



From The Editor's Desk:

Welcome Autumn! A Season of Change and Growth for People with Aphasia

As the air turns crisp and the leaves begin to fall, autumn reminds us of **new beginnings**.

Just as the season changes, people living with aphasia can **find fresh ways to care for their health and strengthen their communication**.

Here are a few ideas to try this autumn:

- **Take Walks Outdoors**

Enjoy the cooler weather by walking in the park or around your neighborhood. Walking helps the body stay strong, and the sights, sounds, and smells of autumn can spark conversation.

- **Read Aloud with Support**

Try reading a favorite poem, recipe, or short article out loud. *Even a few minutes a day can strengthen speech muscles and build confidence.*

- **Join a Group Activity**

Whether it's a community event, a support group, or a book club, *being with others gives more chances to practice talking and listening.*

- **Practice Naming Autumn Objects**

Use the season as inspiration—say words like *pumpkin, leaf, apple, sweater*. *Practicing with real objects makes it easier to connect words with meaning.*

- **Keep a Journal**

Writing short notes about the day, the weather, or feelings helps with language and memory. *Even simple words or drawings count.*

Autumn is a season of beauty, reflection, and growth.

For people with aphasia, it can be a gentle reminder that every step—no matter how small—brings progress and hope.

Denise Mendez

Get The Word Out! Aphasia!

The MAAC President, Mark Harder

MAAC Is Encouraging You to Write Again.

Like many stroke or brain injury survivors - speaking, reading, understanding spoken words, and/or writing are frustrating and laboring to the brain. Speech therapy is the best way to battle aphasia. In addition to therapy, early in my stroke, I asked my three sons to text me a picture every day. I needed to text the answer, like phone, desk, and fence. I know what to picture was but writing and spell was the challenge. I want to get better. I could actually say, "I want to get better" but I really couldn't spell it at all. I tried to spell "Do". After three hours, I saw a commercial on TV with the words on the screen, "Mountain Dew". Dew, Do, Wow! DO! The first sentence I wrote was, "I lock the door". That was eight months post stroke. Two years post stroke - my first poem. I am seven years post stroke and am far better than I was but I am still working hard.

MAAC is encouraging you to write again. Each month, we will send our group a word or a list like - Utensils, Furniture, Leaves, and this month, Monsters. You can list the words. Maybe a sentence or two. A paragraph or a poem. What is your monster? What is your favorite monster? Do you know any funny monsters? Or is spelling a hot mess monster?



Let's
write
again.

Magee Aphasia Support Group Program

Magee Rehabilitation Hospital is in Philadelphia, PA. It has two locations. One is located at 1513 Race Street, and it is both a hospital and a rehabilitation facility. The other location is at South Christopher Columbus Blvd. Its' name is Riverfront and is primarily a rehabilitation facility.

The meetings take place on the first Tuesday of each month, from 1:00pm to 2:00pm. Sarah Lantz is the primary person from Magee that runs the meeting and a great number of people from Magee assist with this program.

Everyone signs in when they are at the meeting and if it is one's first time there, they also give their email address so they can be contacted about our upcoming meetings and any possible changes.

Sarah Lantz will make announcements about anything she is aware of about the aphasia programs throughout Philadelphia, Delaware and New Jersey. Individuals then can add any additional programs that are coming up in the future.

At Magee's Aphasia Support Group there are individuals with aphasia that come from all over. There are also caregivers of those with aphasia that attend this meeting too. The most important point is that those with aphasia are allowed to speak at their own pace and everyone allows them to speak. This gives each person the opportunity to improve with their speech, the speed that they talk, to listen to others like themselves and see that everyone is improving with their communication skills.

Then an individual will do a presentation about when they had their stroke or neurosurgery, how they realized that they had aphasia, how they and their caregivers began to go about improving their own communication skills, such as speaking, understanding what other people were saying, to attempt to read and write again if it is possible. They then allow anyone to ask them questions about what they are experiencing with aphasia. The answers that people give to everyone are very important because many are confronted with the same issues. Everyone learns another story about how different people are living and improving with their aphasia.

Finally, if time allows, everyone at the Magee meeting discusses what they plan on doing in the upcoming month.

The Magee Aphasia Support Group was a major improvement for my communication skills but it took me an hour to get on a SEPTA train to get to Magee and then to return home. Another person in the Trenton area also had aphasia from a stroke and he and I approached Capital Health and said that it was very important for Capital Health to offer an aphasia program at its hospital because they were doing neurosurgery and should assist a person with aphasia to improve their speech. The other important point was that people in Mercer County, NJ really could not go all the way to Philadelphia every month. Capital Health realized that this was a very important program for people with aphasia and with the assistance of people such as Sandy Stein and others, to begin the Capital Health Aphasia Program at the Capital Health-Hopewell. This is an outstanding step for people with aphasia.

Thank you very much to the Magee Aphasia Support Group Program.

Jim Burd

The Power of Self-Advocacy for People with Aphasia

Self-advocacy is the ability to communicate your needs, make informed decisions, and stand up for your rights.

For people with aphasia, self-advocacy is not just important; **it's essential.**

Aphasia can affect speaking, understanding, reading, and writing.

Because of this, many people assume those with aphasia can't express their thoughts or make decisions. ***This is not true.***

While communication may take more time or look different, ***people with aphasia are still thinking, feeling, and understanding.***

When we advocate for ourselves, we challenge these misconceptions.

We must let others know what kind of support we need—whether it's *asking for more time to speak, requesting written information, or using communication tools like picture boards or apps.*

Self-advocacy also empowers us to be active participants in our medical care, workplace, and community.

Being a self-advocate **builds confidence and independence.**

It helps others see us beyond the aphasia. We are MORE THAN APHASIA! Most importantly, self-advocacy ensures that we have a voice in the decisions that affect our lives.

You can support our self-advocacy by:

- listening patiently
- respecting communication differences
- creating environments where everyone's voice can be heard—no matter how it's expressed



Tie Pulls the Ball Away

Tie: Hey, do you want to kick the ball!

Me: *This is not a metaphor, is it?*

Tie: Absolutely not. What's a metaphor anyway?

Me: *It's a figure of speech - like "Man's best friend". You wouldn't pull that ball away, would you?*

Tie: Kick the ball! It's right there - ready to be kicked. Look at the ball, run at it, and kick it!

Me: *Tie, do you know that I must find the word, have to form the word in my mouth, and then say the word but the wrong word comes out. You will not pull the ball away, right?*

Tie: You can do it. Be the word, I mean the ball.

Me: *You are right. I get this. I'm going to kick it!*

Me: *Augh!!*

<https://www.stroke.org.uk/stroke/effects/aphasia/communication-problems>

<https://youtu.be/mC5MzvgE4c0?si=RpDo1hiytlApD2sT> (Charlie Brown Football)



"Perseverance, the secret of all SUCCESSES!"

MAAC is proud to support the
Middletown Athletic Association (MAA) soccer team!
A BIG thank you to the Derry family behind this connection. We can't
wait to cheer on your player out on the field!



MAAC GETTING THE WORD OUT!!!
at the **BRISTOL FALL FESTIVAL**
September 20th





MAAC 4th Annual Aphasia Get Together

It was a beautiful day with people with aphasia, family, friends, therapy, and students at the **Bristol Township Parks and Recreation Amphitheater**.

September 28th



Horror Halloween

By Jenn Derry

Halloween night, on October 31th, once a year
Horror evokes a sense of fear
Through the fog and gloomy misty and the cold breezes blow
Candles flicker, dancing on dark shadows, as eerie glows
The monsters rise with their traditional savage prowl
Sharing their own incognito existence, menacing scowl

Freddy Krueger,
One, Two, Freddy's coming for you
Three, Four better lock your door
With his jagged burned-skin
And has his dreadful devilish grin
Blades on his fingers and slicing the air
Beware the nightmares, he's always there

Jason Voorhees from the lake returns,
With his mask of silence and has cold eyes that burn
His voice hearing the chilling whisper "ch ch ch ah ah ah"
Scream so loud
Ghostface mask is dreadful and cloaked in shroud
With a call, he plays his lunatic game
Run and hide, it's all the same



What is Your Favorite Movie?

Chucky laughs, an alarming doll
A twisted possessed soul
Tiny in size, but cruel and sly
He wants you to be your best friend,
but you will cry

Together they stroll the streets
through the town
These legends of terror,
they won't let everyone down
It's an essence of **Kill**
Halloween is here, it's a **thrill!**



MAAC QUARTERLY SCHEDULE/CALENDAR OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, DECEMBER 2025

Date	Session	Topic/Guest
Monday, October 13 th At 7pm ET	MAAC Aphasia/Caregiver Support Group	Special Guest Patricia Dabroof Creative Aging Specialist
Saturday, October 18 th At 10 am	ROSA-Conference Temple University - Gittis Student Center. 1755 N. 13 th St. Philadelphia	
Monday, October 27 th At 7pm ET	Conversation Group	
Saturday, November 1 st	American Heart Association Heart Walk Citizen's Bank Park 7:30am – Event Registration 8:15 am - Educational Programs Begin 8:45am – The WALK Begins!	
Monday, November 10 th At 7pm ET	MAAC Aphasia/Caregiver Support Group	Special Guest Jonathan Nelson
Monday, November 24 th At 7pm ET	Conversation Group	
Monday, December 8 th At 7pm ET	MAAC Aphasia/Caregiver Support Group	Special Guest Sandy Stein, CCC-SLP
Monday, December 22 nd . At 7pm ET	Conversation Group	