



A NEW YEAR, A NEW WAY OF ASKING QUESTIONS

AN APHASIA WORKBOOK

MAKE A RESOLUTION TO ASK QUESTIONS BETTER TO
IMPROVE COMMUNICATION & CONNECTION IN THE
NEW YEAR WITH YOUR LOVED ONE WITH APHASIA

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WELCOME!

Anyone can set resolutions, but it takes planning and effort to make them stick. By following these tips in this workbook, you can set resolutions that are both realistic and achievable that will go a long way to improving your communication & connection with your loved one with aphasia.

Happy New Year!

Genevieve



LINK

Link to the welcome video!

BOOK A
CONSULTATION

A NEW YEAR

A New Way to Improve Asking Questions in Aphasia

AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE TYPICAL NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION FOR 2023

It's that time of year again! **New Year's Day** is just around the corner, and with it comes the opportunity to start fresh. Turn that frown upside down. **Take meaningful steps to improve communication with your loved one with aphasia successfully.**

But resolutions can be tough. It's too easy to set big, lofty goals that are impossible to stick to. So how can you **set resolutions that are both realistic and achievable?**

This workbook is for any spouse, family member, caregiver, or professional who interacts with a person with aphasia. In this workbook, we'll take the concept of **setting a New Year's Resolution** and apply it directly to communication. Specifically, you'll learn how and why to ask questions of your person with aphasia for **improved communication and connection.**

Happy New Year!

SIX TIPS FOR RESOLUTIONS



1 START SMALL

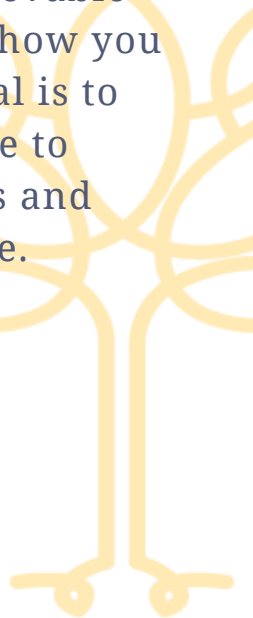
Resolutions are more likely to be successful if they're small and manageable. So instead of vowing to lose 50 pounds, try setting a more realistic goal like losing 5 pounds.

2 SET SPECIFIC GOALS

Vague resolutions are more likely to fail. Instead of resolving to "eat healthier," try to set a specific goal like "eating two servings of fruits and vegetables at every meal."

3 MAKE A PLAN

Part of setting realistic and achievable resolutions is having a plan for how you will achieve them. So if your goal is to eat healthier, your plan might be to pack your own meals with fruits and vegetables or cook more at home.



SET RESOLUTIONS YOU CAN STICK TO

4 BE REALISTIC

Don't set yourself up for failure by setting unrealistic goals. If you're not used to working out, don't resolve to work out seven days a week. Start slow and work your way up.

5 BE PATIENT

Change takes time, so don't get discouraged if you don't see results immediately. Stick with it, and eventually, you will see results.

6 GET SUPPORT

If you're struggling to stick to your resolutions, reach out for support from family and friends. They can help you stay on track and be accountable.



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ABOUT THIS WORKBOOK

Aphasia can be a difficult condition to live with, but it doesn't have to be a life sentence. There are many **ways to overcome the challenges of aphasia and achieve your communication goals**. LIFE Speech Pathology is here to help you achieve this New Year's Resolution of asking better questions of your loved one with aphasia.

Aphasia is a **language disorder caused by damage to the language centers in the brain**. Stroke, traumatic brain injury, brain tumors, and degenerative neurological conditions can all cause aphasia.

The **symptoms of aphasia can vary from person to person** and from the sight of damage in the language center of the brain. Recovery also depends upon the type of stroke, your motivation and family support, goal-directed language therapy, and working every day on your communication.

Rebuilding the language pathways or learning new skills or strategies takes time, dedication, and smart practice. You'll want to **work with a clinician that helps you reclaim your independence and reach your communication goals**.

There is no such thing as a plateau. **When you believe you can get better, are willing to put in the time and effort, and have goals you want to accomplish, then don't settle for a plateau**. Find a speech pathologist who works with chronic aphasia to help you reach your goals.

FOUR TYPES OF APHASIA FRIENDLY QUESTIONS

YES - NO QUESTIONS

Common questions that can be answered with a simple “yes” or “no” are logically called yes/no questions.

EXAMPLE

Do you want a Dr. Pepper?

CHOICE QUESTION

Choice questions can be either general, open-ended questions, or more specific. If the question does not center on the subject of the sentence, a complete answer is needed.

EXAMPLE

Would you like coffee or water?

WH- QUESTIONS

A special question, as you can guess, uses a certain word at the beginning of the sentence to ask a specific question. The questions words who, what, where, when, why, how, how many, etc., are used to begin the question.

EXAMPLE

How are you feeling?

CLOSED ENDED QUESTIONS

Asking an open-ended question can feel overwhelming to someone with aphasia. Instead of asking, "What did you do over the weekend?" Use one of the question styles above to make it easier to receive a response and positively interact.

EXAMPLE

I heard you went out to dinner. Was it good?

MINDSET SHIFT

Identify one area of communication with your loved one that you want to change. Not sure where to start? Brainstorm.

You don't need to make major changes to your life all at once to have a big impact. Rather, **make tiny changes to your behavior (i.e., how you ask questions)**, which, when repeated repeatedly, will become habits that may lead to big results. If you improve by 1% every day for one year, then at the end of the year, you will be 37% better. Small changes make a big difference over time. Tiny habits are anchored on small changes that lead to great long-term results.

TIME TO BRAINSTORM -- LET IT FLOW

List your top communication frustrations. Set a timer for 5 minutes and write down everything that comes to mind.

Don't analyze. Don't judge. Just write.



LET'S GET STARTED

Use this page to write out your goals and strategies. When you write them down, the goals are more meaningful, and you are more likely to accomplish them. You don't need to fill up the page. Just get started. That is the first step.

PUT THE MOST IMPORTANT GOAL AT THE TOP

Goal

Strategies

Goal

Strategies

Goal

Strategies

Goal

Strategies



NEW YEAR'S COMMUNICATION TIPS

1

LOOK DIRECTLY AT THE PERSON

Facial expression provides context for what is being said

2

WAIT

Give the person with aphasia extra time to respond. Get comfortable with pauses and silence.

3

AVOID GUESSING OR RUSHING THE PERSON

Briefly describe what the next task is all about in one or two lines.

4

OBSERVE & LISTEN

People with aphasia say things using vocal inflection, gestures, facial expression, and body language.

5

STICK TO ONE TOPIC AT A TIME

Be sure to let the person with aphasia know when you are switching topics.

6

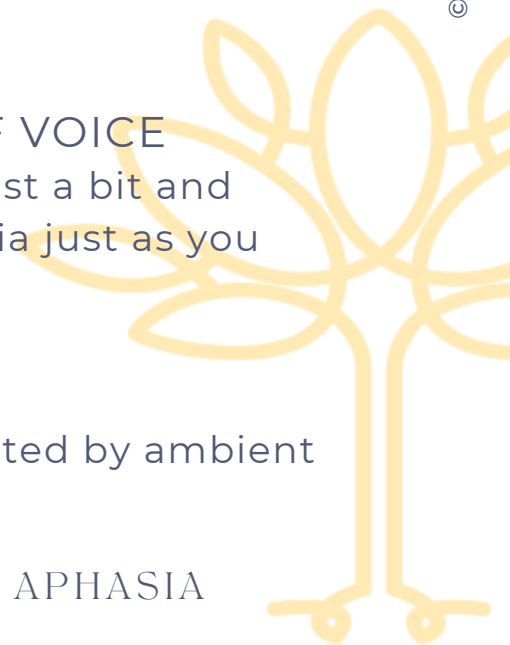
USE A NORMAL, ADULT TONE OF VOICE

Reduce your normal rate of speech just a bit and pause. Talk to the person with aphasia just as you always would.

7

REDUCE BACKGROUND NOISE

Aphasia makes it easier to get distracted by ambient noises and other conversations.





IMPROVING HOW YOU ASK QUESTIONS CAN BE A GAME- CHANGER IN COMMUNICATION SUCCESS

Changing how we communicate with our loved ones with aphasia is challenging. We must stop and think about the words we choose and how we phrase our questions.

The burden is not all on you, however. If you know your person with aphasia can answer a yes or no question, hold them to it. In other words, don't move forward with another question until you have an answer for the first one. Hold their feet to the fire to answer each question.

If frustration builds, take a breath, pause, and try again. Let your person know they are valued and that you genuinely want them to talk to you.

Asking the right questions, following communication tips, and gaining awareness of the communication environment will take time, energy, and practice. It is worth it to improve communication and connection.



You Are Not Alone!

LIFE Speech Pathology and LIFE Aphasia Academy are your resources and support for your journey with aphasia. To learn more about treatment & resources available to you, go to DoLIFESpeechPathology.com.

Services are available nationwide via telepractice. Specialty services are as close as your computer or tablet.

Let us help you improve communication with your loved one with aphasia. Direct treatment for them or support for you is just a [Zoom](#) or [Phone Call](#) away.

Schedule a complimentary consultation to discuss your needs. Your person can improve. There is always another method, approach, or treatment available. We can help you reach your goals. Do More. Do LIFE.

Wishing you an amazing New Year!

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