

# Aphasia Insights!

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“Aphasia recovery is about the *doing*. The brain converts experience into plasticity - learning, by another name. The more practice, the more learning. Conventional speech therapy is a start. But recovery is a marathon, not a sprint. *Enriched* speech therapy provides the missing link. Exercise, evidence, feedback, and interaction provide the tools.”

*Stroke Diary, The Secret of Aphasia Recovery (Vol II).*

Thomas G. Broussard, Jr.  
Three-time Stroke Survivor  
and Johnny Appleseed of  
*Aphasia Awareness*

Stroke Educator, Inc. is committed to educating the wider public about stroke and the 50 state “*Aim High for Aphasia!*” Aphasia Awareness Campaign.

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## *The ABCs of Aphasia, The Message is the Cure.*

*By Tom Broussard, Ph.D.*

I am a stroke educator. I *was* considered a stroke survivor at one time, but I could feel (emotionally) the difference between being thought a survivor versus being an educator. As I got better, I could tell that I no longer felt the fear of the emotional freight labeled as a survivor.

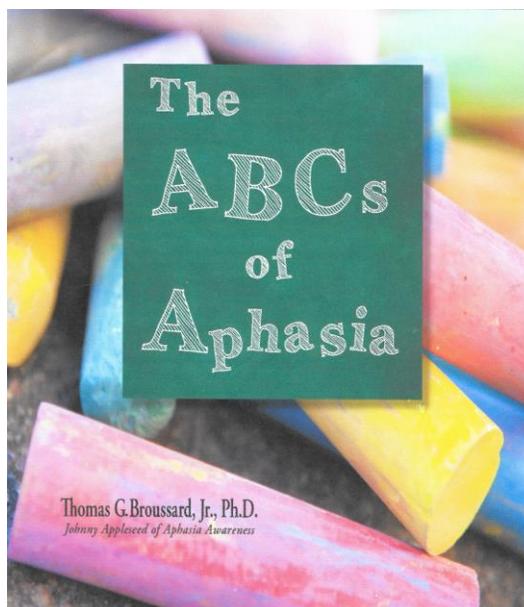
The sensation was more of a swirling cloud of dread rather than a distinctive physical fear. But I could feel it and it didn't feel good.

One of the aspects of that particular kind of fear was when I discovered that there wasn't any overarching context or plan that pointed at my recovery.

I asked my speech therapist about the context of recovery (in words that probably didn't make much sense) but the response was focused on immediate activities, no long term planning. Word finding

and repetition were the words of the day.

And the truth is that I still didn't have the refurbished skills of reading and writing that I needed to explain to the outside world about both my immediate needs as well as a long term plan. As the saying goes, I could *see* them, but I couldn't *say* them.



But I tried anyway and started writing a plan that turned out to be my 500 page diary.

It took me 20 months to complete my “battle” plan without knowing

that much of long term therapeutic activities could have been offered earlier in the planning process. It would have led me to an earlier understanding of the need to pursue persistent language practice as *cure* for recovery.

*The ABCs of Aphasia* is my contribution to every person with aphasia who wants a battle plan, whether conscious of it or not. I started my plan long before I became consciously aware that what I had been doing were the therapeutic activities that I was

already doing! It doesn't matter if you are not yet consciously aware that these activities can help you get better. *Doing* those activities is what matters!

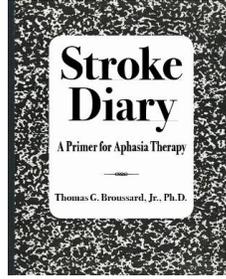
*The ABCs of Aphasia* is the one book that my family and I had wished for from day one. It is designed to be used at hospitals, rehab hospitals, health related facilities, or organizations when a loved one, or one of their family members has a stroke and communication problems *with no idea about this thing called aphasia.*

*The ABCs of Aphasia* includes highly-colored images and aphasia-friendly definitions using the 26 letters in the English language alphabet, over 90 glossary entries, plus aphasia information such as aphasia car magnets, aphasia research info, aphasia ID cards, aphasia caregiver resources, aphasia organizations' websites, and recovery plan tips regarding stroke, aphasia, and neuroplasticity.

This little book helps educate the wider public about this little-known yet highly disabled language disorder called *aphasia.*

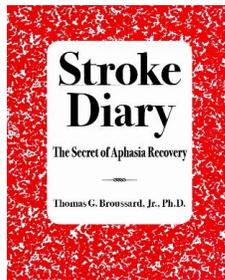
Signed: *The Johnny Appleseed of Aphasia Awareness.*

### **Stroke Diary, Vol. I**



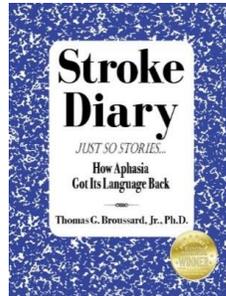
*A Primer for Aphasia Therapy* is almost a day-to-day diary from a stroke survivor who couldn't write...but kept on writing anyway. A first-of-its-kind primer that blazes the trail for new aphasia therapy. Losing the ability to read, write, or speak from a stroke and aphasia is devastating. Therapy for each deficit *requires* action to regain the lost skills. Therapy for writing *requires* writing. Therapy for reading *requires* reading. This primer provides an array of new tools that spur learning, to regain those lost skills (2015).

### **Stroke Diary, Vol. II**



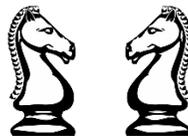
*The Secret of Aphasia Recovery* is a personal, intensive, enriched therapy boost for recovery drawn from an almost 500 page personal stroke diary. The secret of recovery from aphasia isn't a secret at all. Aphasia recovery is about the *doing*. The brain converts experience into plasticity - learning, by another name. The more practice, the more learning. Conventional speech therapy is a start. But recovery is a marathon, not a sprint. *Enriched* speech therapy provides the missing link. Exercise, evidence, feedback, and interaction provide the tools (2016).

### **Stroke Diary, Vol III**



*Just So Stories, How Aphasia Got Its Language Back* validates how practice can provide the cure to aphasia recovery with sections that include; *Words, Language, Awareness, Memory, Thinking, Timing, Neurons, and Plasticity.* Practice is more than just *practice*. Practice is the prescription for improvement. People with aphasia must become more aware that practicing *is* the cure. The brain requires a special kind of "food"—activities and experiences which induce plasticity. These stories were part of the process of *engaging* the environment to "light up" learning on the way to getting your language back (2018).

**Have Aphasia  
Will Travel...**



**To 2020...  
Beyond & Online!**