

APHASIA HOME SUPPORT GUIDE

Communication Strategies: Conversation Strategies



Why Use Conversation Strategies?

- The patient with aphasia may have thoughts and emotions to share. Appropriate conversation strategies help to:
 - Promote a sense of participation and reduce isolation (Kagan, 1998; Lock et al., 2001).
 - Reduce frustration, and improve communication effectiveness and relationship quality (Hopper et al., 2002).
- Core Principle: Conversation is a "two-way collaboration", not a test. The carer should act as a partner, not a corrector.

1 Creating a Supportive Environment



Wait Patiently

Give at least 5-10 seconds of response time. Do not rush to answer or interrupt (LOCK ET AL., 2001).



Acknowledge Competence

Use words and attitude to recognise the patient's abilities. E.g., "I know you understand", "I know you know what you want to say" (KAGAN, 1998).



Reduce Distractions

Turn off the TV/radio. Maintain a face-to-face, well-lit environment for conversation.

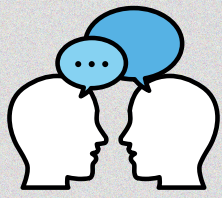
2 Practical Communication Strategies

Tips for Selecting the suitable strategies:

- Adapt to the **patient's abilities** (e.g., if writing is difficult, do not force it).
- Respect the **preferences** of both people (e.g., if they don't like gestures, use another method).
- Choose strategies **together** that both are willing to try.



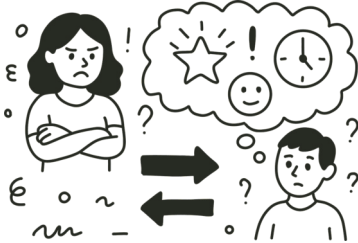
Person with Aphasia		Communication Partner	
Strategy	Example	Strategy	Example
Mention the topic first	"Let's talk about your brother"	Prompt them to say the topic first	"What do you want to talk about?"
Draw	Draw out a "sun"	Write Key Point	Writing the word "doctor"
Gesture	Gesturing "eating"	Write Question Word	Write "Who"
Gesture + Draw	Gesturing "Big" + Drawing "circle"	Offer Yes/No Questions	"Do you want to eat"
Write	Writing the word "car"	Suggesting Other Strategies	"Try to draw it out"
Correct Misunderstanding(s)	"Not... But..."	Provide longer responding time	Wait for 10-15 seconds



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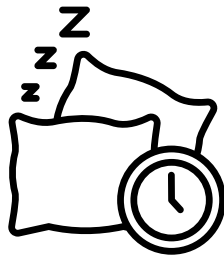
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3 Reminders



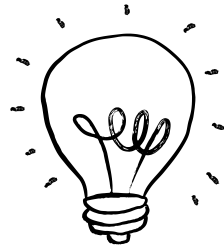
Avoid

Avoid interrupting, talking over the person, or criticising. Do not assume the person has reduced understanding.



Carer Self-Care

Communication breakdowns are normal. It is important to take regular breaks and seek support groups.



Seek Professional Advice

We recommend working with a Speech and Language Therapist to develop personalised strategies.

Aphasia Training App



Download Leaflets



The information provided is for reference purposes only. For professional management or to learn more, please contact a speech and language therapist.

Reference(s)

- CONVERSATIONAL COACHING (對話教練): HOPPER, T., HOLLAND, A., & REWEGA, M. (2002). CONVERSATIONAL COACHING: TREATMENT OUTCOMES. APHASIOLOGY, 16(7), 745-761.
- SCA (支持性對話): KAGAN, A. (1998). SUPPORTED CONVERSATION FOR ADULTS WITH APHASIA: METHODS AND RESOURCES. APHASIOLOGY, 12(9), 816-830.
- SPPARC (伴侶關係與對話支持): LOCK, S. ET AL. (2001). SPPARC. INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE DISORDERS, 36(SUPPL.), 25-30.

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