Aphasia in the News

Stroke Recovery Awareness, Guelph, Ontario, May 11

Stroke Recovery Canada and the March of Dimes Canada are sponsoring a free event called Journey of Hope - Life after Stroke, on May 11.

This symposium will offer important information about issues affecting stroke survivors, including aphasia awareness, caregiver support, health and wellness, advocacy and more. Special guest speakers include gold medal Paralympian Paul Rosen, author and stroke survivor Howard Engel, brain injury survivor and motivational speaker Forrest Willett and Walter Gretzky.

The event is sponsored in part by Linking Survivors with Survivors, a volunteer driven project connecting new stroke survivors with individuals who have already made successful recoveries from stroke.

The symposium includes interactive programs and workshops, lunch and refreshments.

Date:
Saturday, May 11, 2013
9:30 am - 3:30 pm

Location:
Delta Guelph Hotel and Conference Centre
50 Stone Rd.W
Guelph, ON N1G 0A9

For Information:
Contact Teresa Pyke at 866-380-0758 ext. 230

April 26, 2013

In this edition
Aphasia in the News
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How to help your Brain

Dear William,

In this edition, we're changing things up a bit.

During my recovery, I worked on MANY exercises using the Aphasia Toolbox website, materials and tools. Some of the modules and exercises I used were Semantic Cognition (including the exercises heteronyms, homonyms, Hink Pinks, Multiple Meanings, Clips), Verbing (verbing, nerbing, canonicalizing sentences) and Verbal working memory.

In this edition, we're including a free aphasiatoolbox treatment and practice protocol; this is an example of some of the very early work that I did with Bill Connors (the creator and owner of Aphasia Toolbox and Aphasia Sight Reader) during my recovery. See the section - Free aphasiatoolbox Protocol.

With over 50 treatment protocols and well over 800 exercises (and more every day!), there's no reason for tired and repetitive drills; Bill believes in changing things up in therapy, keeping things fresh, just as we are with the newsletter this month. We hope you like the selected protocol and the change with this edition.

Re Entanercept,
In the March 2013 edition of this newsletter, we discussed the use of the drug Etanercept (trade name Enbrel) for stroke and aphasia. We are following our clients who opted for this treatment, and will report on their recovery in a future edition.

$12 Million for a Center for Research on Aphasia, Evanston
Northwestern University (Evanston, IL) has received a $12 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to establish a center devoted to research on aphasia. The grant is the largest ever awarded to a School of Communication researcher.

The full article is available here.

ARC Aphasia Conference, June 23-28, Las Vegas

The Aphasia Recovery Connection is offering the ARC Jam in June and the Viva Las Vegas Aphasia and Stroke Conference.

Dates: 
June 23-28 (come for all or part) 
3 days of Social and Learning options 
3 days of Conference and Fun

The ARC Jam in June (June 23, 24 & 25) event allows you to join others with aphasia for pre-conference activities including small group sessions, social networking, and free time to explore Las Vegas!

The Aphasia and Stroke Conference (June 26, 27 & 28) event allows you to meet experts to learn the latest treatments, new technology, and helpful communication devices for those living with aphasia. Gain tips for living a healthy life after stroke, discover how brain neuroplasticity impacts recovery, learn CPR from the American Heart & Stroke Association, meet inspiring stroke survivors and more!

SPONSORED BY:
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www.strosehospitals.org
Aphasia Recovery Connection
www.facebook.com/groups/Aphasia.Recovery.Connection

For further information, contact Carol Down-Richards.

Brain Injury Global Picnic

The Brain Injury Global Picnic is an international event to unite disability groups and to bring media and general awareness to the 'Silent Epidemic' of brain injury.

Visit the website at Big Global Picnic.

The BIGP this year is scheduled for September 21, 2013.

For information, please contact:
Lori Purdy Faitel
http://braininjuryмотivation.com /
248-310-4815

BRAIN Mapping Study

President Obama announced the BRAIN project in his State of the Union address in February 2013. The BRAIN project - Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies (BRAIN), is designed to understand the nature of thought. This is probably the most

Sincerely,
Sharon Rennhack
Chief Editor
Aphasiatoolbox.com

News on aphasiatoolbox and aphasia sight reader

Aphasiatoolbox.com is lowering the price of its monthly membership and subscription. ATB is the world leader in providing innovative tools, techniques, software and materials for aphasia treatment and practice.

Subscribers to our website come from 18 different countries and aphasia treatment is offered in 7 different languages, flattening the world of aphasia.

Our primary product is Aphasia Sight Reader, a unique and specialized software for independent and patient practice.

For people with aphasia:
Purchase a full membership to aphasiatoolbox.com to get complete access to the most comprehensive collection of online tools for aphasia rehabilitation for your practice.

For Speech Language Pathologists (SLPs):
Become an SLP member of aphasiatoolbox.com to get full access to our online evidence-based clinical tools for the treatment of aphasia and related disorders, including software for patient practice, data collection and limitless treatment stimuli.

The monthly price for the membership/subscription is now $14.99; the yearly fee is $99. Due to increased demand, our overhead costs are less, so we are sharing the difference with you!

New Facebook Page!

We have created a new Facebook page for Aphasiatoolbox.com. Please "Friend" us and "Like" our new page!

CEU Home Courses

The on-site workshops entitled "Aphasia-Apraxia Therapy: Exploiting Neural plasticity" that have become so popular will now be available in streaming video presentations. These presentations utilize the Brain Compatible Aphasia Treatment and the Motor Reconnect Apraxia programs, and will be available to you at https://www.homeceuconnection.com/ in the near future. We will let you know when these are available online.

These exercises have just been added to the Aphasia Sight Reader- the world’s most innovative aphasia practice software:

Your own list of personal names to practice:

Our newest feature is a personalized list of the names of people in your life- -family members, friends, therapists. If you are a paid member, you may email [information@aphasiatoolbox.com ], a list of 20-35 names and we will create your own.
This ambitious neuroscience initiative is probably the most ambitious neuroscience initiative ever proposed, as the project is expected to be decade long, with $100 million in funding.

The project plans to reconstruct the activity of every single neuron; this mapping of the brain could help neuroscientists understand the origins of cognition, perception, and other brain activities. Hopefully this will lead to more effective treatments for such conditions as autism and brain injuries including stroke and aphasia.

In a recent interview on this project, Miyoung Chun (a molecular geneticist and vice president for science programs at the Kavli Foundation), says:

What’s most interesting to me is how our thoughts are molded. Thought seems such a human thing. We assume that other species have thoughts, but our thoughts appear to be more comprehensive. It’s thoughts that led us—you and me—to talk about these issues today. Our thoughts are directly related to how we memorize, and how we learn, and how we are able to do so much. But what’s the basis for this? It’s the reasoning side of the brain that seems to me the most mysterious.

Sources:

Interview with BRAIN Project Pioneer: Miyoung Chun, MIT Technology Review, April 15, 2013

Why Obama’s Brain-Mapping Project Matters, MIT Technology Review, April 8, 2013

Scientists Pinpoint Brain’s Area for Numeral Recognition

Scientists at the Stanford University School of Medicine have determined the precise anatomical coordinates of a brain "hot spot," measuring only about one-fifth of an inch across, that is preferentially activated when people view the ordinary numerals we learn early on in elementary school, like “6” or “38.”

"This is the first-ever study to show the existence of a cluster of nerve cells in the human brain that specializes in processing numerals," said Josef Parvizi, MD, PhD, associate professor of neurology and neurological sciences and director of Stanford's Human Intracranial Cognitive Electrophysiology Program. "In this small nerve-cell population, we saw a much bigger response to numerals than to very similar-looking, similar-sounding and similar-meaning symbols.

Link to the article.

Free Webinar on Stroke

The American Heart Association and Stroke Magazine is offering a free, educational webinar on May 22, 2013.

This webinar discusses Stroke Risk Factors and their Management:

Risk factors for the development of stroke include hypertension, hypercholesterolemia, diabetes, smoking and excessive alcohol intake. The control of these risk factors through lifestyle modification and medications substantially reduces stroke risk. The AHA has recently released a list of 20-35 names and we will create your own Aphasia Sight Reader practice list. It will be in the module: Flash Spelling > exercise: Name: [your initials + state abbreviation].

Module- Flash Spelling >> Exercise-Clustered Words

Left 3 letters
Middle 3 letters
Middle 4 letters
Right 3 letters
Right 4 letters

Module- Functional Goals >> Exercise-Orientation

General
Children
Married
Holiday to month
Places
Month to holiday

Module- Pure Alexia >> Exercise-Words

Australia
Museum
Medical
Symphony Orchestra

Upcoming aphasiatoolbox presentations

Bill Connors will be presenting on Aphasia-Apraxia Therapy: Exploiting Neuroplasticity, at these locations:

April 27, 2013, Tampa, FL
May 23-26, 2013, Marco Island, FL - Presenting at the Florida Speech Hearing Association Conference
July 2013, Long Beach, CA
August 18, 2013, Berkeley, CA

These presentations will include aphasiatoolbox clients and staff members in both live and recorded demonstrations.

For more information, please see our EVENTS page; if you are interested in sponsoring a workshop in your area, contact Bill Connors at Bill@aphasiatoolbox.com or 724-494-2534.

Free Aphasia Sight Reader protocol

We are offering a free aphasia sight reader protocol: AphasiaPhonics: Anagrams: Sentences
recommended 7 steps to affect stroke risk and these will be discussed along with recent trials demonstrating the benefits of medications in ameliorating various stroke risk factors.

**Highlights:**

1. To review the evidence based recommendations regarding AHA/ASA lifestyle risk factors and stroke prevention.
2. To define ideal cardiovascular health and life's simple 7 and support their relevance for predicting stroke risk.
3. To highlight some recent randomized trials that have addressed blood pressure control and diet and stroke risk.

**REGISTER now for the webinar on May 22, 2013.**

Registration and participation are FREE.

Ralph Sacco, M.D., Presenter

Stoke Risk Factors and their Management

May 22, 2013, at 10:00 AM EDT | 7:00 AM PDT | 3:00 PM GMT

Back Up U.S Attendee Phone: (866)832-6378

Conference ID: 28032721

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**Free Aphasia Software Finder**

**The Tavistock Trust for Aphasia, a UK charity, offers an aphasia software finder.**

The website has information about software programs and apps for people with aphasia in the English language, and includes information on US, British and Australian companies. This website is free to use. It has no connection with any software provider.

**On this site:**

- You can find all aphasia therapy software programs for English speakers on this site;
- You can find information to help you and your therapist find and choose the right software for you;
- You will find analyses and comparisons;
- You will NOT find reviews, advice or recommendations on this site.

**Aphasia Software Finder**

**How to help your Brain**

Meditation has been in the press in recent weeks for its ability to help the brain. While the practice of meditation can take on many different forms, the one technique that appears most beneficial (and also the most traditional) is called mindfulness meditation, or focused attention. Mindfulness meditation is an awareness of present moment experiences.

The Examiner discussed the benefits of mindfulness meditation:

> As little as two weeks of mindfulness training can significantly improve reading comprehension, working memory capacity, and the ability to focus.

The Io9 blog, in its article - "The science behind meditation, and why it makes you feel better", stated:

> By mindfulness, practitioners are asked to focus their thoughts on one thought and one thought alone. An overarching goal is to be firmly affixed to the present moment. This typically means concentrating on the breath - observing each inhalation and exhalation - and without consideration to other thoughts. When a "stray" thought arises, the practitioner must be quick to recognize it, and then turn back to the focus of their attention. And it doesn't just have to be the breath; any single thought, like a mantra, will do.

The Io9 article states that the neuro-cognitive aspects of meditation have been studied by neuroscientists using MRI scans:

> A 2012 study showed that people who meditate exhibit higher levels of gyrification - the "folding" of the cerebral cortex as a result of growth, which in turn may allow the brain to process information faster . . . scientists suspect that gyrification is responsible for making the brain better at processing information, making decisions, forming memories, and improving attention.

In a 2009 study, neuroscientists used MRIs to compare the brains of meditators with non-meditators. The
Structural differences observed led the scientists to speculate that certain benefits, like improved cognitive, emotional, and immune responses, can be tied to this growth and its positive effects on breathing and heart.

Meditation has been linked to larger hippocampal and frontal volumes of gray matter, resulting in more positive emotions, the retention of emotional stability, and more mindful behavior (heightened focus during day-to-day living). Meditation has also been shown to have neuroprotective attributes; it can diminish age-related effects on gray matter and reduce cognitive decline.

Neuroscientists have also documented the way meditation impacts brain activity itself. Meditation has been associated with decreased activity in default mode network activity and connectivity - those undesirable brain functions responsible for lapses of attention and disorders such as anxiety and ADHD.

And finally, meditation has been linked to dramatic changes in electrical brain activity, namely increased Theta and Alpha EEG activity, which is associated with wakeful and relaxed attention.

In summary, a recent Huffington Post article stated:

Ten years from now, this practice is going to be seen as just like doing a push-up.