



Sun 19 May 2013

Thanks to everyone who attended the meeting yesterday!

NEW FACES

- Kei Nakagawa

Hope to see you again!

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Many people brought and shared their assistive technology devices, including iPads, iPhones, Android tablets, Kindles, and laptops. It's an amazing world of technology out there! Here are some of the points we covered:

- There are three broad categories of device size: smart phone (pocket sized, with touch screen), tablet (7" to 10" diagonal with touch screen), and laptop (10" to 15" diagonal with a full keyboard).
- Tablets and phones fall into two broad categories: Apple iPad/iPhone/iEtc and Android-based devices. Apples are generally more expensive and slightly "higher-end", but less flexible and of course single sourced. Apple and Android are not compatible, but the same apps (applications) are often available on both.
- Connection to the Internet is critical with any device. This is usually by wireless, built into the device, but you will need a wireless Internet connection at home also. Many public places also provide free WiFi (wireless Internet).
- You can learn about these devices at the library, at many senior or community centers, and at Apple stores. There are also many resources on the Internet, and Northwest Hospital may be offering a class too (see below).
- Some useful apps include speech-to-text (available on many devices out of the box), an aphasia communication aid called ProLoquo2Go (if you can pronounce it you don't need it) <http://www.assistiveware.com/product/proloquo2go>, and brain-booster games and puzzles such as Lumosity www.lumosity.com/ and Happy Neuron www.happy-neuron.com/.
- Some of the cool devices people shared included several iPads, smart phones like the iPhone, laptops, the new color Kindle Fire, and the Kindle Paperwhite electronic book reader. For \$100 or less you can get an excellent assistive technology device. Kei Nakagawa also demonstrated her Saebo hand exerciser which uses good old springs, not software.
- Get the most powerful device with the most storage you can afford, since new apps always demand more.
- There is some evidence that action games stimulate brain development better than puzzles. Either is good for the brain, though. Also, don't neglect exercising your body! Brain games are great, but stroke survivors need to work the nerves and muscles too.

NORTHWEST HOSPITAL ASSISTIVE TECH CLASSES

Kaylee Paulsgrove, now a therapist at NW Hospital, solicited interest in an assistive technology class being considered in the Rehab Center there. Please contact her at Kaylee.Paulsgrove@nwhea.org if you might be interested. Further developments will be reported at future meetings.

SEX

There, I said it, the big taboo. Sex rarely gets better after a stroke (although Jerry told us of an exception), but it's a hard thing to discuss. I bared my soul and talked about some of the problems I've had and solutions I've explored, others joined me, and we all talked about it. It affects both the survivor and the caregiver. A stroke can make you feel undesirable and incapable, which doesn't help. Sometimes it feels peculiar, you can't make your limbs behave, and you feel self-conscious or foolish because of it. More of a buzz-kill. And full or partial impotence often results for men, either physically or psychologically. The new movie "The Sessions" was recommended, which deals with a polio survivor who hires a therapist to help him enjoy sex for the first time in middle age. We explored the pros and cons of prostitution and its varying degree of acceptance around the world. Sex counselors and occupational therapy were also recommended. Here is a good treatment: <http://bit.ly/13zBLr6>, or search for 'sex after brain injury'. This was the first time the subject came up in our group, and I think it broke the ice. Hopefully it led to communication and closeness between partners afterward. Everyone was receptive to the idea of exploring it further, so look for expert speakers on the subject in future meetings.

THREE TIPS FOR HAPPINESS

I could remember only two of them yesterday (good thing one of them isn't "memory"), but here are the Golden Three:

- Savor the present moment
- Be grateful
- Give of yourself

STROKE AMBASSADORS WANTED

The American Heart & Stroke Association is looking for volunteers to be a Stroke Ambassador. You would be a leader in raising community awareness, serving as a face of stroke survival, attending stroke related meetings and public presentations, and sharing your story. Learn more about it and find an application form on our website at http://seattleyass.weebly.com/uploads/3/0/9/7/3097963/stroke_ambassador.pdf.

VOLUNTEER BANK

Let me know if you want to volunteer or need services from the YASS Volunteer Bank. Cooking? Cleaning? Delivering the occasional meal? Driving to appointments? Shut-in visiting? Reading aloud? Communication practice? You can help!

SAVE A STAMP, SAVE A TREE

Please let me know if you want to go email only and opt out of receiving group mailings by postal mail. Help reduce the burden on the American Heart Association, which does our mailings for us. Let me know (contact info below).

See you next month!

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