

Providing Support to Receive Support: Participation in Alcoholics Anonymous

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The success of the Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) program has been attributed to the use of individual sponsors for group participants and the sharing of one's experiences. Persons with aphasia (PWA) and alcoholism have difficulty reaping the benefits of AA. This poster presents a therapy program designed to increase a PWA's participation in an AA support group.

Ms. D

- 68-years-old, lives alone, does not drive
- Was attending Alcoholics Anonymous and had been sober for 8 years prior to her stroke in 2007.
- A few years after her stroke, she began drinking again. Five years later, she attempted to return to AA meetings.
 - Her language deficits made it difficult to participate.
 - Group members perceived her to as "crazy"
 - She was unable to find a sponsor
- Her physician referred her to speech therapy



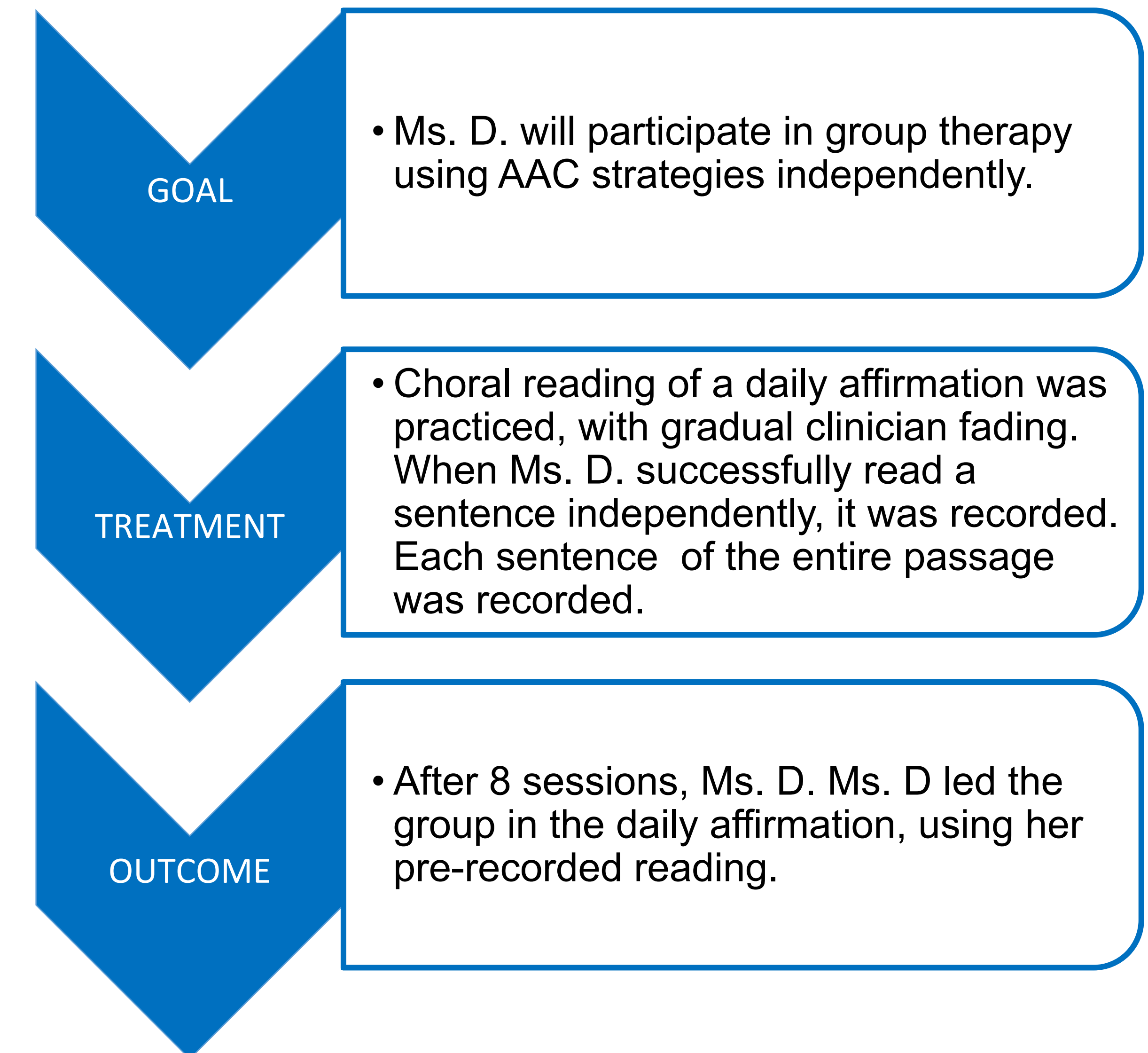
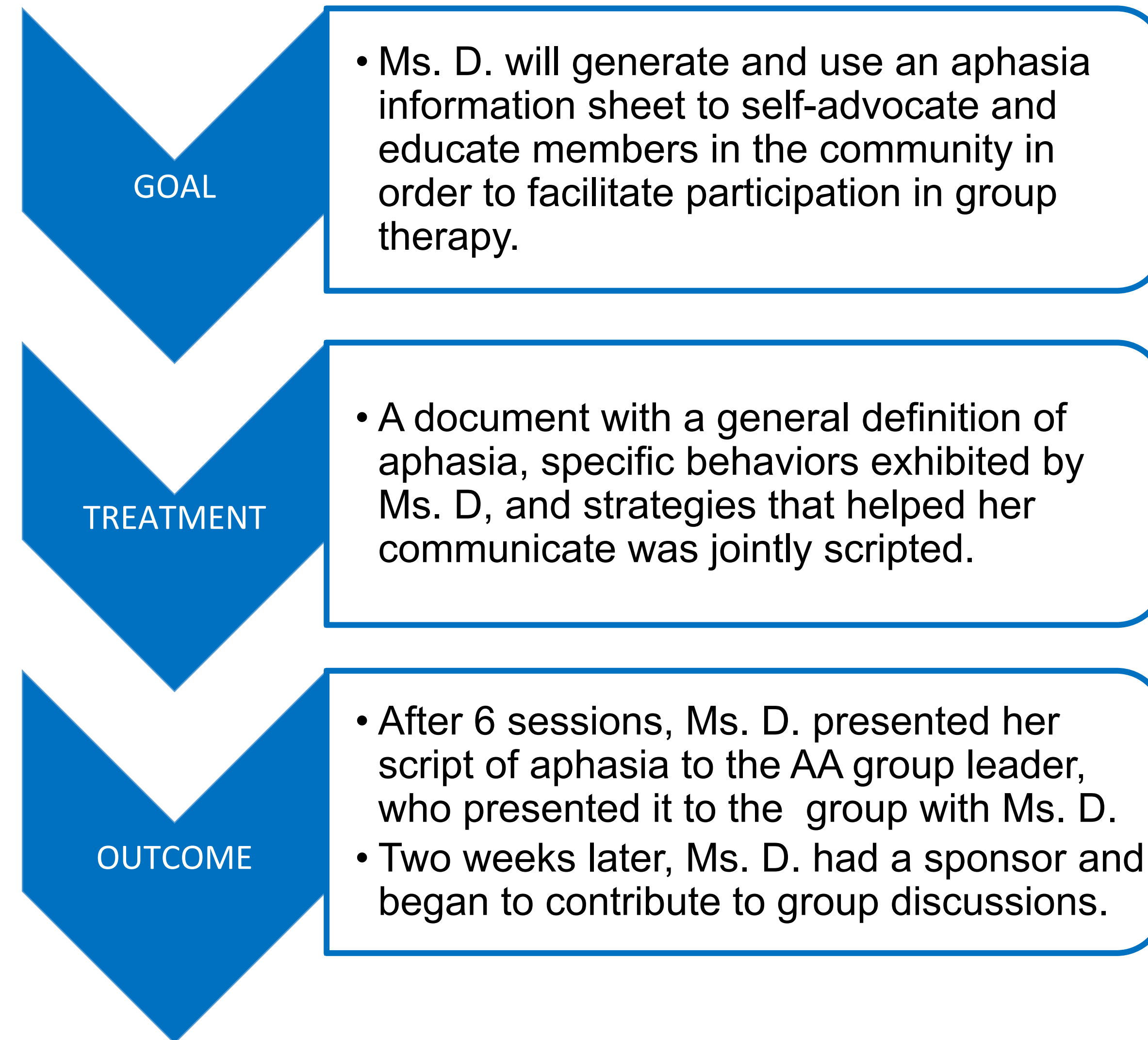
CLIENT-CENTERED GOALS

Ms. D's goals were "to talk clear" so she could get a sponsor, and to read out loud" so she could lead the group in their daily affirmations.

LIFE PARTICIPATION APPROACH TO TREATMENT

Intervention should address the environment to reduce/eliminate barriers

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I had a stroke and now have aphasia. Aphasia is a language impairment that affects the comprehension and production of speech as well as reading and writing. I am not stupid or crazy. I can understand you if you talk slow. I know what I want to say but sometimes my words come out wrong. Please be patient. I need your help.



Welcome to Alcoholics Anonymous. Would all who care to please join me in opening with a moment of silence for those who are still sick and suffering, followed by the Serenity Prayer.

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference. Thy will not mine be done. Amen