

Identity Theft: Rediscovering Ourselves After Stroke

By Debra E. Meyerson, PhD with Danny Zuckerman

Chapter 6: Let Me Talk!

1. Debra writes, “My challenges are primarily expressive: an inability to communicate my thoughts, both speaking and writing. Far more than my limp or lost use of my right arm, substantially diminished speech and writing capability has altered my life the most.” (p.68)
 - a. If your survivor has lost capabilities as a result of their stroke, what changes have impacted them the most?
 - b. If your survivor has lost capabilities as a result of their stroke, what changes have impacted you the most?
 - c. Have you been able to help your survivor thrive in new ways?
 - d. Have you been able to advise or guide others about how best to support your survivor to thrive?

2. Debra discusses aphasia, which affects the ability to communicate for more than two million Americans and about a third of all stroke survivors. It can be particularly difficult to reconstruct identity and relationships while struggling with aphasia. As one stroke survivor noted, “When I’m home alone, I don’t have aphasia.”
 - a. Does your survivor experience aphasia?
 - i. If so, how does your survivor’s aphasia affect their ability to communicate and your ability to interact?
 - b. Have your survivor’s other relationships changed as a result of aphasia?
 - c. How have your own relationships changed as a result of your survivor’s aphasia?
 - d. Are you familiar with the Life Participation Approach to Aphasia (LPAA)?
 - e. What techniques and practices do you utilize when working to communicate with your survivor?
 - f. What communication training have you received?
 - g. What barriers do you continue to have?