



APHASIA SNAPSHOT

a monthly look at what the aphasia community is thinking and feeling

Aphasia and the Holidays

We defined "the holidays" as the time between Thanksgiving to New Year's, but people answered these questions accordingly if they lived outside the US. What we're really focusing on is navigating group social situations and celebrating with loved ones.

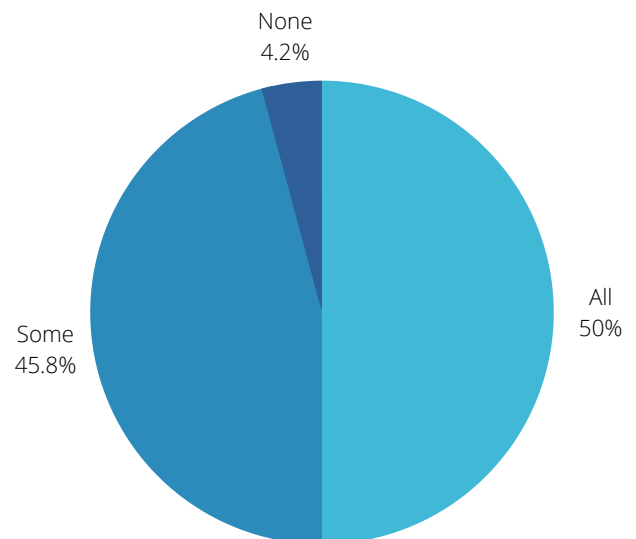
Do you celebrate the holidays with friends and/or family?



I spend ALL of the holidays with friends and/or family

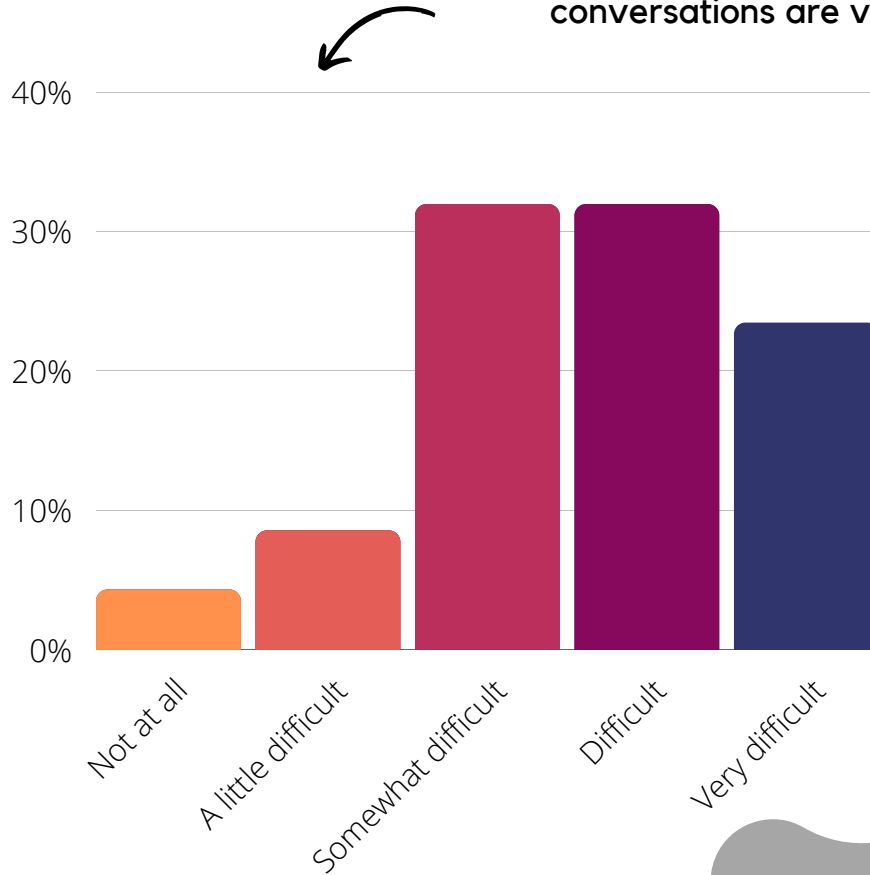
I spend SOME of the holidays with friends and/or family

I spend NONE of the holidays with friends and/or family



Aphasia and the Holidays

On a scale from 1 - 5, how much trouble do you have navigating group conversations at social events? (1 is not at all, and 5 is group conversations are very difficult.)

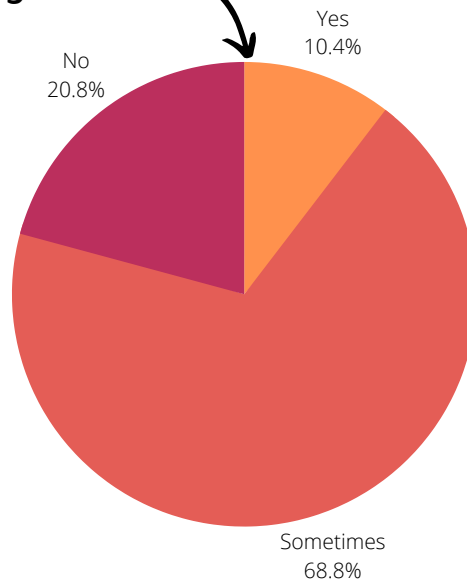


Does your aphasia ever stop you from wanting to attend big get-togethers?

Yes, it's too hard to navigate the noise

Sometimes—big get-togethers can be very tiring and stressful

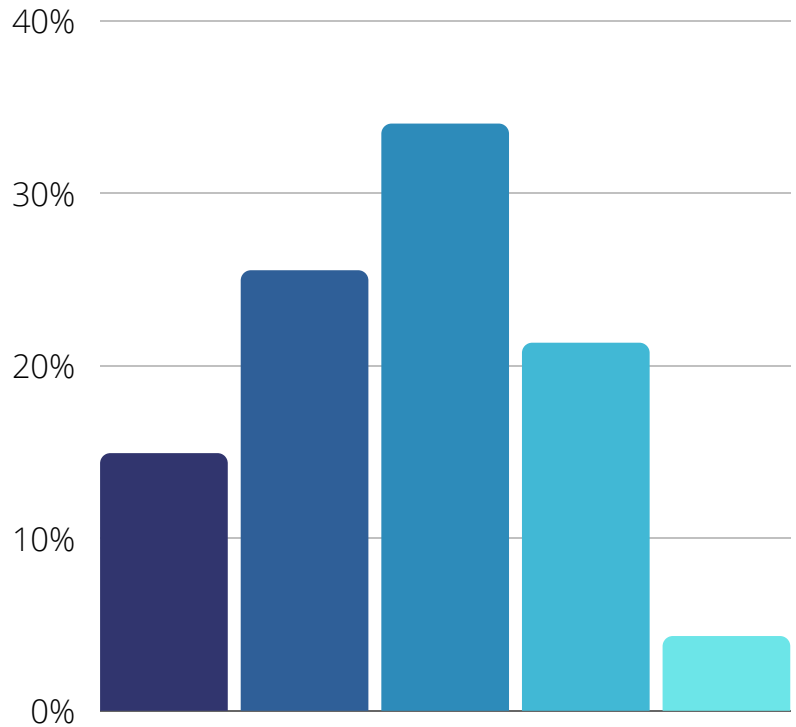
No, I enjoy big social events and seeing everyone



We have advice so you can enjoy yourself more at family events.

Aphasia and the Holidays

Have you ever told the host before an event how they can be more aphasia-friendly? For instance, ask to be seated next to someone you can easily speak with during larger group meals.



No, I don't need any special accommodations, so I've never said anything

No, I would benefit from accommodations, but I don't feel comfortable saying anything

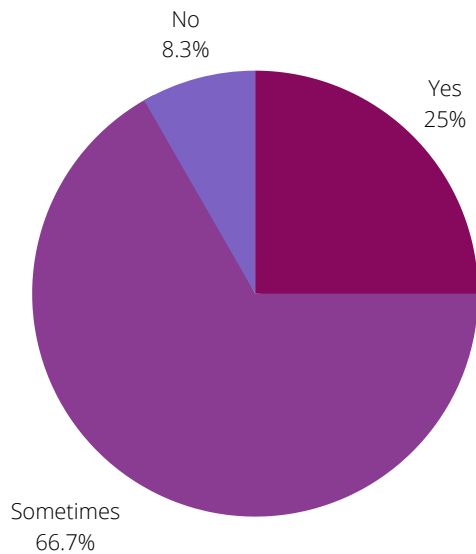
Sometimes—it all depends on how well I know the host

Yes, I told the host before I got to the event (or someone else has told the host)

Yes, I told the host when I arrived at the event (or someone else has told the host)

We have tips and tricks for navigating group conversations.

Aphasia and the Holidays



Yes, people use aphasia-friendly communication practices

Sometimes, but I wish they would slow down or not speak for me

No, the get-togethers are not aphasia-friendly and I don't feel included

Do you usually feel included in conversations at social events with family and friends?

What is the hardest part about navigating big group conversations or get-togethers?

Following the flow of the conversation. Navigation among varied speakers is hard to keep track of. I find the flow too fast to keep track.

Not being able to explain things fluidly and coherently.

Feeling left out.

The time it takes to compose a coherent sentence can cause a lag in the conversation. Noise levels and other stimuli add to the stress, decreasing processing time further.

I am uncertain about whether there will be anyone there who will want to communicate with me.

With groups, there is more of a chance for miscommunication/not being heard.

Knowing how to say certain things.

Background sounds/music can be too loud.

It is noisy, and I have to make more effort to be heard.

Aphasia and the Holidays

What is one thing you wish people did to make events more aphasia-friendly?

Speak slowly and about one topic at a time.

Include me in the conversation.

Softer environments.

When in a large gathering in an auditorium or a large room, saving some places near to the people talking so that we can hear better and see their mouths better. (I wear hearing aids, and it is sometimes impossible to hear well.)

Accept my disability. I am still the same person, so don't avoid me.

Mention ahead of time what the topic of conversation might be.

Take turns.

Be patient with me.

Make me feel at ease by taking the initiative to introduce yourself.

Please don't interrupt.

Lower the noise level and use recapping in conversation.

Give more time to respond.

Don't shout.

Don't bombard me with guesses; give me time to talk.

Throwing a party?
Consider these tips
to make it great for
everyone.

Aphasia and the Holidays

What is your best advice for enjoying holiday get-togethers when you have aphasia?

It's not easy, but I still love talking with people.

Keep interacting with people, and it will get better over time.

Enjoy—at least you're there.

Enjoy the food and company.

Laugh, nod, and drink.

Don't worry too much about aphasia. Enjoy your blessings.

Keep quiet and focus on listening.

Find some time to be with a small number of people.

Have more one-on-one conversations.

When things get too stressful, go to a quiet room to compose yourself.

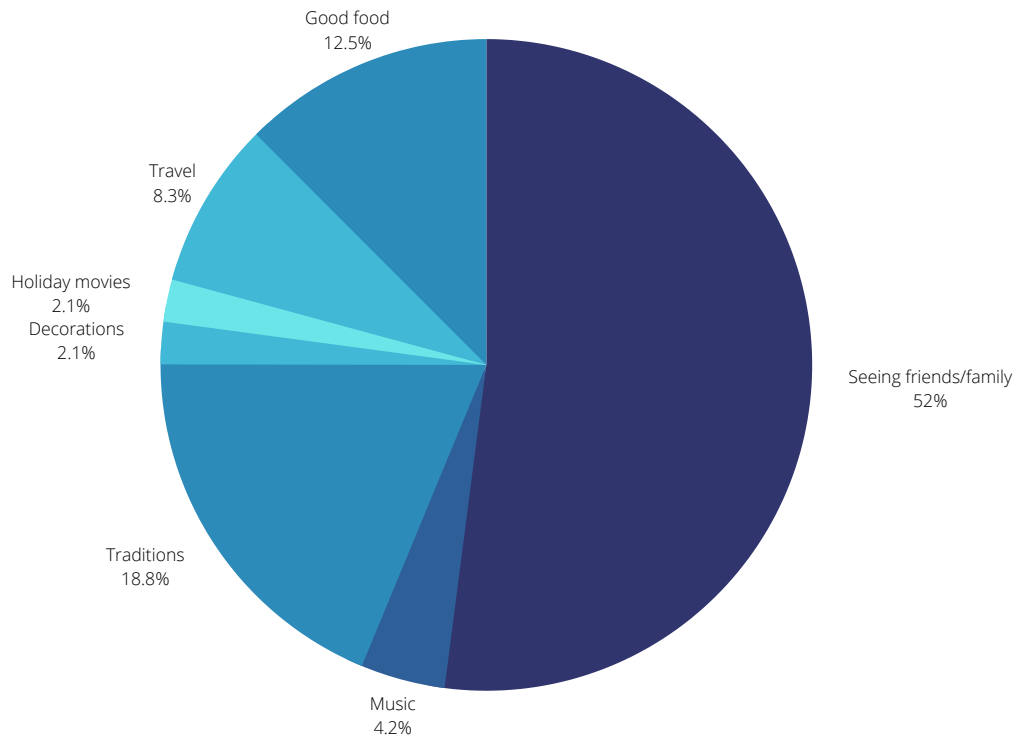
Chill, enjoy each other's company, and accept each other as who they are. We are all human with similar emotions and needs for companionship, acceptance, love, and joy.

If possible, have someone close by who understands your particular needs. Plan ahead for a place to take a break. Know your limits and try to regroup before your energy is gone.

Being able to leave when I want to.

Aphasia and the Holidays

What are you MOST looking forward to this holiday season? (We know it's hard to choose only one.)



However you celebrate, the NAA wishes you a happy holiday season.