention to address depression



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Our hope for you...

- EMPOWER you to take action
- START your own group
- JOIN in an existing group
- CONNECT your clients



EMAIL US!
virtualconnections4aphasia@gmail.com



Questions & Answers