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MnCAN Online Aphasia Groups Using Zoom Platform: A Guide for Facilitators
GETTING STARTED TO FACILITATE AN ONLINE GROUP
AND IDEAS FOR TOPICS

1. Preparation for HOSTS before starting an online platform with your group
   - As host, you must be in a private room with no distractions and make sure that no one enters the space you are in during the group.
   - Have a conversation with all participants about their situation/readiness for an online group: use of computer or app, phone, etc. and assistance at home. You can email the survey provided.
   - Work individually (or have your students or volunteers do this if possible) with each participant who is new to this to practice getting on Zoom BEFORE the meeting
   - Send out the instructions by email on how to get on Zoom ahead of time, once you know if they will be suing phone, iPad or computer. Make sure each participant has someone there to help them at the appointed time if this is needed.
   - At the time of the group, have everyone log on a few minutes before the group is to start so everyone is ready
   - If you have volunteers/students, assign one to be the 'tech person" to help with those issues whole the other facilitator keeps the conversation going. With Zoom, you can send messages to one specific person in the chat function (SLP to student, student to SLP, etc. FOR ALL GROUPS WITH U OF M STUDENTS, THE U OF MN WILL ASSIGN ONE OF THEM TO BE THE HOST USING THE UNIVIERSITY'S ZOOM PLATFORM. THE STUDENTS WILL SET UP AND SEND OUT THE LINK TO ALL PARTICIPANTS. PLEASE MAKE ARRNGEMENTS WITH THE STUDENT.
   - Send out a reminder email an hour before group is highly recommended. Give out your phone number should a participant encounter a problem.
   - Send the agenda ahead of time, create visuals to reinforce your message and forward them to everyone before the meeting.
   - Have a power point or word doc ready with the topic and topic questions. For example - if going to ask what's new? Write this out on a PowerPoint. Write out topic questions on a power point or word doc ahead of time to share on screen.

2. Review some ground rules for everyone:
   - Device should be fully charged or plugged in.
   - Be in a quiet room with neutral background
   - Have the room be private with a support person only - avoid having others walk in to the room during group
   - Have on-site support ready on time
   - Host have contact info easily available in case something goes wrong
   - SLP and students wear work/professional clothing as you would to regular group and same for participants.

- Remember to speak slowly, give time, make topic clear and include everyone - all aphasia friendly

3. The video platform:
   - Tell people how to switch views from speaker view to gallery view where you can see everyone (This is in the Zoom instructions)
   - Teach how to mute audio and/or video if needed
   - Teach people how to send a chat message for those who can
   - The host has the ability to mute someone who might be having trouble with feedback, etc. and unmute as needed

4. Dialing in from the phone:
   - You can dial in from a smart phone (or from a land line for audio only) - will have to be mindful about that person being part of the conversation even though they can't be seen.

5. How to support conversation during the group
   - You can use power point slides to augment the conversation (just like writing down key words on a whiteboard or paper.
   - You can share a word doc or google doc on screen and write key words to support comprehension on it as you go during a group conversation
   - Encourage people to use the Hand Raise option if someone wants to say something and has trouble or needs some time to process or they can actually raise their hand or make another gesture - so no one dominates
   - Consider emailing materials that support conversation that participants can use on line - like pictures of thumbs up/thumbs down or month calendars, maps, etc. If they are more tech savvy this is a great time to have them use their phones to communicate this if it can be seen well on the screen. Another idea is to have the participants have a grid labeled 1,2,3,4 in quadrants on a paper and ask a question with picking choices by number (What have you been doing? 1. watching TV   2. Playing cards, etc.)

4. How to break up into dyads, etc.
   - Zoom has break out rooms where you can break into smaller groups or dyads for private discussions and then come back to the whole group
   - IF your group is used to doing this, it is something you should try!

5. Suggested format and topics for the first groups as we learn and experiment:
It is suggested that you use a close format to your regular face to face groups - If you had a check -in, reviewed progress on life goals/I cans/victory for the week - review those. If you use a topic or activity to stimulate conversation, continue to do that. If you break into small groups and come back together - you can do that online too. Use the above suggestions on how to support the communication and answers creatively.

So many topic suggestions right now:

- What are you doing to keep busy?
- Practice scripts
- Share jokes https://leader.pubs.asha.org/doi/10.1044/leader.HYTT.20072015.np
- Adult show and tell - show us something in your home that is important to you and tell us why or show us something in your home that hold a special memory
- Play 20 questions - email a specific word or picture to each person ahead of time.
- Use aphasia friendly items from this document to talk about COVID 19 and start a discussion (send it out ahead of time) https://cloudstor.aarnet.edu.au/plus/s/UTVLEK5h9AWv1b3
- Here's a great video that lasts 7 minutes and is a good conversation starter about COVID 19 and is aphasia friendly (from Australia) A GOOD FIRST GROUP CHOICE RIGHT NOW: https://cloudstor.aarnet.edu.au/plus/s/XcG0IeBlvalUfKW/download
- Other examples using power point for hangman activities, conversation starters https://universityofwieauclaire-my.sharepoint.com/:p:/g/personal/sathertw_uwec_edu/EVL8EtBSz19FglgCDqjsS6gBRqEDeGgqsENY5s7OLHaCwA?e=aUyIdu
- Other power point ideas - again to modify for your group/maximum conversation, etc. https://universityofwieauclaire-my.sharepoint.com/:p:/g/personal/sathertw_uwec_edu/Ed5cGoF3AKBFiSepLLO1FVUBNIL4gwEGhqkbY3wTl9OsAQ?e=P4ZhPg
- Music trivia activity to help get used to responding by holding up numbers and/or saying the answer: an adjunct activity (not the whole group session) https://universityofwieauclaire-my.sharepoint.com/:p:/g/personal/sathertw_uwec_edu/EXTbKZ52nX1Kj8fC-H9VloMBXVoG0YIo49BEkvmmoCstjA?e=0seLLa
- Take turns teaching an exercise they do or try a kitchen activity while you have the advantage of being in someone's home!
- Resources for conversation starters from HoneycombSpeechTherapy.com:

* Some of the reference material used to create this document is from Supporting Online Aphasia Groups: Lessons We've Learned from The University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire and Chippewa Valley Aphasia Groups

Websites with FREE Conversation Prompts:

https://conversationstartersworld.com/250-conversation-starters/
This is a giant list that's a good go-to when you don't know someone yet and don't have a specific theme of question to ask.

https://www.verywellfamily.com/conversation-starters-for-kids-4160004
These prompts are focused on bringing out attributes such as confidence, empathy, imagination, gratitude, etc.

http://iteslj.org/questions/
Although this is an ESL website, the questions are organized by topic which could be helpful for someone with a particular interest area. There are TONS of topics!

https://www.conversationstarters.com/openendedquestions.htm
Open-ended questions are nice because they allow flexible vocabulary and fall in line with motivational interviewing, which is a person-centered approach to discussions.

https://conversationstartersworld.com/questions-to-get-to-know-someone/
One last huge list of questions that start simple and then move to slightly more deep / personal questions.

Website List from Honeycomb Speech Therapy