

## Speech Recovery Pathways



# November Quarter Newsletter

In every change, in every  
falling leaf there is some  
pain, some beauty. And that's  
the way new leaves grow.

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Monthly Highlights

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## Announcements!

### 1) GIVING TUESDAY

Tuesday, November 28th, is Giving Tuesday, a day that encourages people to give back in whatever ways they can. Our stroke community, since the last 3 years that we created this organization, have been wonderful - people like you have volunteered and donated so we could provide the services that our survivors so need. Imagine the sense of fulfillment you'll experience by contributing to a worthy cause.

Be creative: How about running a Facebook campaign? Or spreading the word on Instagram? Or even letting friends and family know about this?

One minute is all it takes to make a difference right now. Any donation helps!

<https://speechrecoverypathways.org/donate/>

### 2) BALANCING THE BRAIN



Our first Art Class, on August 8th, for those wanting to do a little “brain balancing” work was fun and even educational! The instructor, Amy Pierce, presented a famous painting by Andy Warhol, gave some history about it, and

participants had the opportunity to create their own! Doing any kind of art is a powerful way to wake up the right side of the brain.

Our next class will focus on photography and will be divided into two parts. In the first part, we will learn various photography techniques and review different pictures. Afterward, we will have the opportunity to go out and take pictures. In part two, we will reconvene to share and discuss some of the pictures we captured. Be on the look out for more information on this class and sign ups.

### **3) MOVE THAT BODY CLASS!**

The next Move That Body class where we stretch, do a bit of non-strenuous yoga moves and a some light cardio is scheduled on December 1st at 11:30 a.m. PT. All exercises are ability appropriate so just do what you can...Deserve to move!

### **4) OPEN CHAT CAFE**

It is important to openly discuss the feelings and emotions that come with injury. Join us for Chat Cafe where we talk about the good, the bad, and the ugly aspects of our experiences. The next class is scheduled for November 15th at 5:50pm till 6:30pm.

## ~ Caregiver Corner ~

### **August 18th Caregivers Meeting with Samina Kwan**

By Royce Morales

The Caregiver Support Group was honored once again to have Samina Kwan as our guest presenter. As a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, a Life Coach, an instructor at U.S.C. as well as a caregiver, she knows firsthand what it means to readjust your entire life to care for someone.

In this hour-long meeting, she explained the basic ways the brain functions when triggered by fear. Our primitive stimulus responses are generally fight, flight, or freeze. She reminded us that, as caregivers, we are frequently in those modes whether consciously or not.

Fear sends signals to our primitive “Lizard brain” that causes adrenaline to increase, heart to pound and breathing to become shallow. She mentioned how easy it is to go to worst case scenarios when in the thick of constant fear (AKA

being a caregiver). She suggested that “belly breathing” from the diaphragm sends signals to the brain that lowers blood pressure and lets you know you are okay. She led the group to personally experience conscious breathing and we all felt calmer immediately.

This primitive fear response can also trigger procrastination and avoidance. She emphasized the importance of finding doable ways to not isolate. She suggested walking with neighbors on a regular basis, being with friends and family, going out to the movies or even going shopping.

### **Getting Out of Our Own Way for Self-Care**

Samina reminded us about making sure to prioritize self-care. To quote her: “Self-care is always the first thing to go for caregivers.” She appealed that we make it a priority to carve out time, even in small increments. It’s usually fear holding us back from taking care of ourselves, so recognize what’s in the way.

She recommended that we take breaks, asking ourselves do I really need to do this right now? She also suggested that we commit to journalling and exercising and to make sure to do what brings joy.

As a reminder, know that self-care is not being selfish since it will ultimately contribute to our loved one’s wellbeing.

### **We are going through the ‘grief process’**

She noted that, as caregivers, we are going through various stages of the grief process even though our loved one survived. Perhaps we are feeling sad remembering what life was like before; feeling the loss of how someone used to be; losing the ability to do what we were going to do.

Samina reminded us that the last stage of grief is finding meaning, something we all need to do.

It’s natural to also experience regrets and guilt. All those “should haves” or “could haves” might be affecting us in various ways.

Samina emphasized the importance of feeling compassion for your emotions. They come in waves, and what keeps them stuck is our thoughts and judgments about them. Plus, we might inadvertently take on the fears and emotions from the one we are caring for especially if we are strongly empathic. For example, saying “I feel for you” can prevent them from completing whatever they are feeling.

Her final words of wisdom were “Just because you think it, doesn’t mean it’s true!” Profound, important words to live by for us givers of care.

## ~ Traveling After Stroke ~

As we approach the holidays, many of us will be traveling to visit friends and loved ones. For individuals who have had a stroke, traveling may become difficult, but not impossible!

### **Here are some recommendations for traveling after a stroke:**

First and foremost, please get cleared for travel by a doctor. Whether you will be driving, flying, or using other forms of travel, it is important that you have had some time to recover. The American Heart Association recommends waiting at least two weeks before flying. But, if you have other underlying conditions, it is important to have a medical professional clear you.

Next, do not forget your medication if you take any. This may sound like a given, but the holidays can often get us so caught up in planning and celebrating that we forget about other things. Plus, it's important to remember that pharmacies and stores may close during these times. So, ensure you have all the medication you require, and extra just in case.

A handy resource for those who struggle with memory is to create a travel itinerary both digitally and on paper. Add vital information about your trip, such as your flight number, hotel address, hotel room, scheduled activities, etc. Make sure to share it with those who will be joining you so you have back-up copies. Let those who are not joining you know as well in case they need to contact you.

Lastly, we advise that you call ahead to airlines, hotels, and other places you will be visiting to disclose your need for any personal accommodations. This will help them assist your needs, making your experience more comfortable and safe.

We wish you safe travels. For further recommendations, please visit this link.  
<https://www.flintrehab.com/flying-after-stroke/>

## ~ Navigating Communication Challenges During the Holidays ~

As the holiday season approaches us, many of us will be gathering with friends and loved ones to celebrate. This means we will be communicating more than usual, which can be quite overwhelming.

**Below are some strategies to help navigate potential communication challenges:**

1. **Create a schedule:** Writing down scheduled activities can help you anticipate the type of communication situation you will be in (family dinner, chatting with friends, holiday shopping). A schedule can help you prepare specific discussion topics or questions ahead of time to reduce the stress of speaking on demand.
2. **Actively listen:** A huge part of communicating effectively comes from listening attentively to others. In turn, you can generate responses that are appropriate and relevant to the topic being discussed, which will keep the conversation flowing.
3. **Use other modes of communication:** If communicating verbally becomes too challenging, there are other ways to get your messages across. For instance, you can write down your thoughts on holiday cards and hand them out, or have someone else read them out for you. Do not feel limited!
4. **Don't be scared to ask for help:** During these times, you will be surrounded by individuals who love and support you. Asking them to repeat themselves, slow down, and have patience will make you feel more comfortable as you communicate.

We hope you all have a joyful time!

~ Fundraiser ~



Seasons Greetings! Help us celebrate the most wonderful time of the year by participating in our See's Candy fundraiser! Speech Recovery Pathways will receive 100% of the profits from any of the items purchased through the link listed below. Featuring all your See's holiday favorites from boxes of assorted chocolates to lollipops to truffles and more! Don't wait to spread a little holiday cheer!

[https://www.yumraising.com/secure/speechrp\\_speech\\_recovery\\_pathways46/S teste6952/candy](https://www.yumraising.com/secure/speechrp_speech_recovery_pathways46/S teste6952/candy)

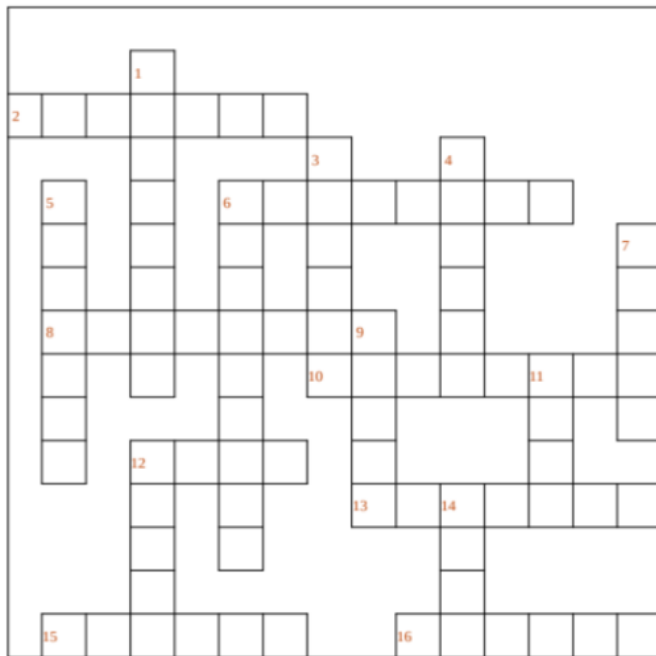


Join our T-Shirt Campaign! Purchase Speech Recovery apparel today, and know that a percentage goes back to support us. It's a win-win

<https://speechrecoverypathways.org/fundraisers/>

## ~ Fall Crossword ~

### Fall



#### Across

- 2 Halloween month
- 6 Rodent that hordes nuts
- 8 People of the first Thanksgiving
- 10 Thanksgiving month
- 12 Yellow vegetable that grows on stalks
- 13 To gather farm crops
- 15 Thanksgiving main dish
- 16 Falls from trees

#### Down

- 1 Sport played with a brown ball
- 3 Another name for Fall
- 4 a color and a fruit
- 5 Great for pies or for carving
- 6 Keeps birds away from fields
- 7 Nut from an oak tree
- 9 Birds fly \_\_\_\_ for the winter
- 11 Bundles of hay
- 12 Drink made from apples
- 14 Tool to clean up leaves







*Final remarks:*

No matter what your reason for giving to Speech Recovery Pathways, we want you to know that we appreciate it! We do not take it for granted that our work would not be possible without supporters like you. As volunteers, caregivers, members, donors, partners, and friends, your giving spirit empowers us to impact our survivors throughout the United States!



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