Show Notes - Episode #37
Stewardship and Best Business Practices for aphasia groups
with Janice Dittelman

Today, Janet Patterson will be speaking with Janice Dittelman, Technology Coach at the Adler Aphasia Center in New Jersey.

In today's episode, you will:
- Hear how incorporating technology, in particular mobile technology, can expand the experiences and connectedness of persons with aphasia, their family members, and individuals in the community,
- Learn tips on managing expectations for incorporating mobile technology into an aphasia group and encouraging group members to use mobile technology beyond the aphasia group activity,
- Learn what aphasia and fantasy football have in common.

Note: These show notes have been edited and condensed.

How can technology, and in particular mobile technology, contribute to and enhance life participation of persons with aphasia?
- Support impairment-based language skills practice
- Foster members' comfort with mobile technology through project-based technology groups
- Encourage use of mobile technology in daily life activities
- Expand members' skills through projects such as developing a member-created text and video newsletter

What are strategies for teaching technology-use skills and managing expectations for success?
- Plan an introductory course to teach critical skills, such as how to operate the mobile technology, and what are apps and how to access them
- Assess an individual's willingness to learn something new
- Create theme-based sessions to learn site navigation, such as Pinterest or YouTube
- Embed regular reminders of two absolute truths that face all individuals who use mobile technology whether or not they have aphasia
  - Technology is not perfect and everyone has problems at one time or another
  - Technology is always changing and one must adapt

How can virtual telehealth technology interface with a community aphasia group?

- Aphasia can be isolating and a virtual aphasia program offers the opportunity to connect people with aphasia in a member-led group, without the individuals having to be in physical proximity
- Telehealth is the future and building groups through easily available teleconferencing apps connects people in ways not previously possible
- Incorporate a range of topics of interest, such as current events, local arts events, or community news

What methods can a community aphasia group incorporate to fund and sustain a technology-based program?

- Establish relationships with software developers to beta test new programs
- Explore community-based grant programs to purchase hardware and software
- Assist members in acquiring personal mobile technology devices

And the most fun - what do fantasy sports and aphasia have in common?

- Fantasy football and baseball are played by people across the world
- Emulating existing fantasy sports leagues, the Adler Aphasia Rehabilitation Center created its own leagues
- Members manage their fantasy sports team: drafting players; checking weekly team and player stats; trading players; and tracking points
- At the end of the season winners receive a prize, often from local sports personalities
- Members use mobile technology to participate in an activity enjoyed by millions of people and are encouraged to use the mobile technology at home

Resources and Links:

Adler Aphasia Center - https://adleraphasiacenter.org

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