
Aphasia Center of California

Volume 6 Issue 1 ♦ Spring 2003

Aphasia Groups: Healing through Community

“We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.”

--Norman MacEwen

By Roberta J. Elman, Ph.D.
President and Founder

Aphasia isolates. With reduced communication skills, it is common for people with aphasia and their friends and colleagues to withdraw from one another. Research from a variety of disciplines indicates that social connection and community are vital for maintaining positive health and overall longevity. This research shows that creating and maintaining meaningful ties to other people is essential for being happy and healthy.

Aphasia groups offer an excellent way to foster such interpersonal relationships and meaningful ties. Groups



The Aphasia Center of California Community celebrates the holidays

have the power to heal as shared interests, stories and trust develop among group members. The focus of the aphasia groups at the Aphasia Center of California is on moving people forward in life. Programs at the Aphasia Center are developed using a life participation approach within a social model of communication. Our aphasia groups provide people with membership in a community while giving them a reason or purpose for communication. Rather than being excluded from a range of activities, our aphasia groups are inclusive: everyone with aphasia belongs and everyone with aphasia is welcomed. In addition, our research demonstrates that aphasia

groups provide members with the needed support and confidence for reintegrating into the community at large.

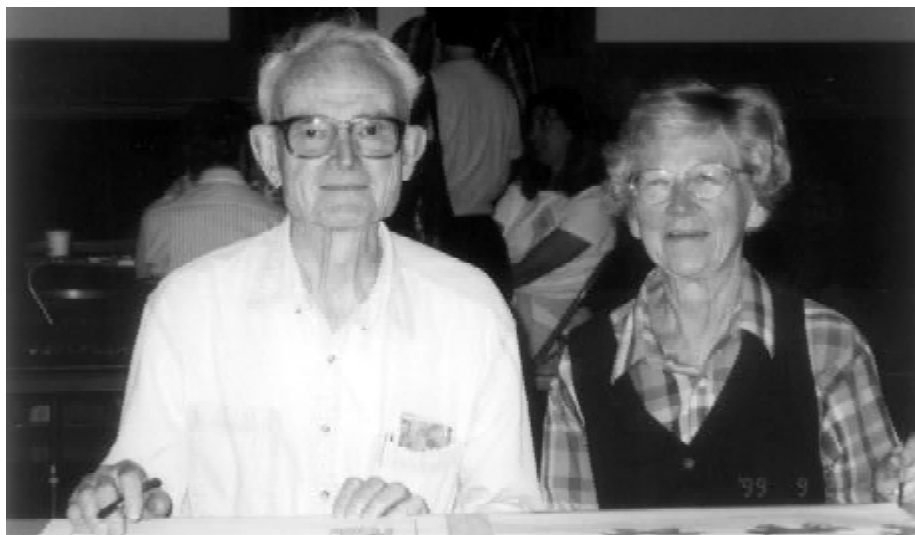
Sometimes people come reluctantly to that first visit at the Aphasia Center. However, it doesn't take more than one or two visits for them to feel at home and comfortable with the new friends they've met in the communication groups. Over time this translates into increased confidence and willingness to participate in activities both within and outside of the Center. The successes we see each day at the Aphasia Center demonstrate the true importance and healing power of "community."

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Our Mission statement: *The mission of the Aphasia Center is to encourage and expand communication and psychosocial well being for those with aphasia. We are dedicated to helping families and stroke survivors understand the ramifications of stroke and aphasia on their daily lives and to improve the quality of life for all those affected.*

Love at the Aphasia Center!



Bob and Iste Ingham

By Mary Jane Laufenberg
*Stroke Survivor and
 Board Vice President,
 Aphasia Center of California*

Meeting with Iste and Bob Ingham was a delightful experience. I had heard what a wonderful couple the Inghams were and was pleased to have the pleasure of interviewing them. The day we were going to meet happened to be a glorious spring day – the daffodils were abundant, the birds were singing and the sky was a shocking blue. Love was in the air. This is Iste and Bob's love story.

Both Bob and Iste's prior spouses had passed away about 10 years before meeting each other again; however, Iste and Bob had actually known each other since 1939, as Bob had been an usher in Iste's first wedding. Bob was a Yale schoolmate of Iste's husband. Bob said with a smile, "Iste had been really good at keeping us all in touch by exchanging Christmas cards." Their reunion took place at the Kennedy Airport in 1989 as their travel group was leaving for a

Budapest tour. Bob and Iste said they both felt they were each meeting a new person. As they told their love story, their eyes and smiles were sparkling.

Before retirement, Bob was an inventor at a textile research organization in South Carolina and Iste was a special educational teacher in Berkeley. After re-meeting, Iste helped Bob to move to Berkeley from the South. They had planned on getting married in the fall.

On September 30, 1990, Iste had a stroke. When asked if there was any warning, Bob and Iste recalled that Iste had not felt like herself and had gone to see a nurse practitioner. After the stroke, Iste had spent two days in Alta Bates and subsequently two weeks in Herrick for the beginning of her rehabilitation.

Bob felt that Iste's recovery would be more successful if the two of them were married, so on Valentine's Day, February 14, 1993, their wedding took place. Last month, they celebrated their 10th anniversary! Bob is 94 years old and Iste is 87 years

old.

These past 10 years have been very full and challenging. Mr and Mrs. Ingham swim at the Oakland YMCA and they both visit the Aphasia Center three days a week. Iste had been one of the participants in the 1994 Aphasia Center research study that investigated group communication treatment and had demonstrated its efficacy. Since that time, the Inghams have experienced and enjoyed many of the varied activities offered at the Center. Both of them attend the exercise class and the Book Club. Iste attends two communication treatment groups each week and is an extraordinary participant in the art class. Iste uses her art talent to express herself. This helps her to overcome the impact that aphasia has had on her. When asked if Bob demonstrates the same art skills as his wife, he smiled and said, "I'm the cook at home."

Although Iste's stroke has certainly affected their lives, the happiness they enjoy is very evident. Iste has five children who are "spread all over the world – California, Colorado and Africa." Bob has two children on the East Coast. Both have grandchildren and Bob has great grandchildren. By the way, I finally had to ask, "Who gave you the name of Iste?" Bob explained, "Iste's sister was ten years younger and couldn't say 'sister' so she called her, 'Iste'." Iste is a very attractive woman and her name fits her perfectly.

When asked what the challenges are in their lives today, Bob explained that his eyesight is failing due to macular degeneration so he can no longer drive. Iste's aphasia frustrates her because it makes it hard to express herself. However, when asked what

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Aphasia Center News

Aphasia (uh fay' zhuh) n: an impairment of the power to use or comprehend words, usually acquired as a result of a stroke and sometimes from head injury or a brain tumor. More than one million Americans have acquired aphasia.

"I jenti ferbis..."



ing aphasiologists discussing the Life Participation Approach to Aphasia. She was also a co-presenter in a seminar on applying the World Health Organization's new model to aphasia intervention outcomes. Ms. Bernstein-Ellis and Dr. Elman also presented a seminar on the Aphasia Center's innovative Book Club program. Aphasia Center of California staff remain dedicated to sharing clinical advances with others in order to help as many people with aphasia as possible.

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Everybody shops. Think of how much money could go to the Aphasia Center of California if supporters did some or all of their shopping online at www.iGive.com/ACC where up to 25% of every purchase is donated to the Aphasia Center of California. At www.iGive.com, membership is free and shopping is easy. There is no extra cost or obligation to you. You can shop at over 240 merchants, including Amazon.com, Lands' End, Gap.com, PETSMART, Barnes and Noble and more and help the Aphasia Center at the same time! Just go to: www.iGive.com/ACC

Making Credit Card Donations to the ACC

The Aphasia Center of California accepts Credit Card Donations made through its website. Guidestar, a non-profit organization providing information to and about US charitable organizations, and the America Online Foundation are sponsoring a safe, secure, and private method allowing donors to send credit card donations to their charity of choice. The best part is that there is no additional fee. That means that the Aphasia Center of California receives your entire donation. Please let all of your family and friends know that they can go to

Aphasia Center website at www.aphasiacenter.org and make a credit card donation through our "You Can Help" page. All donations made to the Aphasia Center of California are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

Spreading the Word to Speech-Language Pathologists

Dr. Roberta Elman and Ellen Bernstein-Ellis presented papers at the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association convention in November in Atlanta, Georgia. Dr. Elman was an invited speaker on a panel of lead-

Join our "Walk to Talk"—Raise funds and Awareness!

What: The Aphasia Center of California's "Walk to Talk" is a fund-raising event to raise funds for our programs. Our "Walk to Talk" will feature a 1/4 mile and 3 mile untimed walk/run.

When: Saturday, June 21st, 2003. Walk will begin at 10:00am.

Where: Lake Merritt, Oakland. Walk starts at the Downtown Oakland Senior Center at 200 Grand Avenue.

How: Companies and individuals, from walkers with kids to seasoned athletes to people with their dogs on leashes can participate in this event to benefit the Aphasia Center. Help the Aphasia Center by sponsoring an Aphasia Center participant, asking friends and family for donations, or joining us for the walk. Please contact Roberta Elman (510) 336-0112 to receive a walk packet or for more information.

Thank You to Our Generous Donors

July 2002-December 2002

If we have made any errors in this listing, please accept our apologies and contact us at (510) 336-0112.

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ACC 2002 Annual Report

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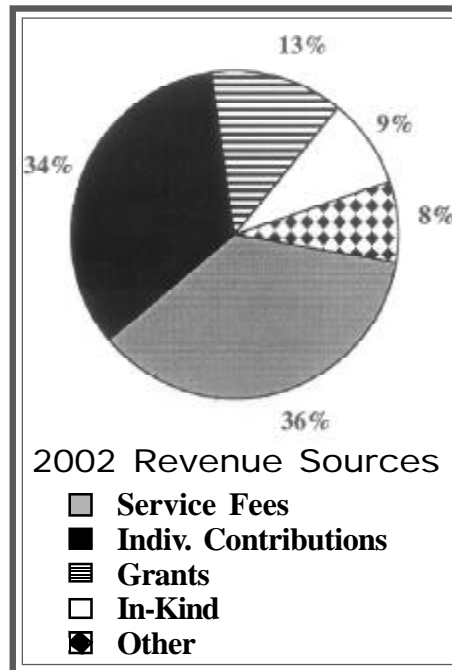
Total Visits: 5,242
 Group Communication Treatment Visits: 2,685
 Individual Speech-Language Treatments Visits: 164
 Reading & Writing Classes: 410
 Painting/Drawing Classes: 613
 Fitness & Relaxation Classes: 805
 Information & Referral (includes phone, mail, and e-mail): 1,869
 Web site hits: 22,500+

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 Noah's Bagels—Montclair



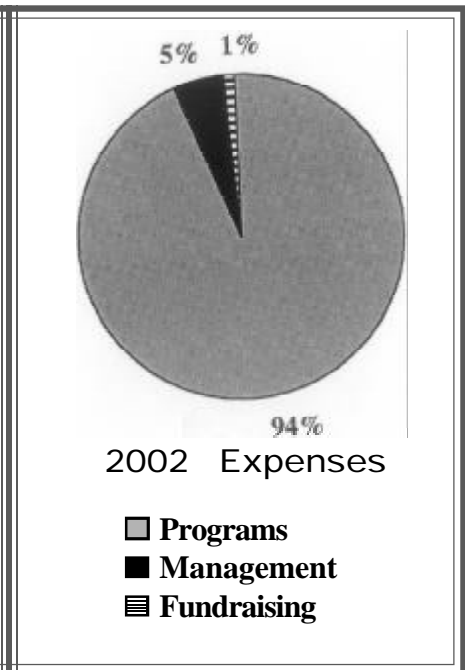
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Love at the Aphasia Center

Continued from page 2

are the good things in their lives, they quickly responded, “Each time we come to the Center, Bob walks around Lake Merritt (3+ miles!), we enjoy all

the people at the Center, Bob tends our lovely garden at home, and I love doing my art.” Smiling at each other, they also both responded, “Being together makes us happy. We love each other very much.” As I left the Center, I said thank you to Bob and Iste. They gave me a beautiful spring day and a true demonstration of love!

“Living in Wheelchairs”

Our eight weekly Communication Groups allow people with aphasia to learn to communicate again. During these sessions, group members learn about themselves and living their lives with changed communication. The following article was written by one of our group members, Lynne Tabor, after a heartfelt group discussion about loss of self and loss of independence following stroke. Lynne’s primary means of communicating with us is through her writing. She continues to have some difficulty with spelling and grammar due to her aphasia, yet she was able to express quite clearly her feelings about the group discussion with the help of her computer. She created a powerful statement about dealing with stroke each day, and we wanted to share it with you.

“I am a strong leader. [I was.] I

used my convertible Camero, now I am in a wheelchair. I go to the store, doctor, Sears, bank, drugstore.... Others are in wheelchairs. We want to live too and sometimes you have to go in a wheelchair to get where you want to go! The group was talking about things. I know we are in wheelchairs. We are thinking and feeling like you. We are not babies—we are adults.”

Donors

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