

# NAA'S LUNCH AND LEARN

## YOUR COMMUNICATION JOURNEY: BEYOND THE APHASIA DIAGNOSIS

WEDNESDAY, 1/28/2026  
12 PM EST

# SOME NAA REMINDERS

**Advocate  
Advance  
Empower**



## Dr. Davetrina Seles Gadson Mini-Grants

Empowering voices through health equity

The National Aphasia Association (NAA) is proud to honor the legacy of Dr. Davetrina Seles Gadson, a remarkable leader in speech-language pathology and health equity. Her groundbreaking work advanced our understanding of aphasia care for underserved communities and inspired a commitment to fostering change in healthcare systems.

In her memory, the NAA is directing donated funds to support innovative projects that address systemic inequities in aphasia care and research. This program will encourage efforts that align with one or more of the eight health equity objectives Dr. Gadson so passionately championed. Read more about these initiatives at <https://aphasia.org/announcing-the-davetrina-seles-gadson-health-equity-grant-program/>

Up to Three \$500 mini-grants are available!

Application can be found on the NAA website.

**Applications Due 2/10/2026**



 [maura@aphasia.org](mailto:maura@aphasia.org)

 [www.aphasia.org](http://www.aphasia.org)



## ASK THE EXPERT

FEBRUARY'S ASK THE EXPERT WEBINAR IN MEMORY OF DR. D. SELES GADSON




### REVISITING THE WISDOM AND MISSION OF TRUE HEALTH EQUITY

 Wednesday, February 11, 2026 at 12 noon EST

JOIN US TO HEAR HOW HER WORK HAS INSPIRED RESEARCH AND PRACTICE THROUGHOUT THE FIELD OF APHASIA AND BEYOND.






## Night of Aphasia Arts 2026 More Than Words

Explore creativity through art, performances, and community connections, embracing expression beyond words.

March 25, 2026  
6:30 - 8 PM EST

Poetry, Sculpture, Painting, Photography, Music, etc.


Virtual Program



Aphasia can change words.  
It does not take away meaning.  
Tonight, we celebrate communication that lives in color, sound, movement, and form.

This is More Than Words.

Submit your art today! Deadline: Monday, February 24<sup>th</sup> 2026 at 5pm EST





## Lunch and Learn

Wednesday

January 28th, 12noon EST

## Your Communication Journey:


BEYOND THE APHASIA DIAGNOSIS




# Today's topic



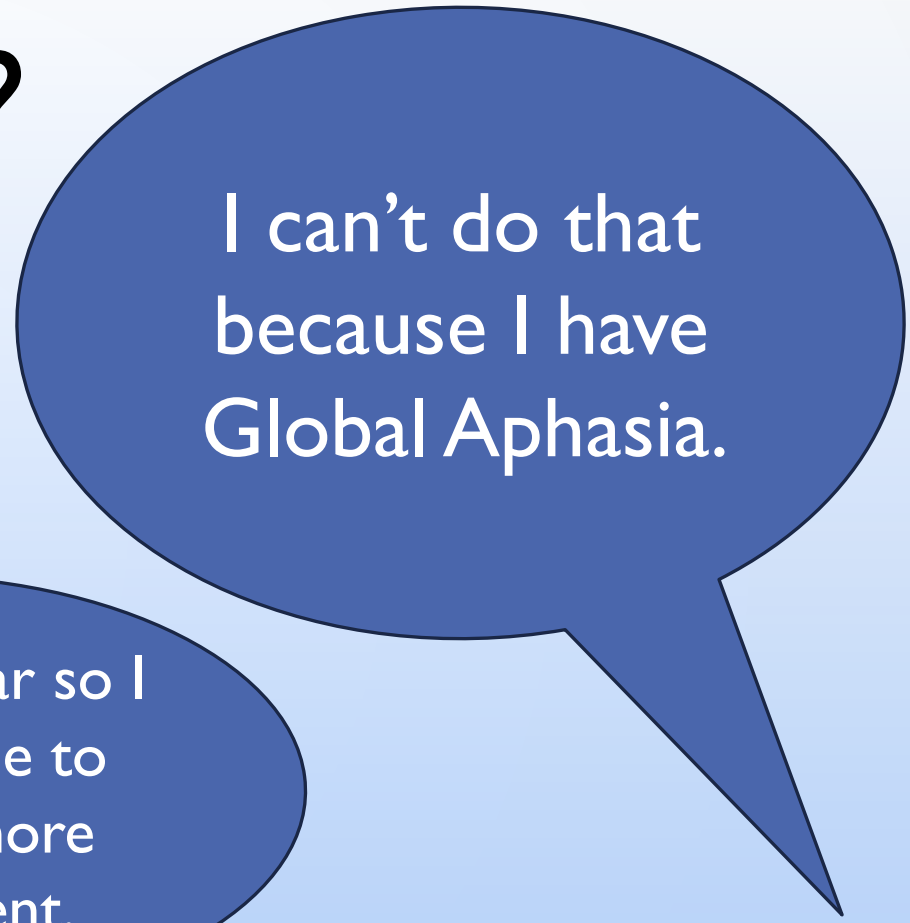
# *Why talk about this?*



My Speech  
Therapist told  
me I have  
“Broca’s  
Aphasia”.



It’s been a year so I  
won’t be able to  
make any more  
improvement.



I can’t do that  
because I have  
Global Aphasia.

# Concerning because...

- “Your now is not your forever!”
- Labels match the strengths and opportunities AT THE TIME OF TESTING
- Tests provide us some quantitative way of measuring impairment, but they often are VERY limited in identifying strengths, use of strategies/communication supports, etc.
- Even professionals don’t always agree on the “diagnosis”
- Co-existing diagnoses can impact the LANGUAGE diagnosis (i.e. motor speech disorder like apraxia or dysarthria, motor function, vision, etc.)
- “Can’t” is a very powerful word and one that can be a self fulfilling processes.

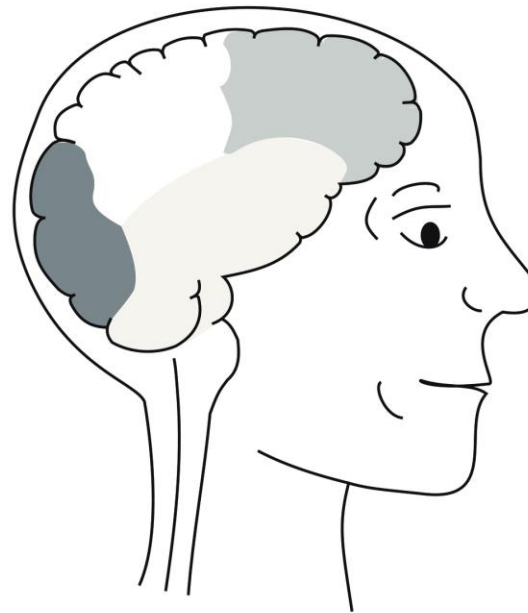


# Aphasia

<https://aphasia.org/what-is-aphasia/>

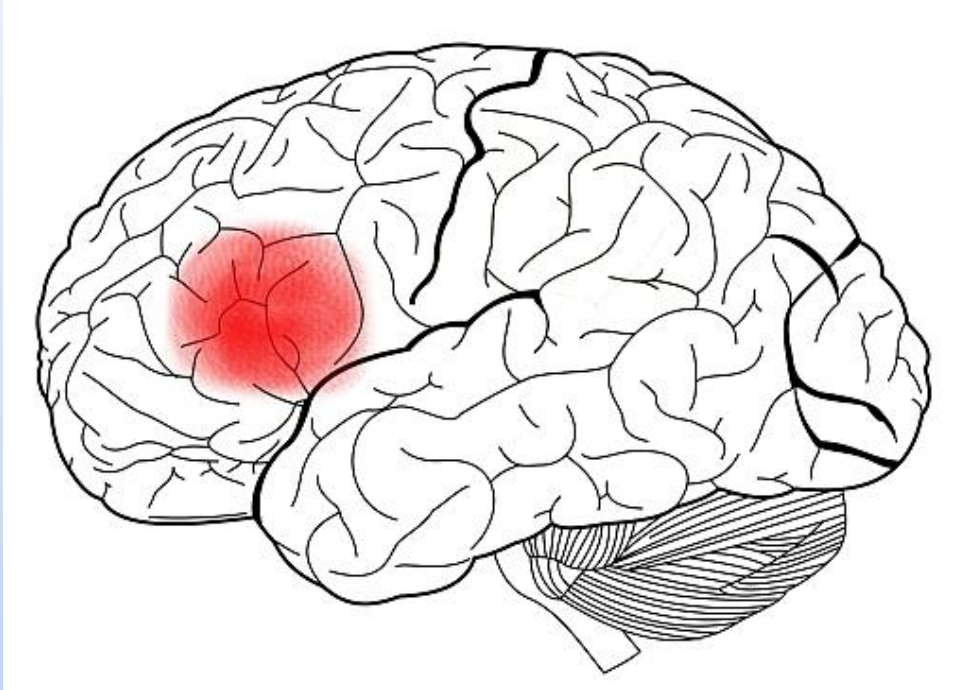
Medical Diagnosis?

Communication Diagnosis!



READING	WRITING
LISTENING	SPEAKING

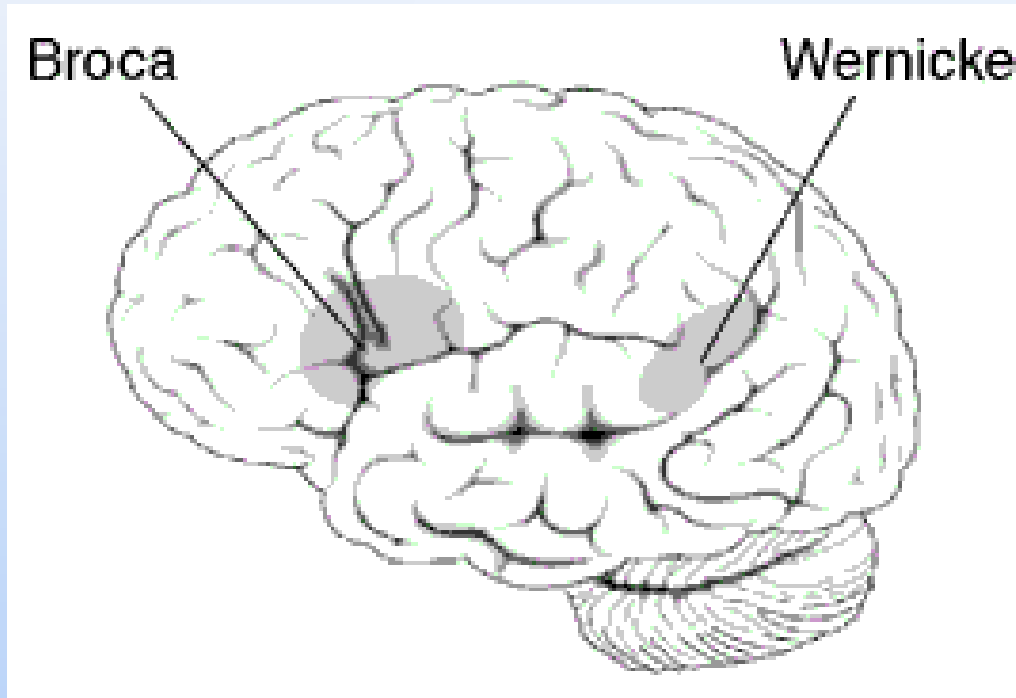
## Types of Aphasia: **Broca's Aphasia**



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- Speaking: Hard to get words out; short phrases or single words
- Understanding: Usually strong—can follow conversation
- Reading: Often easier than writing
- Writing: Words are left out or spelled wrong
- ➡ People know what they want to say, but saying it is hard.

# Types of Aphasia: **Wernicke's Aphasia**



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA-NC](#)

- Speaking: Words flow, but may not make sense or match the meaning
- Understanding: Often hard to follow what others are saying
- Reading: Can be confusing or doesn't make sense
- Writing: May look like normal writing but with mixed-up words
- ➡ Speech may sound fluent, but the meaning isn't always clear.

## Types of Aphasia: **Anomic Aphasia**



**Anomic Aphasia**

- Speaking: Trouble finding the right word (especially names or objects)
- Understanding: Usually strong
- Reading: Usually strong
- Writing: Writing may have word-finding problems too
- ➡ Often sounds like "I know it, but I can't say it."

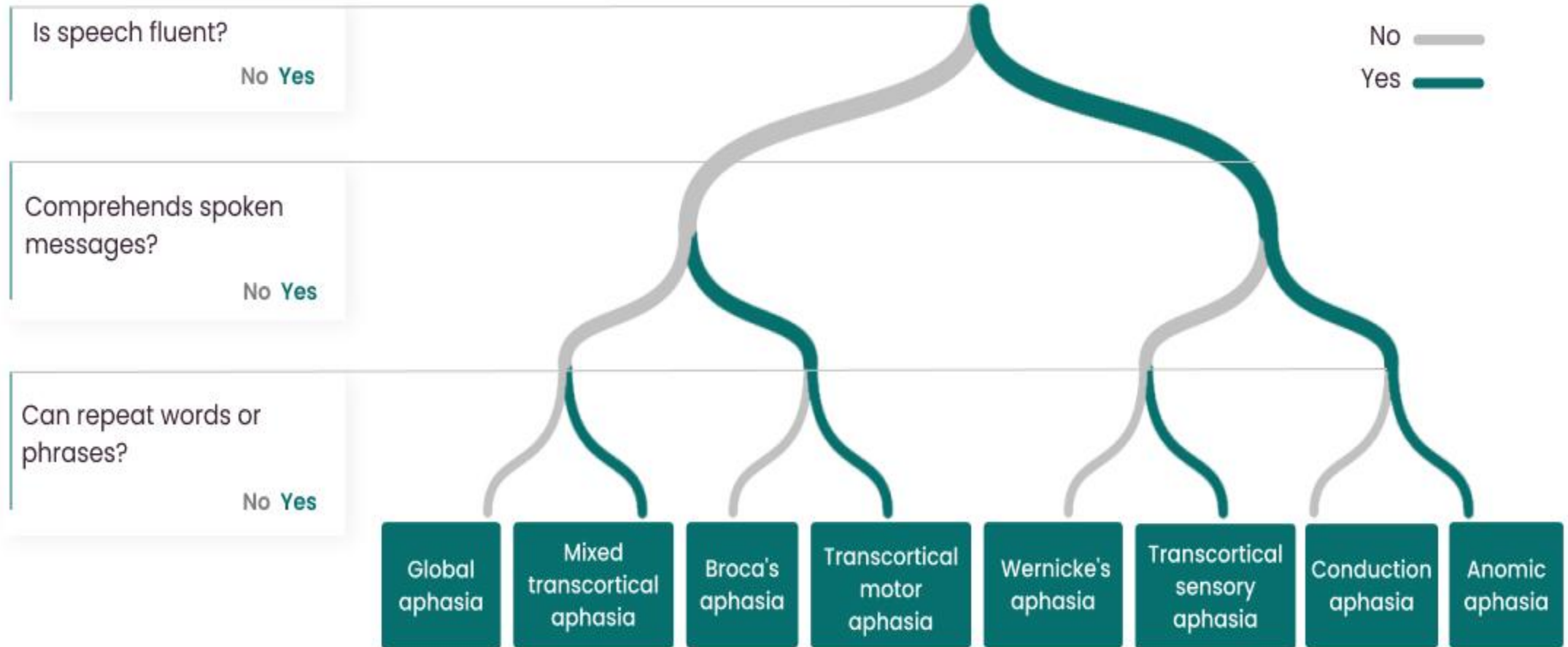
## Types of Aphasia: **Global Aphasia**



**Global Aphasia**

- Speaking: Very limited or no words at first
- Understanding: Can be hard to understand others
- Reading: Very difficult
- Writing: Very limited
- ➡ Often happens right after a big stroke. Can improve over time.

## TYPES OF APHASIA



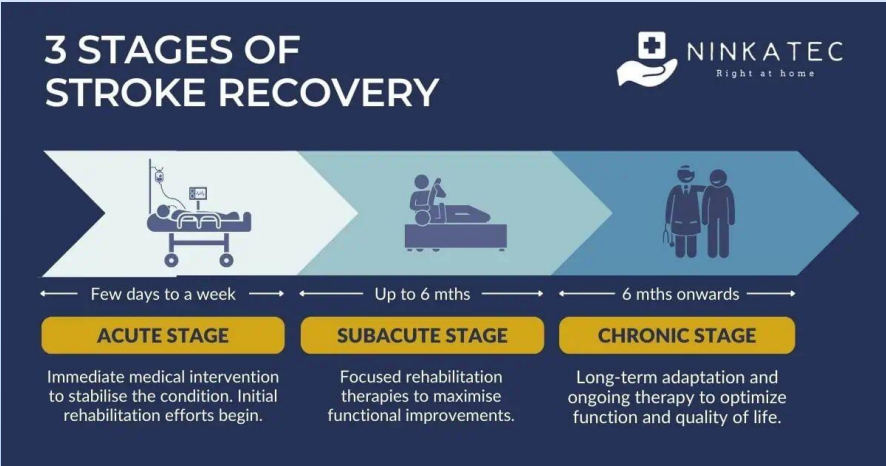
# *Timeline of Stroke/Aphasia Recovery...*

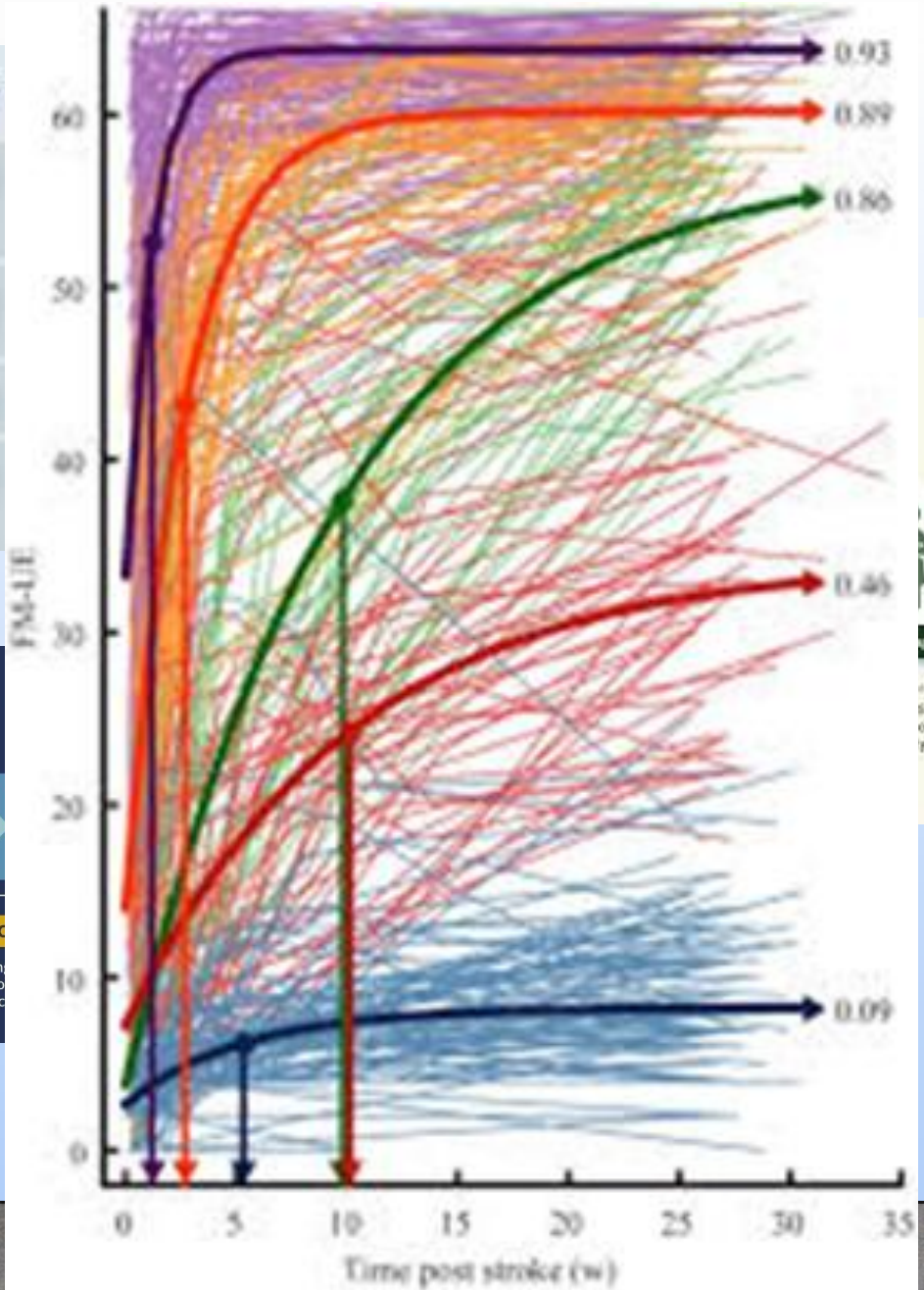
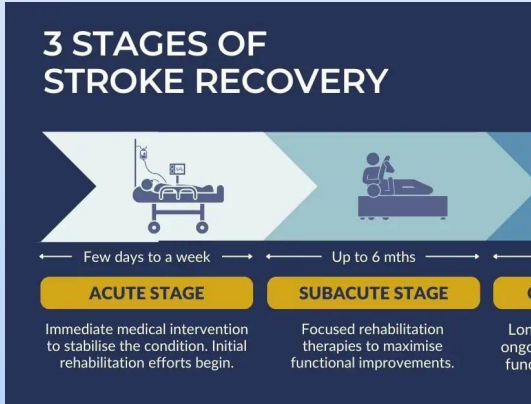


What you have  
heard / been  
told?



# Timeline of Stroke/Aphasia Recovery...





# Timeline of Stroke/Aphasia Recovery...



CHRONIC

LOSS

PLATEAU

VICTIM

DISABLED



# *Timeline of Stroke/Aphasia Recovery...*



*What you think  
(believe)?*





## What we know...

- Neuroplasticity
- Growth vs. Fixed Mindset
- Continued stimulation/connection
- Engagement Opportunities



- Focus on your current **communication strengths and needs**
- Think in terms of **modalities**:
  - How well can I understand?
  - How well can I express?
  - What helps me succeed (writing, drawing, apps, etc.)?
- Aphasia is a **journey**, not a label

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*What do you think?*

