

Activities that do not rely on speech

If your relative or friend has **difficulty speaking**, they are likely to find **conversation tiring**. It may be helpful to **spend** some **time** doing things together which **do not require** much **speech**. You may both be grateful to have the pressure taken off whilst still enjoying each other's company.

The following suggestions may not be suitable for everyone and some involve using more language than others. Similarly, if your relative or friend has difficulty moving their hand or leg following a stroke or head injury, some of these activities may need to be adapted or may not be possible. Different activities will be appropriate at different stages.

Remember, the **effects** of **Aphasia** can **vary** from day to day, often being **worse** on the days the person with Aphasia is **tired**, feeling unwell, anxious or upset.

Long term, you may find that your relative or friend will want to continue with his or her interests – **doing** the things **they enjoyed** before they developed Aphasia. They might also enjoy developing **new interests** which will **not involve** much talking. It may be possible to get help with transport, either financially or practically or pay concessionary rates.

Reading and Music

- **Read aloud** to your relative or friend or **listen to a talking book** together.
- **Go to the library** and choose books, audio tapes, CDs or DVDs together
- **Sing** together
- **Listen to music** together

Games

Do a crossword together. Use simple and large print crosswords.

Play a simple card game together. Use large cards and card holders.

You may be able to get these from good quality toy shops or from your local 'Disability Living Centre'.

Play noughts and crosses, dominoes or Chinese chequers. If your friend/ relative likes cribbage they may still be able to play.

Health and Self-esteem

These activities can be very good for boosting morale:

- Give your relative or friend a **manicure** or **pedicure**. Help them to wash their hands or feet in warm, soapy water and then dry them. You can help them cut, file and/or paint their nails.
- **Massage their hands** using hand cream or perfumed oil. NB. some aromatherapy oils should not be applied directly to the skin so check the label carefully.
- Assist your relative or friend to **put on make-up** or to have a **shave**. You could also help them to put on perfume or aftershave.
- **Do their hair** or ask the hospital hairdresser to visit. There are hairdressers who will visit people at home.
- If there is an event such as a wedding or christening coming up, **help them to choose an outfit**.

Shopping

- **Look through a catalogue together** and choose things to buy.
- **Write a shopping list together** for your relative or friend to use.
- **Go window shopping together**.

Hobbies and Interests

Many crafts such as knitting can be done **one-handed**. An occupational therapist can advise you on equipment to use.

- Join an **evening class** together such as **cooking, photography** or **film studies**.
- **Look at a magazine together**. This could be related to a particular interest such as gardening.
- **Draw or paint a picture**. You could do these together or set things up for your relative or friend to try.
- **Plant some seeds or plants together** and monitor how they grow.

Other Activities

- **Make up a communication book together using photos, words or drawings.** They can use this to point things out if they cannot find the right word.
- **Look at photographs together,** especially pictures of friends and family or favourite holiday destinations.
- **Write Christmas or birthday cards together** or cut up old cards to make gift tags. If your relative or friend cannot sign their name get an **ink stamp** made of their **signature**.
- **Go out for a pub lunch together.**
- If your relative or friend has a religious faith, **say a prayer** and let them join in as much as they are able. You could ask someone from their religious community to visit e.g. a Priest or Rabbi.