

At the National Aphasia Association, we often receive emails asking the same question: **How can I best communicate with someone who has aphasia?**

Aphasia-friendly communication is just good communication that benefits everyone.

It helps if you use the letters from the word "aphasia" to remember these seven simple tips.

A stands for "ask simple questions." Can you phrase your question as a yes/no question or ask for a thumbs up or thumbs down?

P stands for "provide choices." Instead of leaving the question open-ended, give a few choices to simplify things.

H stands for "help communicate if asked." Don't speak for someone with aphasia. Give them time and space to request help filling in a missing word.

A stands for "acknowledge the frustration." People with aphasia know they have aphasia. It's okay to kindly acknowledge that they're frustrated and should take their time to speak.

S stands for "speak slowly and clearly." We like to tell people to adjust to aphasia standard time. It's okay to relax and enjoy a slow conversation. People with aphasia have something to say, and so do you, so let's be sure you understand each other.

I stands for "if you don't understand, say so." It's better to tell someone you don't understand and ask them to say it another way, use hand gestures, draw, or point. Sometimes using two forms of communication at once — such as speaking and writing — increases understanding.

Finally, **A** stands for "allow extra time." Take the stress out of the conversation by slowing things down, pausing, waiting for the other person to think and speak, and enjoying the act of communication. Rushing someone with aphasia can make it challenging to find the correct words.

In this world where we rush, rush, rush, people with aphasia help us slow down and connect. So practice aphasia-friendly communication, and pass this video to friends, family, community members, and co-workers so they can do the same.

Thank you for being a caring, curious person and helping people with aphasia.