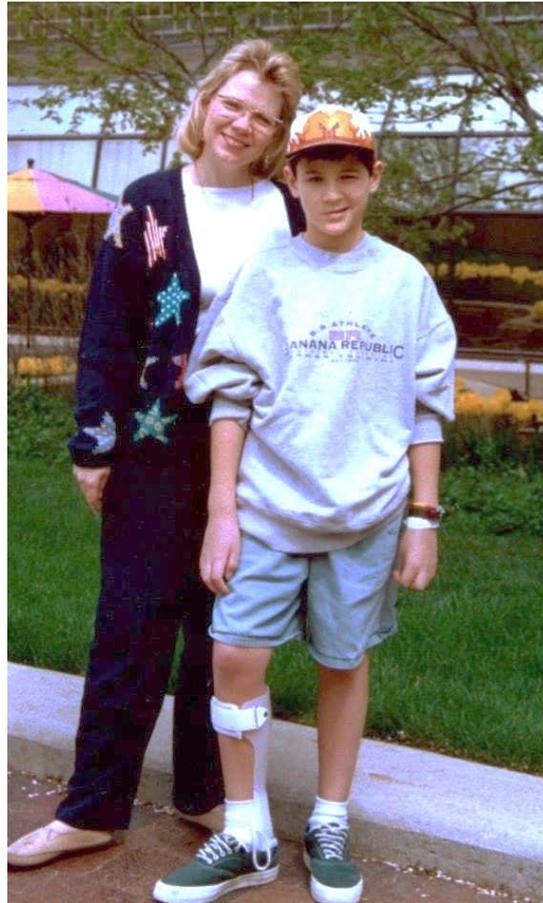


# Aphasia Recovery:

A Family Perspective



## Carol Dow-Richards David Dow

1995 Stroke

1996 Photo - Outpatient

2018 Today





Rehab Professionals Make a Difference



# Life Changed in an Instant

Speaking  
Reading  
Writing  
Paralysis  
Psychosocial Issues  
Goals



# APHASIA RECOVERY



# David Dow

Stroke at Age 10



Stroke on Vacation



## MRI

The beginning of “Alphabet Soup”  
MRI, OT, CT, SPL, PT, PM&R, ADL, AFO,



## NEURO ICU

David Dow, Age 10, 1995

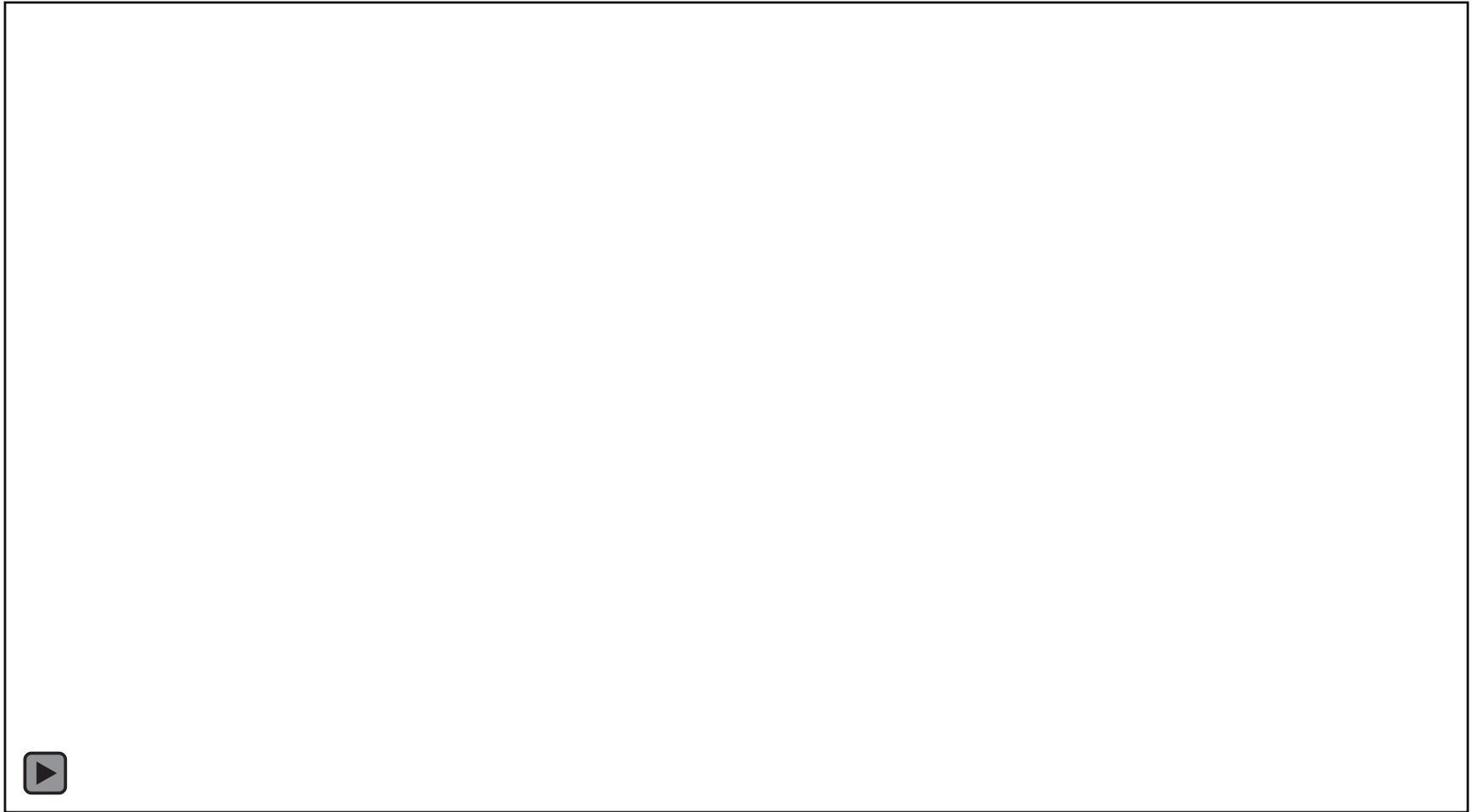
A large blue rectangular area with rounded corners. On the left side, there are three overlapping circles of varying shades of blue, creating a decorative graphic element.

# Inpatient

Reflections & Lessons Learned



Video 1996





First 3 Months – Inpatient & Brain Surgery



Afasia? Afaza? Afhaza?

Aphasia

Patient Information



**ASHA has a 3 page document with links.  
American Speech Language Hearing Association**

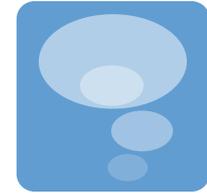
Have print outs for families, doctors, nurses, etc.

Highlight relevant tips.

Suggest the patient post in their room.

Give them extra copies.

Put the link on your phone for easy access.



[www.asha.org/public/speech/disorders/Aphasia/](http://www.asha.org/public/speech/disorders/Aphasia/)



AMERICAN  
SPEECH-LANGUAGE-  
HEARING  
ASSOCIATION

## Aphasia

[en Español]

- What is aphasia?
- What causes aphasia?
- What are some signs or symptoms of aphasia?
- How common is aphasia?
- How is aphasia diagnosed?
- What treatments are available for people with aphasia?
- What can I do to communicate better with the person with aphasia?
- What other organizations have information about aphasia?

**What is aphasia?**

*Aphasia* is a communication disorder that results from damage to the parts of the brain that contain language (typically in the left half of the brain). Individuals who experience damage to the right side of the brain may have additional difficulties beyond speech and language issues. Aphasia may cause difficulties in speaking, listening, reading, and writing, but does not affect intelligence. Individuals with aphasia may also have other problems, such as dysarthria, apraxia, or swallowing problems.

**What causes aphasia?**

Aphasia is most often caused by stroke. However, any disease or damage to the parts of the brain that control language can cause aphasia. These include brain tumors, traumatic brain injury, and progressive neurological disorders.

**What are some signs or symptoms of aphasia?**

The specific symptoms and severity of aphasia vary depending on the location and extent of brain damage. Individuals with damage to the front part of the brain may have "choppy" or non-fluent speech. However, they can typically understand what people say fairly well. Those with damage to the posterior regions of the brain often have fluent speech—that is, the rate and rhythm of speech may sound normal. However, their speech may contain the wrong words or made-up words. They also typically have difficulty understanding what is spoken.

Additionally, all individuals with aphasia may also have one or more of the following problems:

**See Also**

- ASHA Practice Portal: Aphasia
- Family Adjustment to Aphasia
- A Letter on Aphasia from a Concerned Son
- Life Participation Approach to Aphasia



**Download & print.  
Give to families.  
Post for staff.**



# Print and Post

▶ **What can I do to communicate better with the person with aphasia?**

1. Get the person's attention before you start speaking.
2. Maintain eye contact and watch the person's body language and use of gesture.
3. Minimize or eliminate background noise (TV, radio, other people).
4. Keep your voice at a normal level. Do not speak loudly unless the person asks you to do so.
5. Keep communication simple, but adult. Don't "talk down" to the person with aphasia.
6. Simplify your sentence structure and emphasize key words.
7. Reduce your rate of speech.
8. Give the individual time to speak. Resist the urge to finish sentences or offer words.
9. Communicate with drawings, gestures, writing, and facial expressions in addition to speech.
10. Encourage the person to use drawings, gestures, and writing.
11. Use "yes" and "no" questions rather than open-ended questions.
12. Praise all attempts to speak and downplay any errors. Avoid insisting that that each word be produced perfectly.
13. Engage in normal activities whenever possible.
14. Encourage independence and avoid being overprotective.



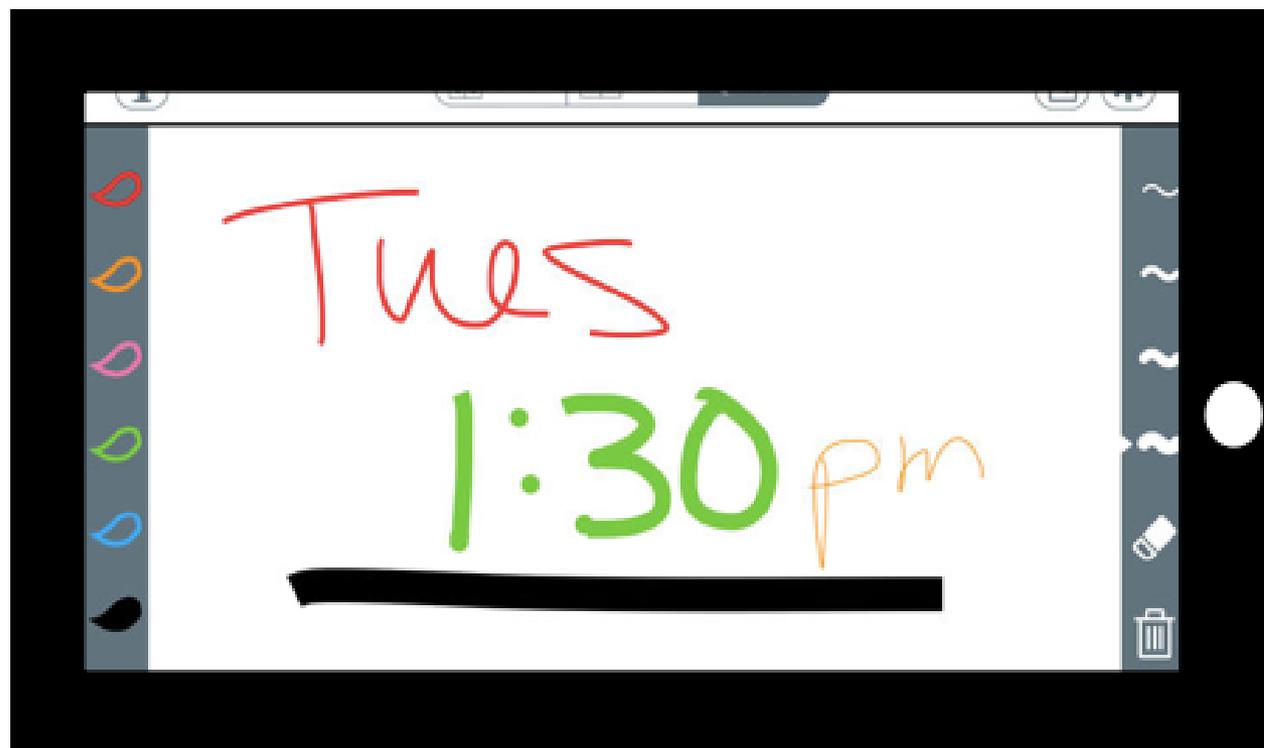
**Provide**  
**A Communication Board**  
To patients who need it for  
daily needs, alphabet, etc.

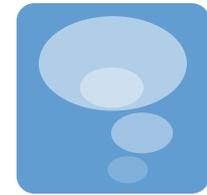


# Self Advocate Sheet for Patients



Write or draw for patients





## White Board

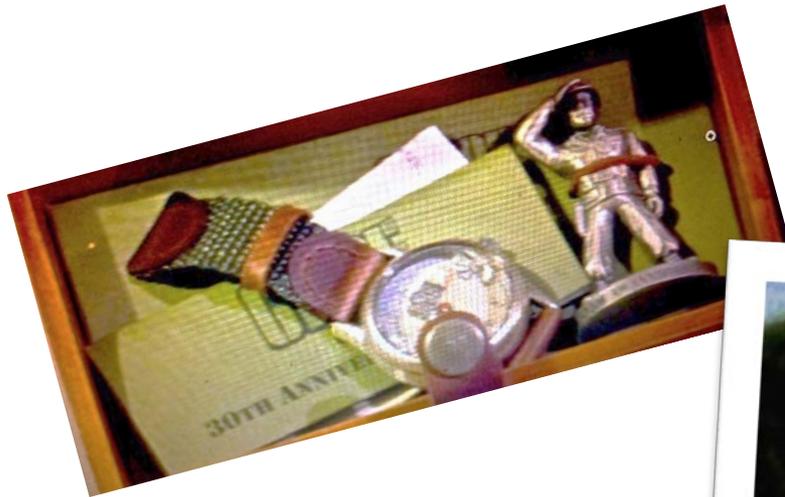
Write a word, draw a picture, or communicate without words; just like having paper & pen

- \* Use Finger or Stylus
- \* 5 Colors, 4 Widths
- \* Easy Save & Export

## AlphaTopics AAC

3 Evidence-Based Communication Boards to Improve Natural Speech & Communication

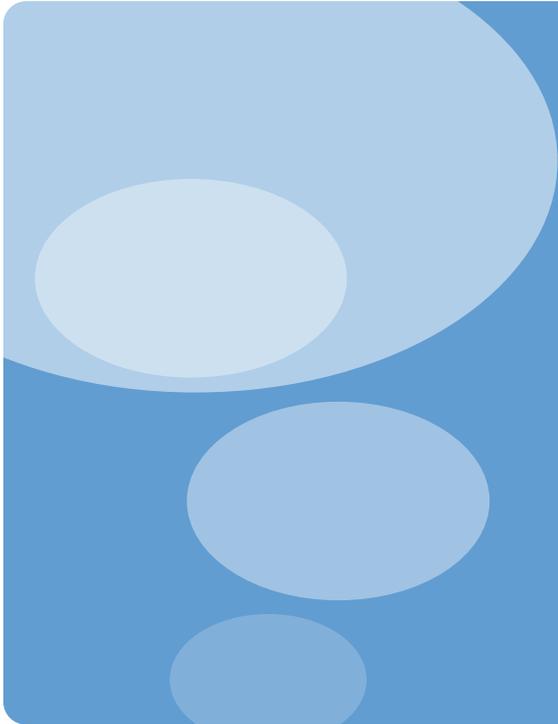
**Download** from the APP Store.  
**SHARE** with patients & staff.



“Be a fighter,”  
my doctor said.



Determination.  
Persistence.  
Never Give Up.

A large blue rectangular graphic with rounded corners. On the left side, there are three overlapping circles of varying shades of blue, creating a layered effect. The circles are positioned vertically, with the largest one at the top and the smallest at the bottom.

# Outpatient

15 years



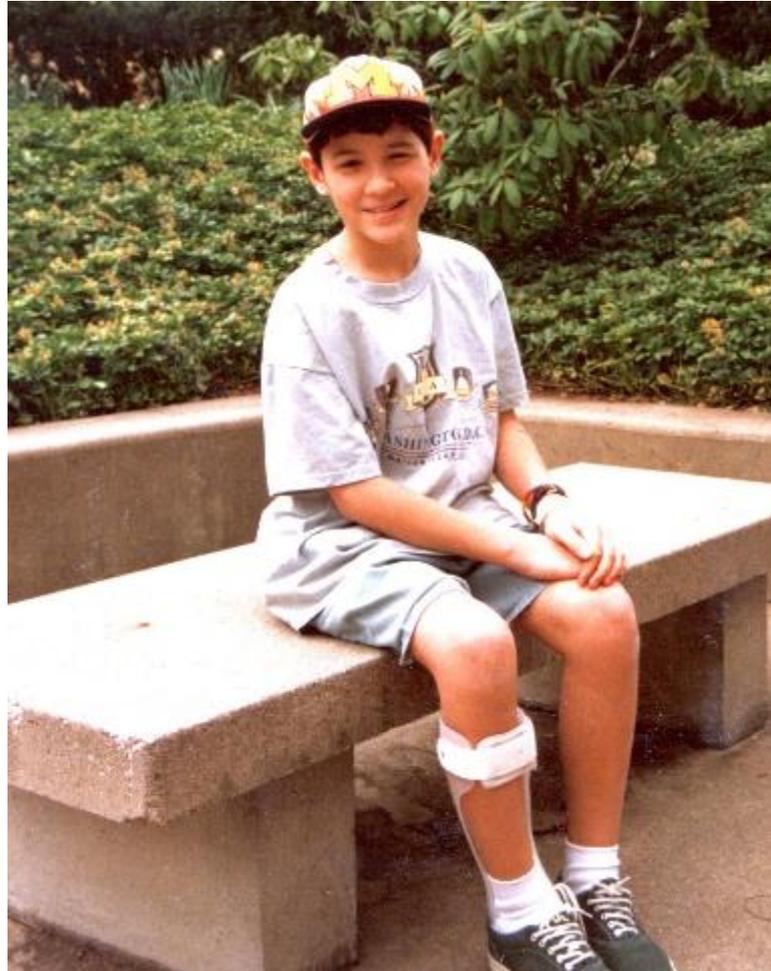
## Outpatient Therapy

Daily OT, PT, and Speech from 1995-1999  
Speech Twice a day 1995-2002  
Speech continued 2003-2010



Video 1995 - 2005





“WHEN????”

When will he talk? Read? Write?

When will he walk? When will his right hand return to normal?



I would like the Spanish version

Fill in the form to get your custom aphasia information card.

Name:

Address:

Emerg. contact:

Phone:

Cause:

**Check the boxes that apply**

- Speak slower with simpler language
- Write key words for me
- Give me written choices for answers
- I use drawing/writing to help me talk
- I may confuse yes/no answers
- Give me a minute to respond
- Shut off loud noises so I can concentrate
- Ask me if I understand
- Give me eye contact while speaking
- Call my caregiver for information

Print this page after you've filled in the form, cut out the card, and put it in your wallet. If your card prints too small, change the settings in your print page. Find the "scale" option and change it to increase the print size. Then print.

**Please Read This**

I have aphasia from a **stroke**. **Aphasia** means I have trouble understanding you, reading, writing, and speaking. It is a medical condition. I am intelligent but need some help with language. This can be frustrating for me.

Name:

Address:

Emerg. contact / Phone:

To help me:

[TheAphasiaCenter.com/pocket-card](http://TheAphasiaCenter.com/pocket-card)

**THE APHASIA CENTER**  
Intensive Treatment Programs

**CREATE a FREE  
POCKET CARD**

Personalized to the  
Patient's Needs

English or Spanish

[theaphasiacenter.com/pocket-card/](http://theaphasiacenter.com/pocket-card/)

National Aphasia Association

www.aphasia.org

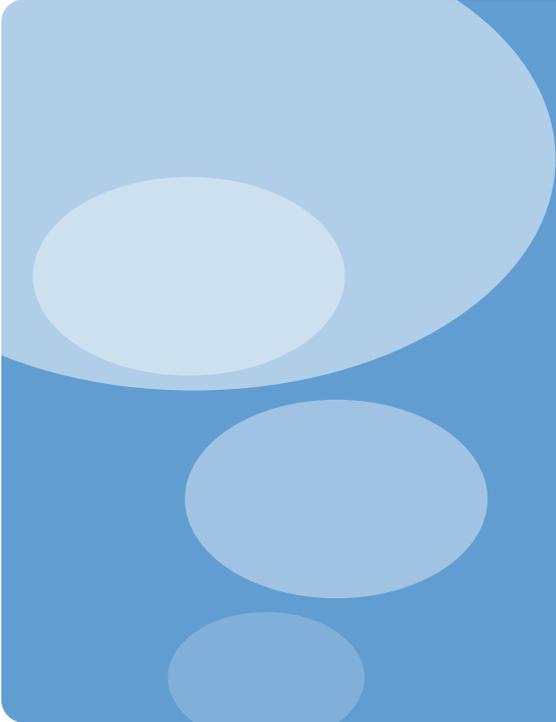
Help families  
find resources  
and **support  
groups** on the  
NAA site.



The screenshot shows the homepage of the National Aphasia Association website. At the top left is the logo, which consists of a dark red silhouette of a person's head in profile with the text "On the Site" inside. To the right of the logo is the text "National Aphasia Association". Further right is a navigation menu with links for "What is Aphasia?", "Find Support", "Stories & News", and "About Us". On the far right of the navigation bar are two buttons: "Affiliate Login" and "Donate".

The main content area has a light green background and features the heading "I Have Aphasia" in dark red. Below the heading is a dark red silhouette of a person's head in profile. To the right of the silhouette is a paragraph of text: "Aphasia is challenging, isolating, and frustrating. Here you can find information to help you better understand aphasia, typical treatments, and assistive technology options. You are not alone: over one million people in the U.S. have aphasia."

Below the main content area is a light blue section with the heading "Resources" in dark red. Underneath the heading are three icons: a grid of small squares representing a keypad or tablet, a clipboard with a checklist, and a play button icon inside a rounded rectangle representing a video player.



# The Family's Role in Recovery

Families, Rehab Experts, and Patients

**Teamwork**



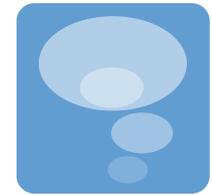
## Social Isolation & Depression

Sending a text.  
Answering the phone.  
Reading a message.



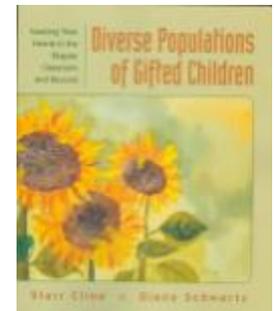
Help find new hobbies.

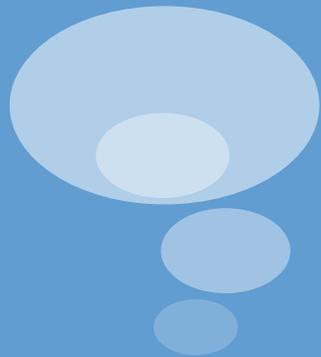
Focus on what you CAN do, not on what you CANNOT do.



BLOOM WHERE YOU ARE PLANTED

David Dow





# Aphasia Resources

Staff



**Download** from  
the App Store.  
**Share** with staff  
and patients.





ASHA PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
●●●●●○●●●○●●●●

## Perspectives on Aphasia: Communication Breakdowns in Medical Settings

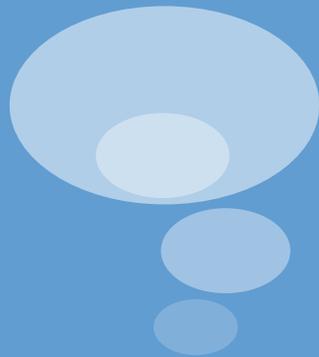
Carol Dow-Richards, Aphasia Advocate & Author  
David Dow, Stroke Survivor & Author  
John Schultz, MD  
[aphasiasupport@gmail.com](mailto:aphasiasupport@gmail.com)

▶ ⏪ 🔊 0:12 / 30:14 CC ⚙️ □ 🗑️

Perspectives on Aphasia: Communication Breakdowns in Medical Settings

ASHA Staff Training – Free on YouTube  
Does your hospital offer in-service training?





# Community Aphasia Resources

NAA  
Facebook  
American Heart & Stroke Association  
Events



Connecting Survivors  
Events and Online





# The Emotional Impact

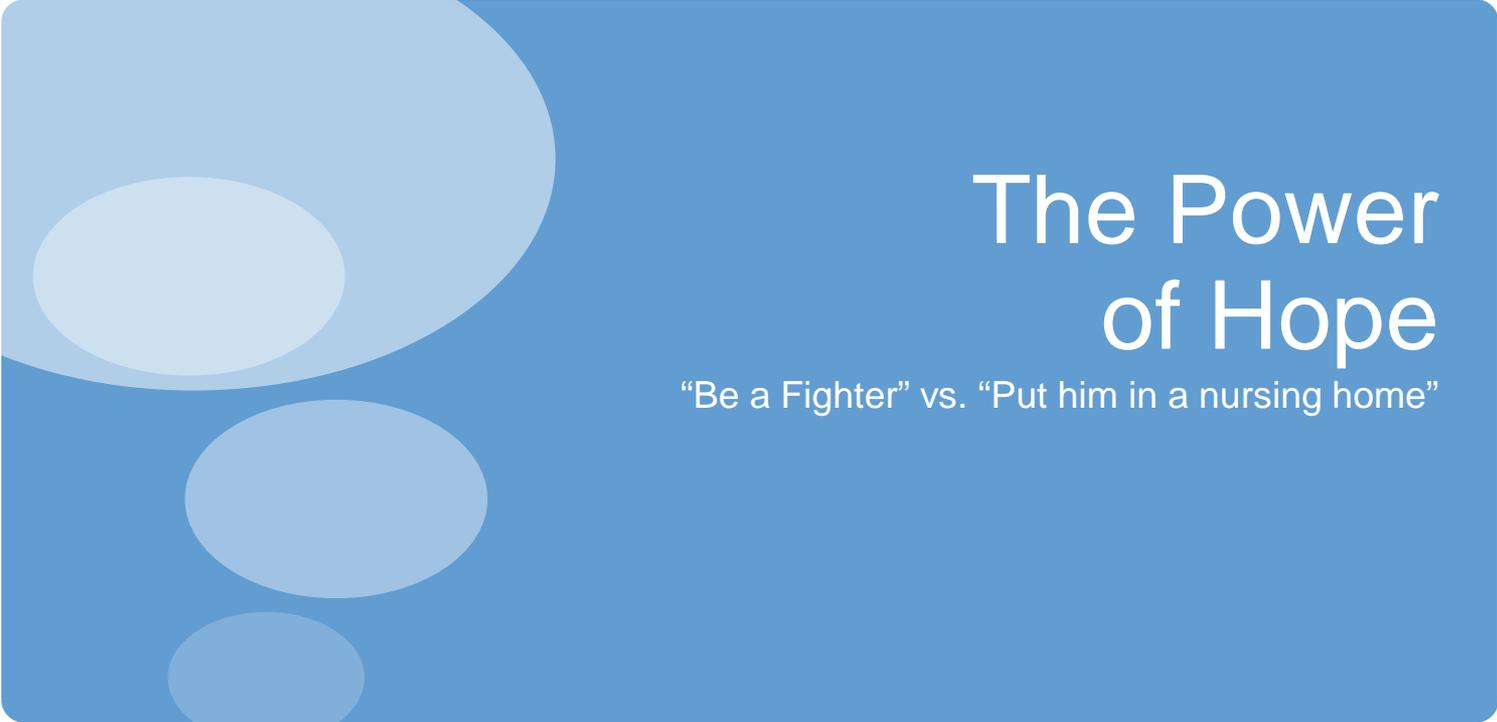
Impact on recovery  
Response to Rehabilitation  
Psychosocial Adjustment



**The emotional impact of aphasia can have a negative impact on recovery, motivation in rehabilitation, and psychosocial adjustment that affects quality of life overall.**

**It's *not* speech alone.  
It's human connection.**

**Look at the BIG picture.**

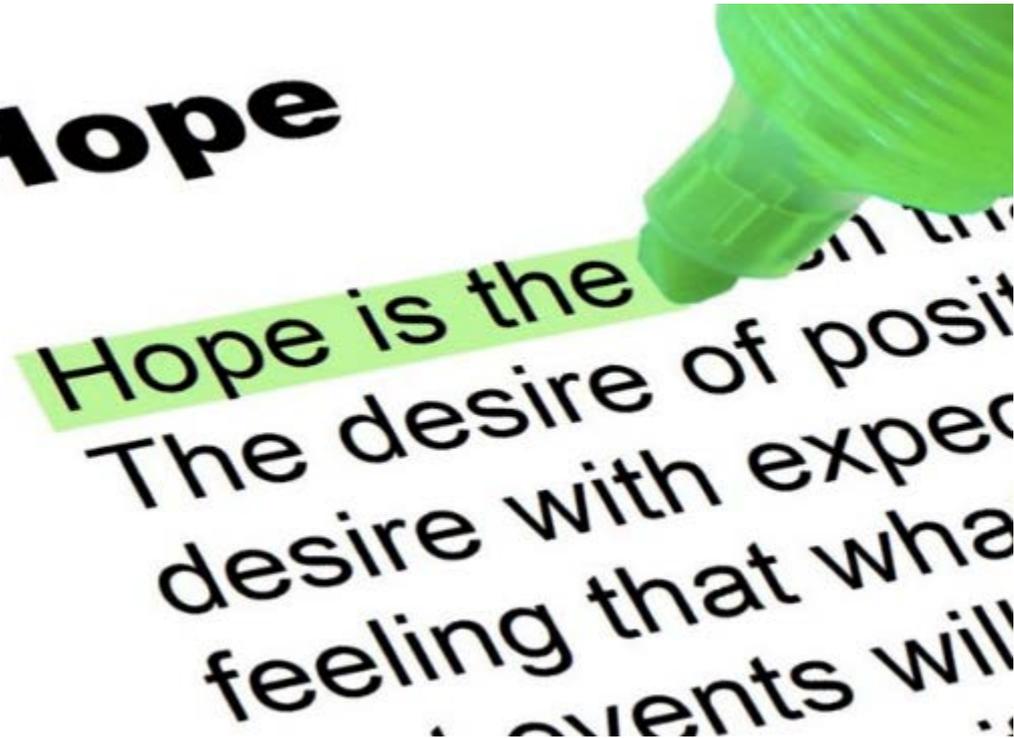
The background is a solid blue color. On the left side, there are three overlapping circles of varying shades of blue, creating a decorative graphic element. The circles are positioned vertically, with the largest one at the top, a medium one in the middle, and a smaller one at the bottom.

# The Power of Hope

“Be a Fighter” vs. “Put him in a nursing home”



# Hope



## Hope & the Self-Fulfilling Prophecy

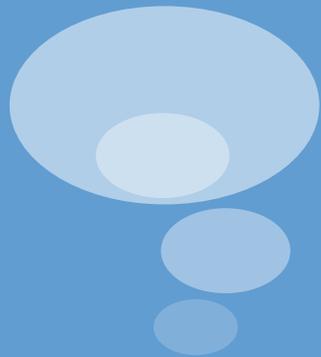
Without hope – why bother even trying?



# The Power of Self-Talk

Learned Helplessness  
“The Cookie Story”



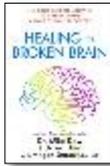


# Supporting Patients

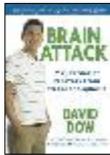
Review



## David Dow



*Healing The Broken Brain : Leading Experts  
Answer 100 Questions About Stroke Recovery*



*Brain Attack: My Journey of Recovery*



*Chicken Soup for the Soul Story, "The Good Fight"*

*The Aphasia Recovery Connection,  
Founder & Director of Cruises and Events*

## Carol Dow-Richards

The Aphasia Recovery Connection, Volunteer Director

Dignity Health, NV, Stroke & Aphasia Lunch Bunch Facilitator

[aphasiasupport@gmail.com](mailto:aphasiasupport@gmail.com)

**702-336-0200**

A large blue rectangular area with rounded corners. On the left side, there are three overlapping circles of varying shades of blue, creating a decorative graphic element.

# OPTIMISM

Is the faith that leads to achievement.  
Nothing can be done without hope and confidence.