Dance with a difference

I am proud to be part of my school's dance troupe which is invited to perform at various venues and for a variety of special occasions. All my friends are a part of this team and our mothers are also asked to accompany us wherever we go. All of us have become good friends too!

I am special because I dance only with my feet. Everyone dances with their feet, you will say! But I'm different. All the movements that others do with their hands – I make them with my feet while I sit smiling happily in my wheelchair! I even do 'Namaste' (greeting with folded arms) to everyone with my feet!

The audiences always respond with great enthusiasm to our dance performances. They clap and cheer and applaud from the bottom of their hearts. It is really most encouraging for us. Sometimes, after the show the sponsors even shower us with gifts!

However, what my friends and I found the most encouraging of all was that Aamir Khan, a famous actor wrote a letter of praise for us! We had sent him a colourful video of our performance of a song from his film 'Taare Zameen Par' and he was most delighted and impressed! Wonderful isn't it?!

Abhijit Sen
D.O.B: 04.10.96
Age: 12+

Abhijit uses a multi-page picture communication display and gestures to communicate. The communication display is placed on a low stool. He pointed to each picture word with his right big toe and the teacher wrote it for him. After each sentence the text was read out to him. Then after 2-3 sentences it was read out to him again so that he could change or re-structure his composition.

My Deep Sea Fishing Trip

One day I told my Dad and uncle “I want to go offshore fishing like you guys do”.

My Uncle Bruce got me an electric reel. It’s a fishing pole that I operate from my boat chair. Dad and my uncle said we will now take you fishing off the shore of Cape Hatteras, North Carolina!

We left about 6 am from the dock. It was a pleasant day. The ocean looked like a huge glass window. We were not out long before we caught 4 sail fish. My uncle had never caught a sail fish and said I must be good luck!

Using my talker, I told my dad “I want to eat”. We all ate lunch. Then I cast my reel off again. We caught 5 more dolphin fish. Then Dad saw the fish first. It was another dolphin fish but it was really big! The dolphin was blue and yellow. It was jumping a lot. When I saw it I said with my talker, “It’s huge!” My Dad fought to bring the fish in a long time. We finally got close enough for my uncle to gaff (type of hook) the fish. And put it into the boat. When the fish hit the floor of the boat it went crazy. My dad and uncle tried to keep the fish from hitting me and doing that my uncle got the gaff into to his left leg. He had to later get a tetanus shot. I was excited! I thought my heart was going to come out!

At the end of the day my dad cranked in all the rods and drove us back to Teaches Lair Marina where we dock the boat.

Fishermen in the boat slips next to us helped my Dad get me and my uncle off the boat. That’s when my uncle went to the doctor. My Dad took the dolphin to the weigh station. The weigh station master said the dolphin was a citation. The dolphin weighed 35 pounds 56 inches long and had girth of 25inches. After Dad got the fish weighed he brought the dolphin and the other 5 dolphin back to my uncle’s beach house where he cleaned them to eat.

North Carolina
Saltwater Fishing Citation

Alex J. Layton

WHOSE CATCH HAS BEEN JUDGED
EXCEPTIONAL

FISH: DOLPHIN WEIGHT: 35 lbs 0 oz DATE: JUN 7, 2008

Governor
State of North Carolina

Director
Division of Marine Fisheries

This was a great fishing experience and I hope to do it again! I have been telling all of my friends about my great fishing trip using my talker ever since!

By Alex Layton

Alex is a high school Junior in Seaford, Delaware. He currently uses his DynaVox Series 4 device to communicate. Alex used his AccessIt device to type and edit his submission using Microsoft Word.

What everyone yearns for: Really good support to communicate…

By Andrew Bloomfield

“Typing to talk” has enabled me to have a much better life. I need more supporters so I can choose and comment on priorities and sustain my good life into the future. I also want to help others who cannot speak with their voices to express their thoughts with whatever form of AAC works for them, so that people listen, understand and respect them. That is my vision for Bridges-Over-Barriers.

I have lived with quite severe symptoms of autism for almost all my 41 years. Since 30, I have also had occasional seizures preceded by spells of pain and turmoil when I cannot control my body. But I am naturally the most exuberant person I know. I was introduced to Supported Typing (what we used to call Facilitated Communicating or FC) in 1991, when I was 23.

Though I seldom speak with my own voice, I like to use the simple words “talk”, “speak” and “say” for my communication through typing. The devices on which I type have voice synthesizers, so I and others hear me speaking through the computer voices. It has always been very important to me to have a device with a voice. I think people take you more seriously when you communicate with a machine than on a letterboard. Yes, the whole package of a device makes people take notice. I like to talk, no matter how, but the device helps.

For several years past, I have used a DynaWrite for most Supported Typing (S-T), and in the past have also used an Epson communicator and LightWriter. I am also accustomed to typing without physical support on desktop and laptop computers in WriteOutloud software. My keyboards usually have key guards. I can read and copy text independently and so learn new ideas and information. I take the words and ideas in through my eyes, my fingertips and my ears. I feel good about typing independently: it exercises and stimulates my brain. But I still need physical support to “type to talk”—to compose and express my own inner thoughts. Who knows if my copy typing will lead to independent “typing to talk”?

S-T has brought me respect from others. Before I could type to talk, nobody really could know what I was thinking. I communicated as best I could by some signs and by pointing. But it was so limiting and unreliable. I was impeded by my movement disturbances. I could sign for things I needed, but I couldn’t say what I thought and felt.

When I was about 6, some experts thought I should learn Signed Exact English rather than be taught to speak with my voice. I understood this might help me to be "heard", so I worked very hard at signing. I learned about 2000 signs, so that my teachers called me their walking sign dictionary. However, it didn't really go anywhere, because too few people in my life would sign, and also because the signs were mainly for basic needs and objects, rather than ideas. And then signing went out of fashion. Later, I did not much like picture exchange cards, as they seemed demeaning. The pictures just showed objects, not thoughts.

Before S-T, other people probably saw me as a primitive childlike person who was not a thinker. I know it must be hard to respect someone who paces and screeches, but says nothing intelligent. Some may assume that people who do not speak cannot think. People may have respected my dignity, but not my mind. I feel that, when I had a reliable way to type real thoughts, more respect came my way.

I would like people to know that I am trying to be in control of my body, even if it looks like I am sometimes not. When my body goes in the opposite way from the way I want, I must try to keep calm, even though I feel upset. From the outside, people only see my racing and pacing. Not my inner struggle. I hope that when I hold my ears, they can understand that I am really working to hold in the storm. It's not usually that my ears hurt. I may hurt somewhere or noise may get on my nerves. I feel the pain of others acutely. S-T lets me tell people when my body is acting up. I sometimes express my thoughts in poems, like this one:

What it's like to be me *(29 January 2003)*
I'm a bundle of sensations:
I get the urge
to touch and pick,
and I must follow my urges.

Can you see my urges?
I can't tell you:
I just show you.

I'm a bundle of nerves,
and a jumble of thoughts.
I'm in constant motion,
and my mind's always going.

I wonder what it's like to be you.
Do you wonder what it's like to be me?
I'm a time bomb waiting to explode,
and a tear waiting to fall.

I remember being a little boy and wondering why Vickie (my twin sister and best friend) was getting things that I didn't. I mean that she could do things while I was still thinking of doing them. One example is playing. I would want to join her, but could not move there until she had left off and moved to something new. My body was stuck. I was trying, but ended up running around and jumping. It became important for me that she could get things for us and talked for us both. It became clear to me pretty early on that she was more in the world than I. I struggled to be in the world she was in.

Whenever I could, I looked to Vickie for a lead as to what I should do in a situation. I might not understand exactly what was happening or why we should do something. But I found it was better to follow her lead. She would look out for me. I remember that I learned about humour and irony by listening for the tones of voice when my parents and Vickie talked. I liked to join in the laughs and smiles. At school, when I did the right thing by copying what others did, my teachers would say "He's only cueing; he doesn't really understand." But that was the way I learned to cope.

From 1991, Vickie was my key facilitator with S-T. We traveled to many places, before she died in an accident in 1996. I called Vickie my window to the community. I think of her every day. It is most painful around the time of her death. It is in my heart the times we shared.

I think that my parents knew from the beginning that I was smarter than I could express. They talked to me and tried to understand my ways of coping. I taught myself to read from about two, before school, reading books with Mum or Dad. Vickie and I would sit on either side, and follow the printed words as they were spoken. It felt like a world of mysterious words that I could enter. A favourite activity was to read through big dictionaries which had little pictures to go with the words. I still love to read the many books and magazines in my home.

But I have felt that others pitied me. Nobody can respect you if they pity you. At school my teachers expected so little of me. I might have learned more if they had respected my mind's potential. The Principle of the Least Dangerous Assumption proposed by Dr Anne Donnellan in 1984 says that it is better to presume competence. This means that it is more dangerous to assume a person doesn't understand than to assume he does. If my teachers had understood the principle, they would have given me more opportunities than just doing easy puzzles and tying shoelaces.

S-T is so liberating. I was locked before it. I had to hope others would see my intelligence in my eyes and behaviour, but these were not reliable. I saw that nobody really knew how smart I was, but I had no way to express myself. It felt like I was observing my own life but not controlling it. When others did not understand me, I was sad and frustrated and agitated all the time. I got angry. I was hopeless: I never expected to find a better way. A few people really looked inside and past my autism. Until S-T I did not know I thought in words that others could understand; I was just absorbing their words.

I remember the first time I used S-T. It was with Martha. I remember trusting her and letting her show me pictures and ask questions. I pointed to and typed the right words. I spoke for the first time in words that made sense. I was very surprised by S-T. Now I really knew I could spell and read, and other people saw it too. Now I had thoughts. Now I could talk. The thing everyone yearns for is really good support to communicate.

When I had been using S-T occasionally for two years, a friend asked me to “speak” to a room full of special education teachers. Vickie drove me with my Epson communication device to Hamilton, and two of my friends were there too. My device had a voice, and the words I typed were also projected on to the wall for all to see. I had prepared things to say and also answered questions the teachers asked me. My main message to them was “Autistic children are smart: teach them to read.”

For the past nine years, a very good friend has visited my home for S-T sessions about twice a month. This allows me to reflect on my life with someone who is not an everyday part of it. We knew each other before either of us knew FC or S-T. She is a very good facilitator who gives me both physical and emotional support. With her support, I was able to express some anxieties about the safeguards and reassurance I needed for my good life to continue.

My life now is excellent. I have my own home and it revolves around me. I know everyone who comes here is friendly to me. My parents, my circle of friends and my housing trust listen to me and respect my choices. My biggest safeguard is my Aroha entity of personal empowerment and support formed in early 2002; it is like a self-directed support corporation or microboard. I am comfortable and safe here. My excellent life helps me to cope with my inexcellent body! My garden is heaven on earth. My dogs Amy and Yukon make friends for me. I’m happy with our progress. Well planned and not stressful. I grow into each step. All this is possible because I can talk through typing.

I wish that others could have this kind of help. Once my own life was flowing smoothly, I was able to think about other people who needed special AAC support to express themselves and be understood. Since early 2004, I have hosted regular gatherings of other communicators, usually in my own home or other peaceful locations in my city. In May 2005, I felt inspired to think of starting a place of refuge and organization for communication support and life planning for people who live with autism and can be helped by AAC. I composed this poem:

I am dreaming of a place
where we can come together,
to be together,
to communicate together.

I am dreaming of a place,
where I can be a leader
and a friend,
a person who helps
and a person who needs help.

I want to dream with you, my friend,
To build that bridge you told me about
Because we both like bridges.

Dream with me
And we will make that place I dream of
And the bridge in your dreams.
(8 June 2005).

We named our communication support group Bridges-Over-Barriers. It is about building bridges, not walls. I love the image of a bridge--like that of a door or a window. S-T is not a “cure” for autism, as some enthusiasts once thought it might be. I am not interested in a “cure”. S-T is a bridge that takes me from my island to the mainland. I think I am visiting the mainland, not living there, and visiting is fine. My good friends and my dogs also bridge the gap between me and the rest of the world.

There are now about 12 members of Bridges, most of them in southern Ontario, but including some who have moved to New Mexico, Nova Scotia and France. We have a worldwide network of friends who wish us well. Our friends, when asked to support the dream of Bridges-Over-Barriers, have been generous. Their gifts provided some seed money for us to offer small bursaries to pay for intensive facilitation for new communicators or for new communication assistants to attend workshops.

At present, we have some special projects on the go. One is to produce a DVD about Bridges-Over-Barriers and its value as a support group so its members know there are others like them and can make key decisions about their own lives. Another is developing and testing a Bridges IT system that allows our communicators' words to be combined into a discourse for each session, with visual and audio projection and a "hansard" record of all that is said. Such an infrastructure system will help us to focus on ideas and interactions, rather than the mechanics of communication devices. We continue to speak up about S-T and the need for deep listening to people who may be vulnerable because they cannot use their voices—through newsletters, support for training and networking, special events, and advocacy for communication assistants.

I want people to know I have something to say worth hearing, not just to talk and be heard. I don't feel secure if people don't believe I can communicate my own thoughts. I use S-T to express myself, but what do others do if they don't have that? That would be so frustrating. In an ideal world everyone would live with communication assistants for ever at all times.

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Andrew Bloomfield directs his good whole life lives in his own home in Guelph, Ontario, Canada. He hosts regular gatherings of communicators in the group called Bridges-Over-Barriers (http://www.ont-autism.uoguelph.ca/bridges.shtml with links to newsletters). Andrew's words and poetry are published in *In My Mind: Thoughts and Words of Andrew Bloomfield* (2006) and *Odyssey: ten years of a good whole life in my own home* (2008).

My Didi (Older Sister)

Akkar Bakkar Bombay Bo, Assi Nabbe Poore Sau, a numbers game ……… My sister and I start playing with each other whenever we are together. My lovely elder sister, my Didi is much older than me and I call her Gudiya (Dolly) Didi. Do you know, she also teaches me with lots of love and care? She even helps me to correct my mistakes.

My Didi does the cooking for the family whenever my Mother is unwell. I help her with the chores. Once, Didi forgot to add salt in the vegetables. What fun we had joking about it!

My Didi is very studious. She plays Ludo and Carrom with me whenever she can. I love to listen to stories from her just before going to bed. She has told me about Bapuji (Mahatma Gandhi), Chacha Nehru (Jawaharlal Nehru) and Rani (Queen) of Jhansi. Didi likes to be neat and clean. She keeps her table so tidy that even I have started arranging my books neatly. The loveliest and most special person in my life is my Didi. She is good, she is lovely.

Ashis Jaiswara
D.O.B.: 19.01.95
Age: 14+

Ashis uses a multi-page picture communication display and gestures to communicate. He pointed to each picture word with the index finger on his right hand and the teacher wrote for him. After construction of each sentence the text was read out to him. After 3-4 sentences, it was read out to him again and he had the choice of continuing with the sequence or modify the text. He used gestures for sentences such as "I help my sister".

My AAC Reopens Doors! By Barbara Watkins

Hi There!
My name is Barbara Watkins and I am 54. After turning 17 life threw me a curve ball. -A severe stroke due to birth control pills. I could not believe my unfortunate circumstances. A young person like me should be dancing and shopping like I'd done the day before! After 3 months in a coma I woke up with Developmental Disabilities and no speech. Sure when I woke up I went through the usual stages. Depression, Devastation, Jealousy, Pity Parties, and Bargaining with God. After 37 years I am a different person; however I will tell you about my biggest accomplishment "thus far".

I am sometimes attracted to the unknown so when I told the institution where I was living in 1987, that I wanted to live independently they secretly wanted to put me in a crisp, white straight jacket and tack LOONY TOONS on my room door. There were a lot of concerns, much of which I could understand and appreciate. One of the many concerns was my not being able to communicate with the world. I had a communication device but I barely used it. It took 8 years of fights, and more downs then ups but in March of 2000 I won my independence.

I got my own apartment and quickly learned why the concern. I had to express my needs and wants to everyone concerned. So my AAC became my best friend. Now I run my household and my plan of care through my AAC. My augmentative device is my second voice of a lifetime but I am also blessed with two other forms of AAC. (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) In bed I use an alphabet chart. Unable to use my hands I have a stick put in my mouth and I spell words. Yeah it takes patience but that's ok. Out of bed I communicate with my augmentative device and my computer. I even use the phone! Yep, I can communicate with anyone. I once thought my life was over yet I sit here today with AAC that continues to reopen doors that slammed shut when I had a debilitating stroke in 1972. I have 3 ways to communicate now and no reason to say I cannot communicate.

I am emailing tons of people and constantly writing letters to my doctor, manager, or whoever else. If invited I write and give speeches. Since graduating from Partners and Policymaking in 2005 I email and write letters to Senators and Congressmen for different causes. We all need dreams and goals so do not fear or worry about failure because you never know how far you will get with persistence and the willingness to answer the question, "AM I WILLING TO PAY THE PRICE FOR MY DREAM?" There will be more downs than ups but worth it when you get to that finish line and see your achievements. YOU CAN DO IT!

The End

May 11, 2009

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May 11, 2009

Upliftment

It was Aashar, 15 June – 15 July in the Bengali calendar, the height of the monsoon. The rumbling, inky clouds hung heavy and low. The rain came down in a deluge cleansing the earth as if the Goddess Kali was purifying the world of all its evil.

In this tumultuous time, was born beautiful little Chetana to her mother Jyotsnadevi. Chetana's bright smile and gorgeous eyes captivated her mother completely, shining like a beacon of light in her gloomy life. Jyotsnadevi no longer felt the pain and humiliation of her mother-in-law's tongue lashing or her husband's barbs.

Ten months passed with Jyotsna immersed in her daughter's love and laughter. Then the dark clouds gathered again, engulfing the entire family in sombre misery as Jyotsna's husband lost his job as a reporter in the local daily newspaper.

Furthermore, their old fashioned joint family which had remained bonded together through thick and thin for 24 years, split up and went their own way. Jyotsna had to leave for her parents home with little Chetana clinging to her bosom.

As Chetana grew, Jyotsna realized that her beautiful, beloved daughter was physically disabled with cerebral palsy. Although her speech and movement were severely impaired there was absolutely no doubt about her intelligence! Chetana's soul yearned to soar like a free bird… she longed to be one with the air, the river and the ocean!

Jyotsnadevi was deeply disturbed whenever she dwelt on her daughter's future. Hoping for the best, she admitted Chetana in a special school but because of serious inconveniences had to discontinue with this arrangement. She then began teaching little Chetana at home.

Another five years rushed by….

In the meanwhile, Jyotsna was blessed with two more children. Once her siblings started school, Chetana's overwhelming desire to attend school resurfaced. But her father cruelly laughed off her longing. This led to a renewed challenge in the mother–daughter duo's life.

Determined to brave the odds, Chetna was readmitted in another special school. This school was such that Chetana felt she was being introduced to an entirely new face of life. Here she was taught to use Augmentative and Alternative Communication in the form of an alphabet communication board. Through this, Chetana learnt to string together words and then, phrases and sentences. She had finally found a means of expressing herself in a way that could be comprehended by one and all!

Soon, Chetana began to express her myriad thoughts and feelings; her education also began in earnest. Chetana used to excell in all subjects and also became a favourite with all the teachers. She found her life was progressing leaps and bounds! Despite this rapid progress, often Chetana's physical challenges would lead to bouts of deep mental depression. She could not help yearning to be like the other young girls she saw around her and she desperately wanted to lead a 'normal' life.

These bouts were like the sudden, violent storms which are the precursors of the pre-monsoon rains, the Norwesters. During these low periods, Chetana's feelings would be in a state of absolute tumult.

Finally, Chetana's mother took matters in hand. Jyotsnadevi explained to her daughter how these 'ups and downs', longings and unrealized dreams were part of every young girl's life. No one was entirely free of sadness and disappointments. No one! Jyotsna's concerted effort at trying to stabilize Chetana worked wonders. Much to her relief, her brave adolescent daughter began to find new depths of courage within herself and face life like a stalwart soldier.

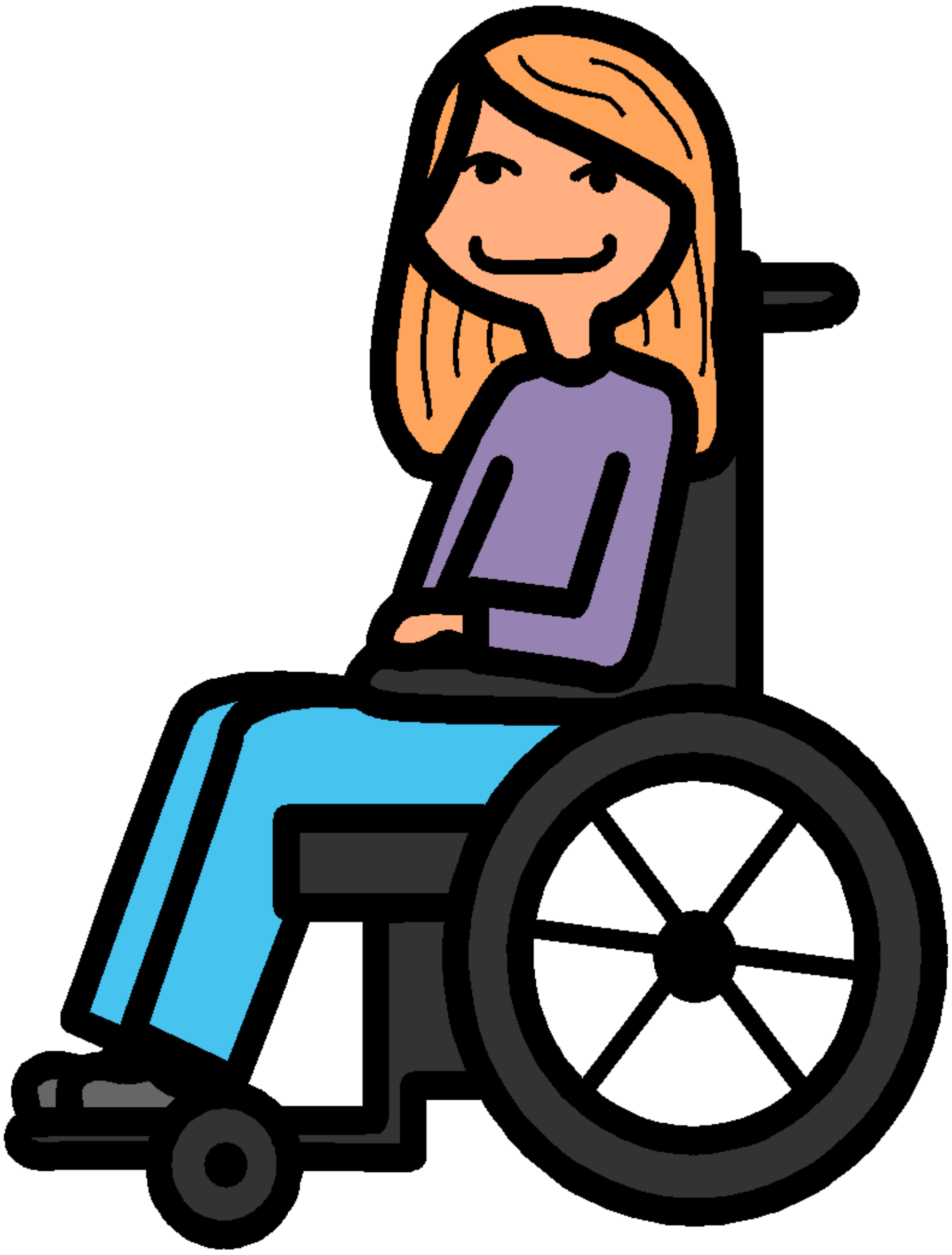
Along with her studies, Chetana became a budding writer.. Her deep and varied emotions tumbled out in the form of vivid and colourful poems and prose. With the passing of time, Chetana's writings no longer remained in dusty note books but gained recognition in India and abroad!

Thus it was that her name became well known around the globe! This was the name Jyotsnadevi had given her little daughter, Chetana, that meant *awareness* and this very name became a ray of light for other girls like herself with renewed strength of purpose and zest for life!

Barsha Bhattacharya

Barsha Bhattacharya, 28 years, uses an alphabet board. Her facilitators, all familiar communication partners write for her. As each sentence is composed, the partner reads it out to her. Barsha was the winner of the ISAAC 2008 International Writing Contest 'Many Stories One Voice'. She attends the services of IICP's Adult Day Centre.

All About Me



How Do I?

Written by the members of Chat Room 2008

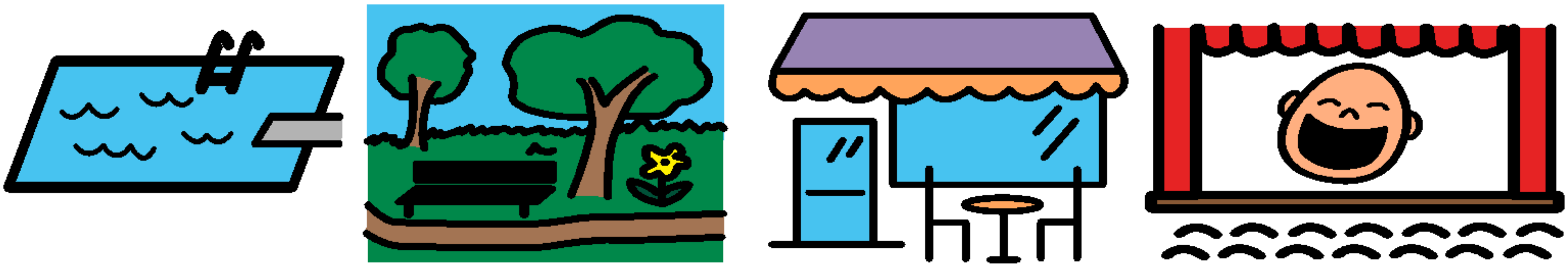
I am Rory.

I am 7 years old.

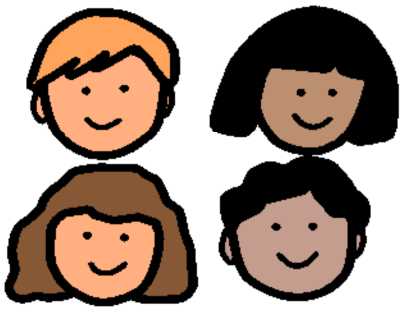
7

This is how I am writing a book about me.

I like to go to a lot of different places.

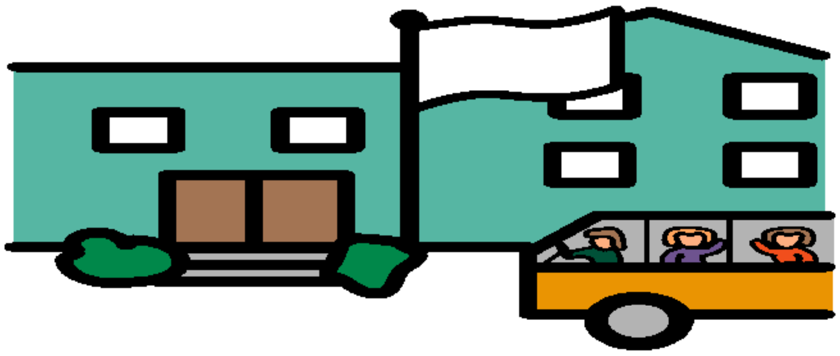


I like to meet a lot of people.

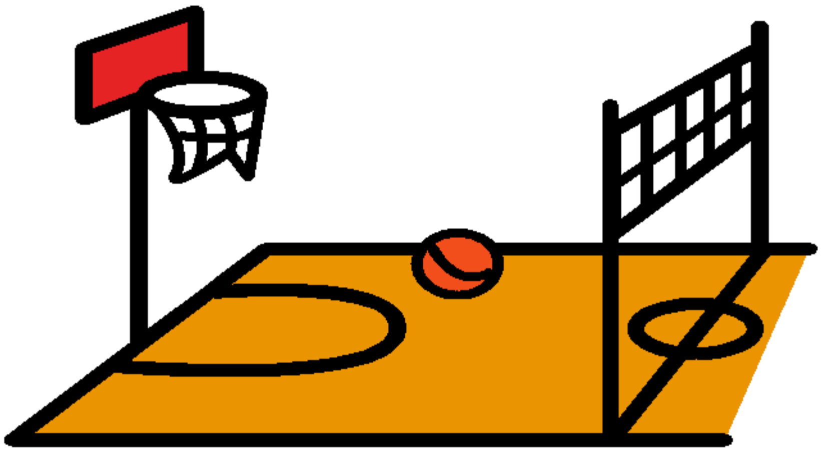


This is how I get around.

I go to school.



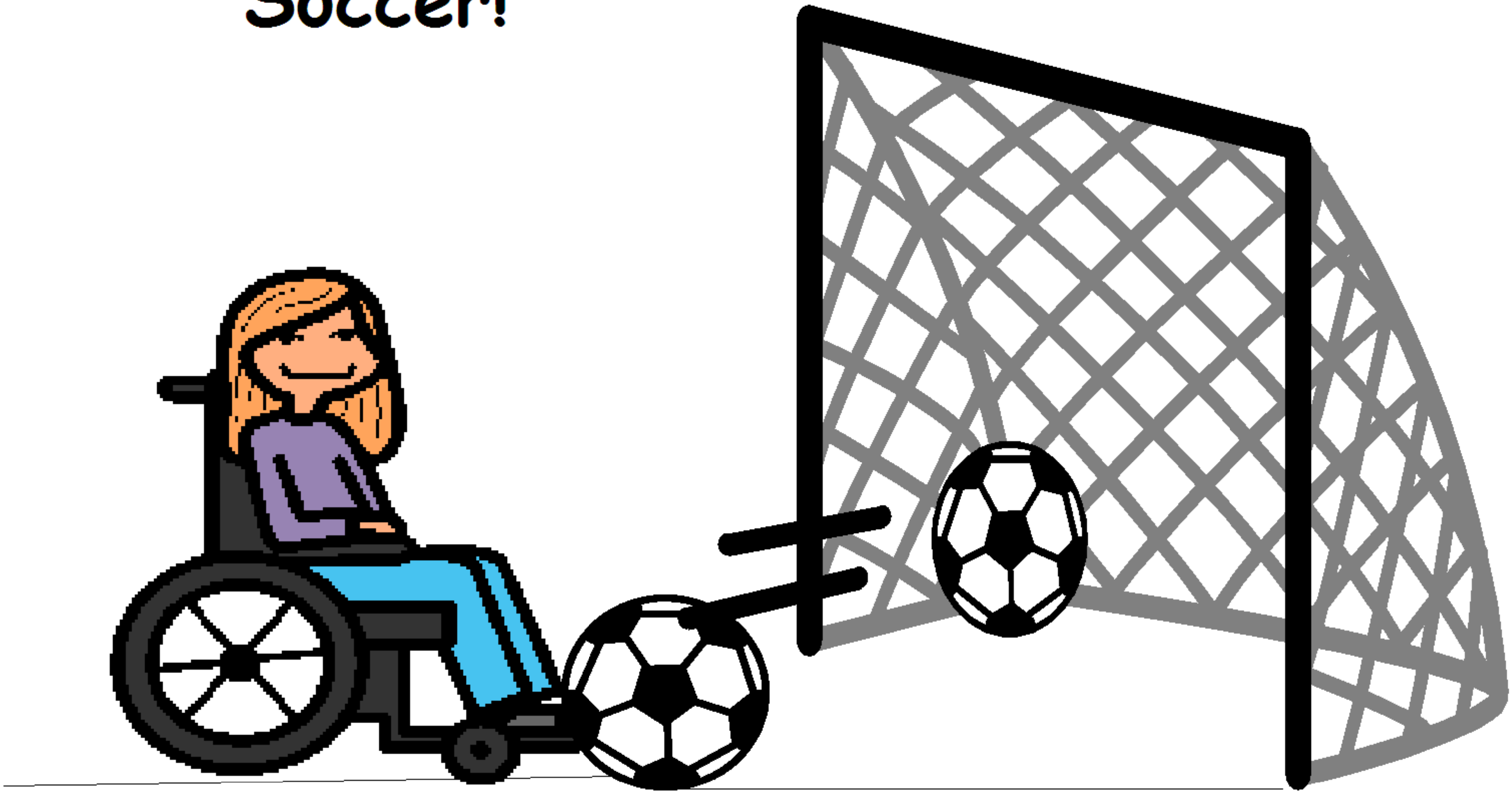
I go to gym class.



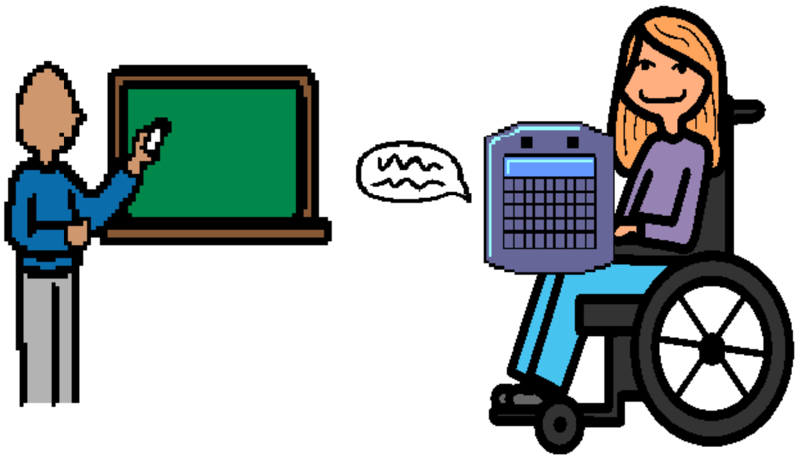
I can do what you can do.

This is how I play my favourite sport,

Soccer!

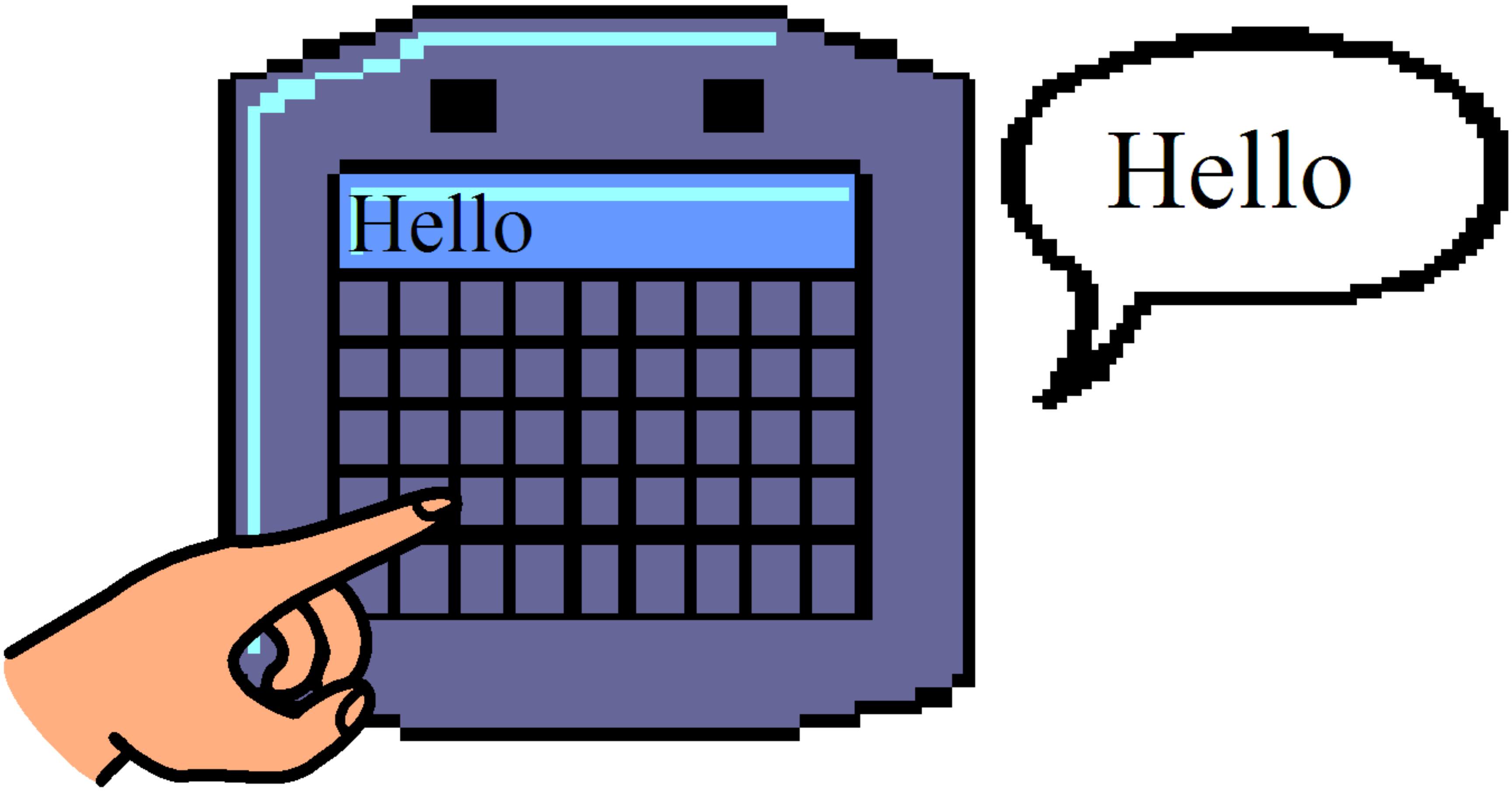


I talk to my friends. 

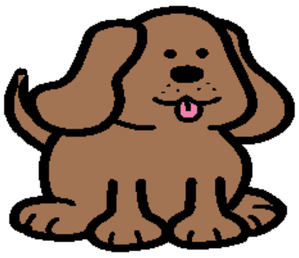
I talk to my teachers. 

I can talk to you.

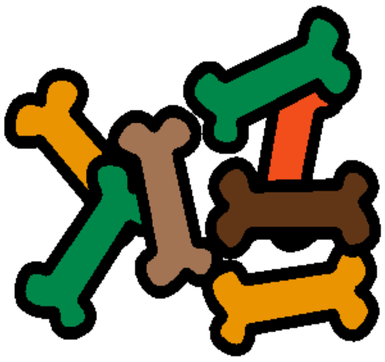
This is how I tell people what I want to say.



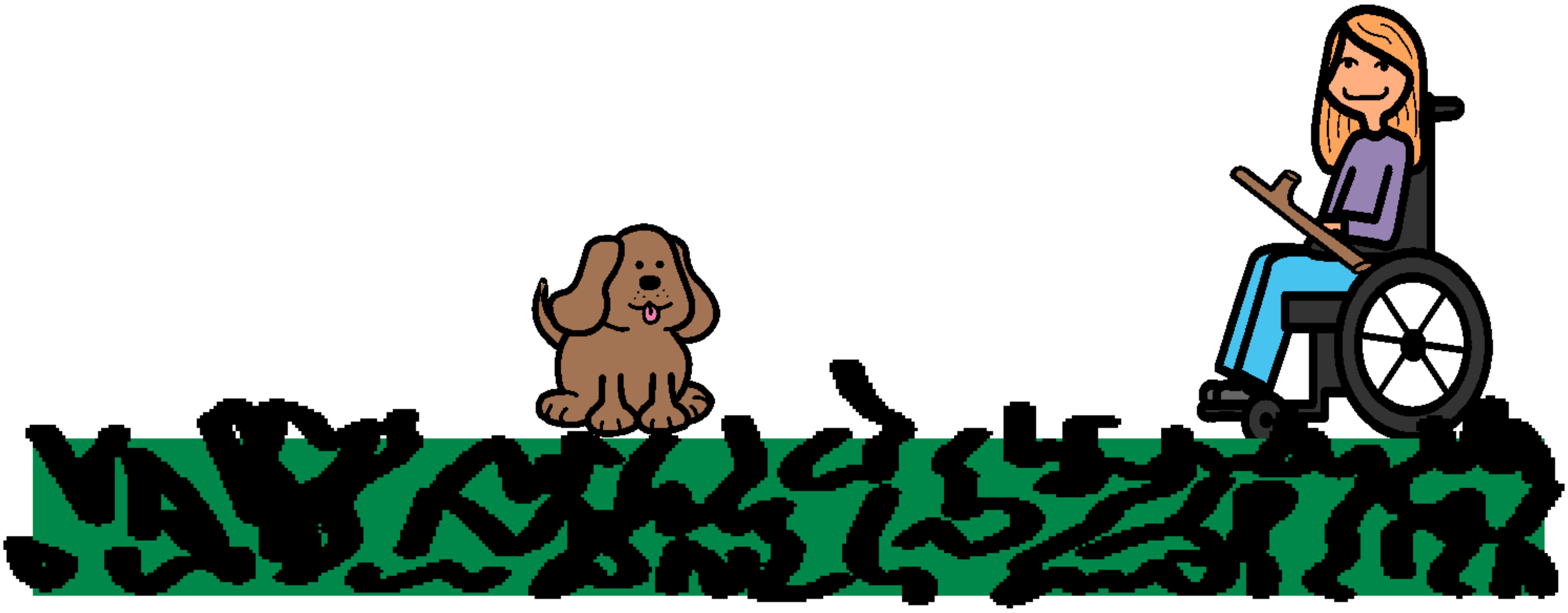
I have a dog named Lovebug.



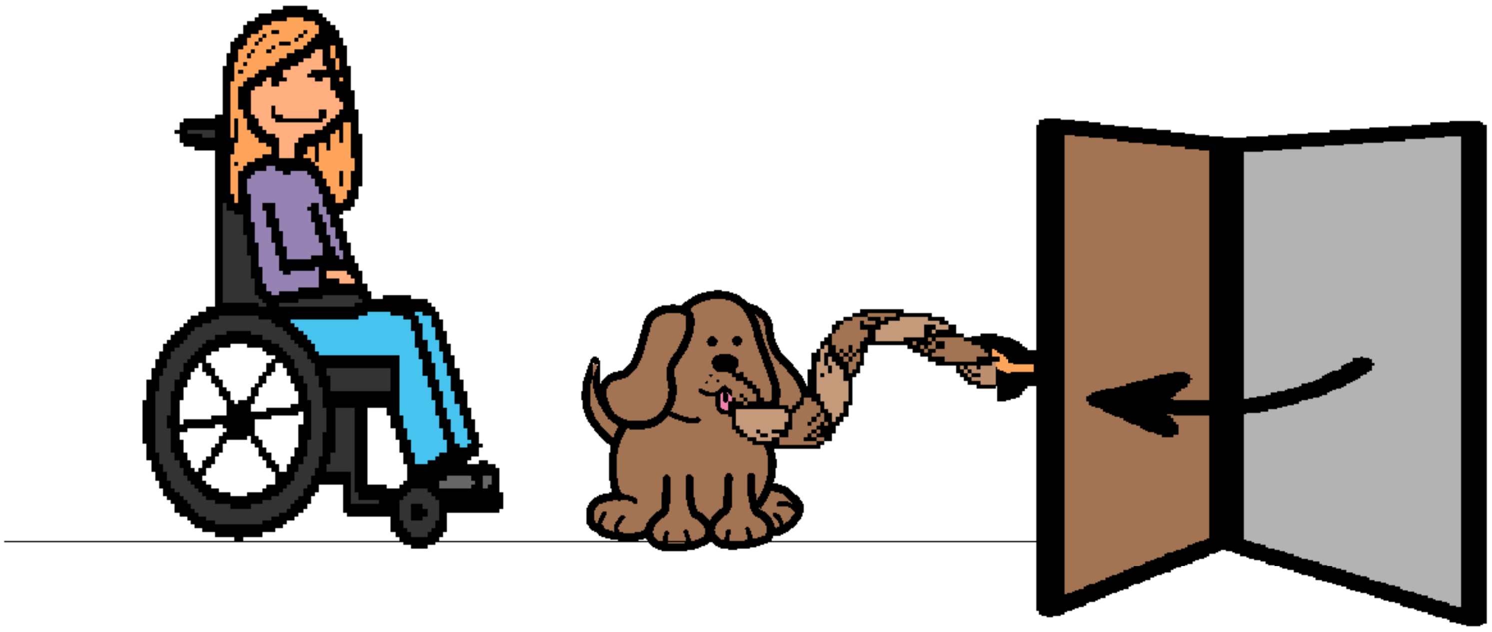
I have treats to give him.



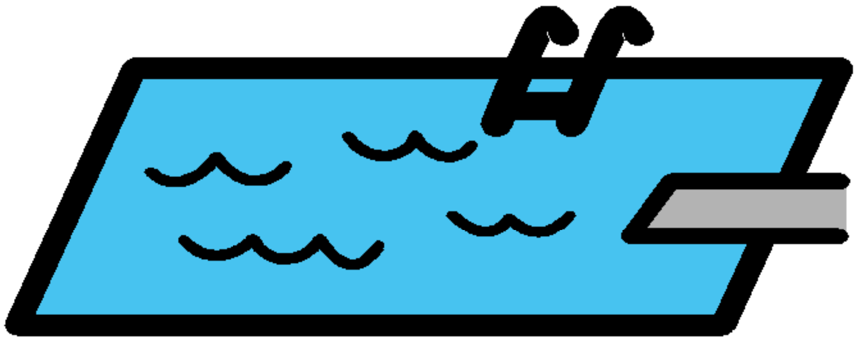
I can play with him and so can you.

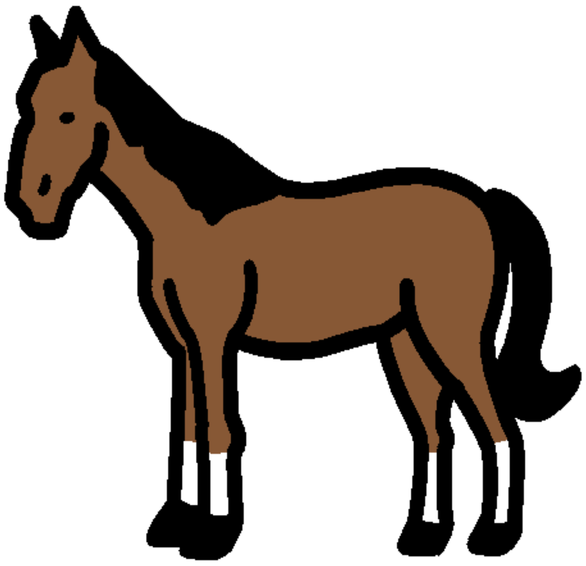


This is how he helps me.



I love to swim.

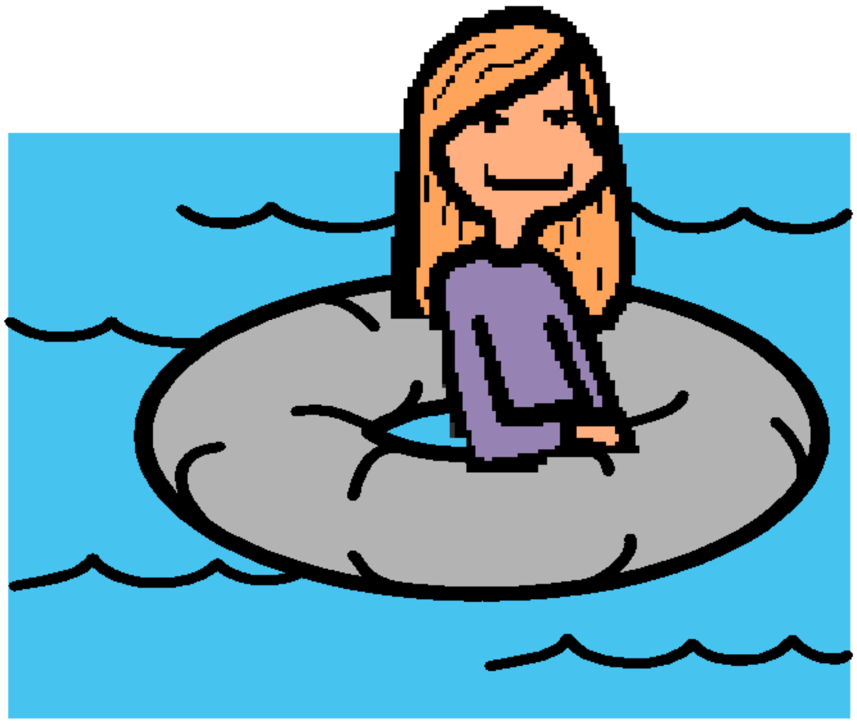


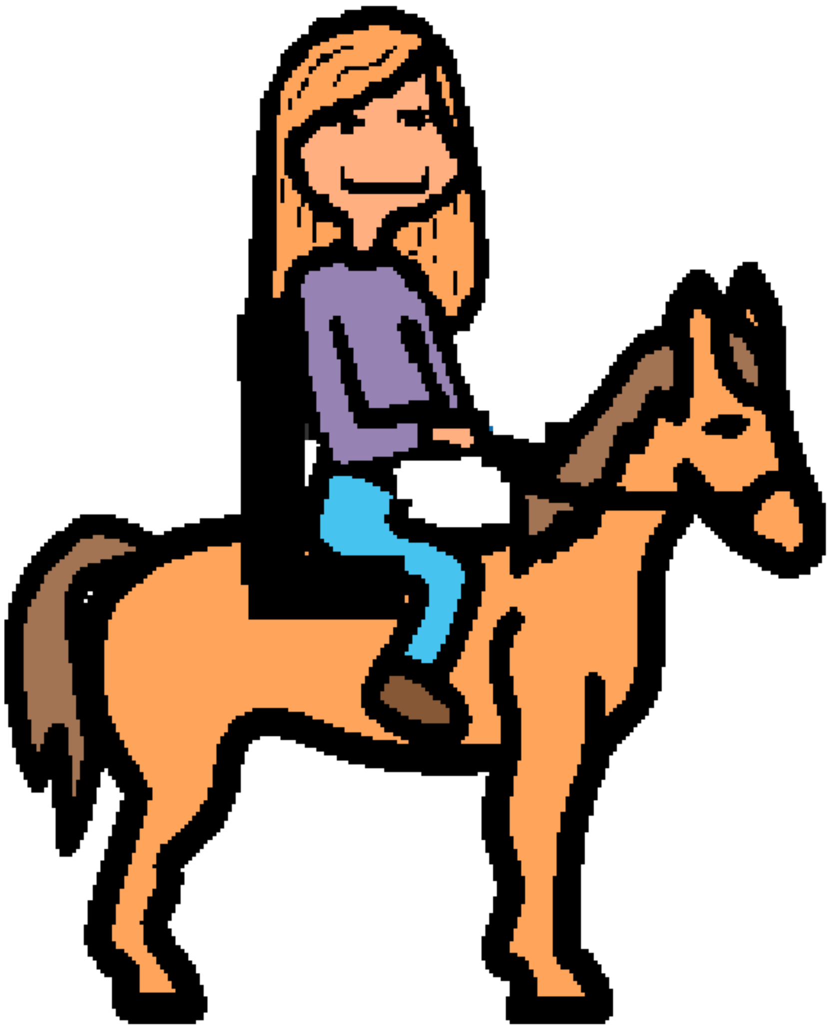


I love to ride horses.

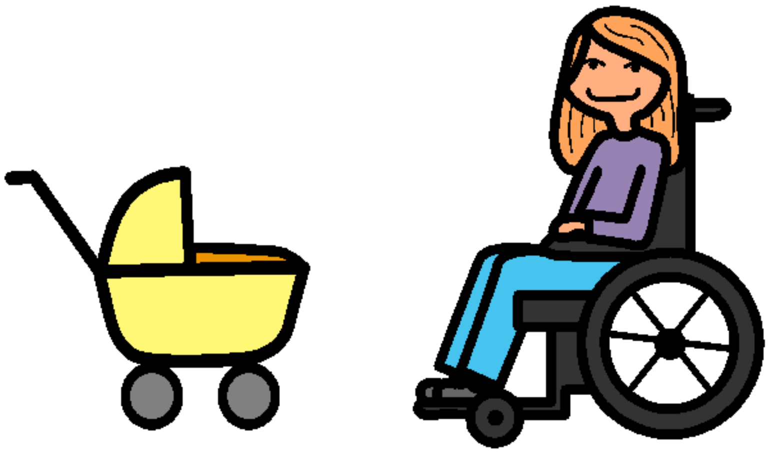
What do you love to do?

This is how I do the things I love.

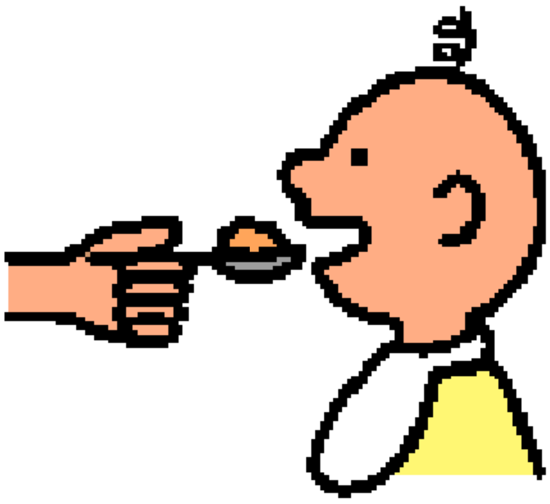




I am a big sister.

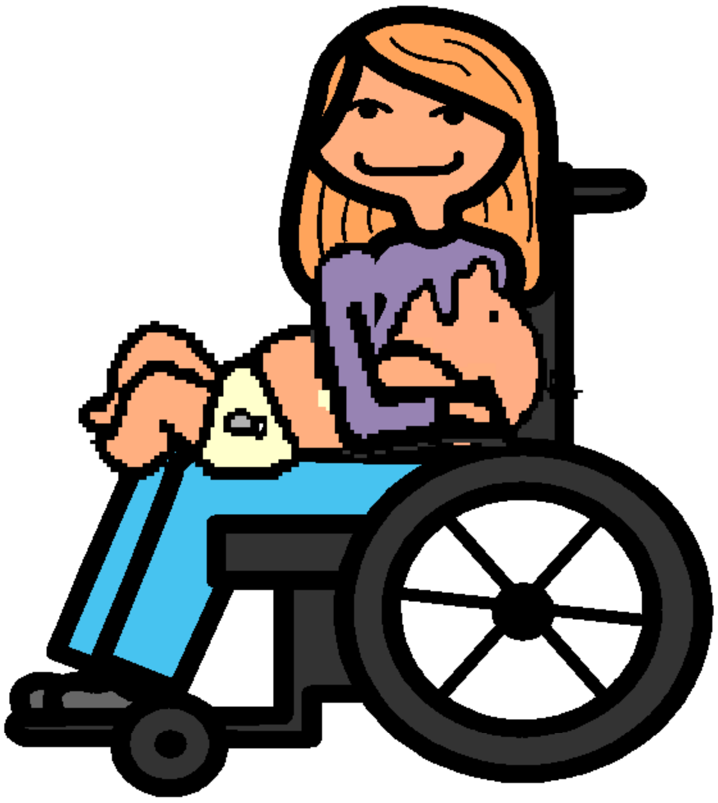


I am great at taking care
of my baby brother, Joey.



I can be helpful just like you.

This is how I give Joey lots of love.

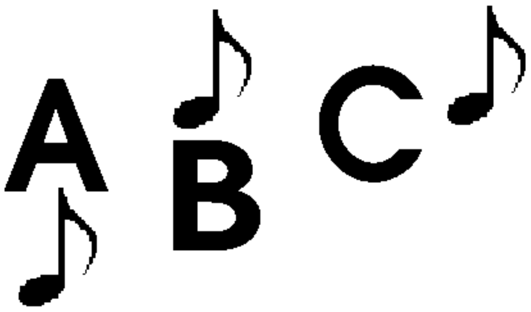


I like books.

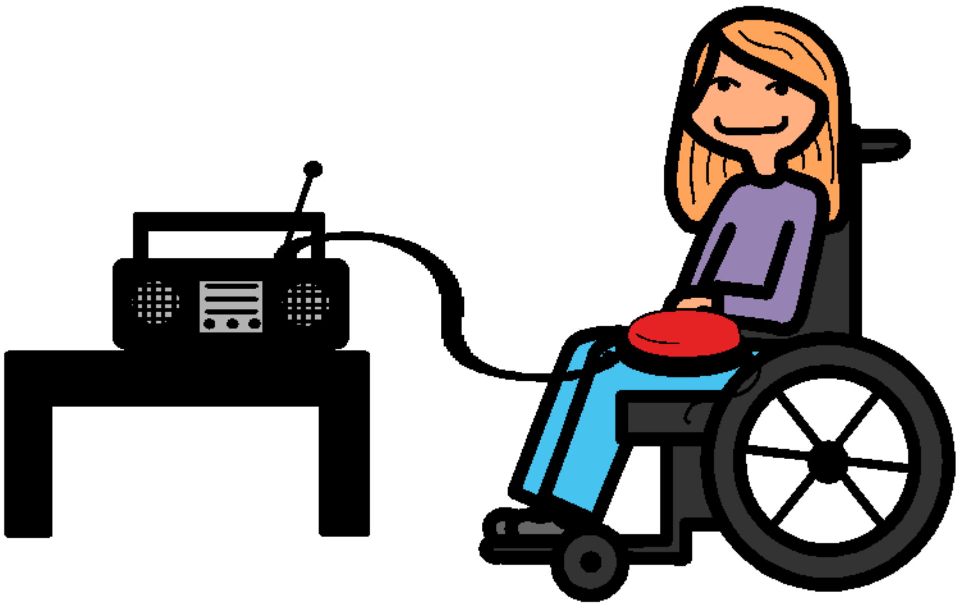
I like music.

I can read the ABCs and sing them too.

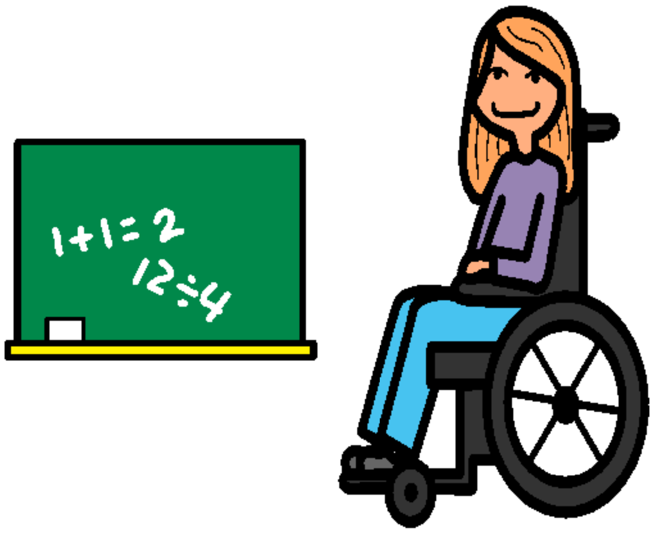
Can you?



This is how I turn on my favourite song.

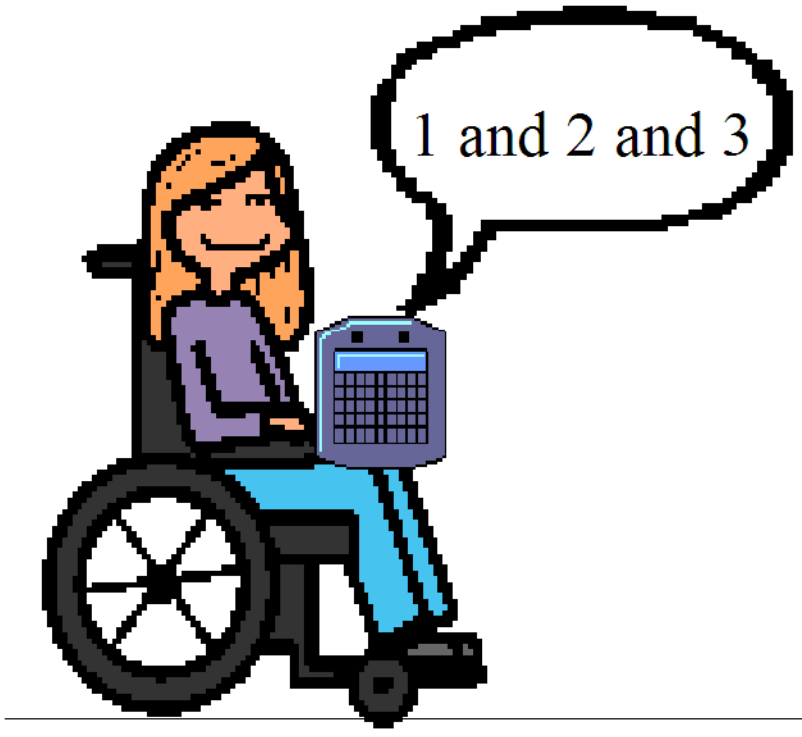


I want to be a teacher one day.

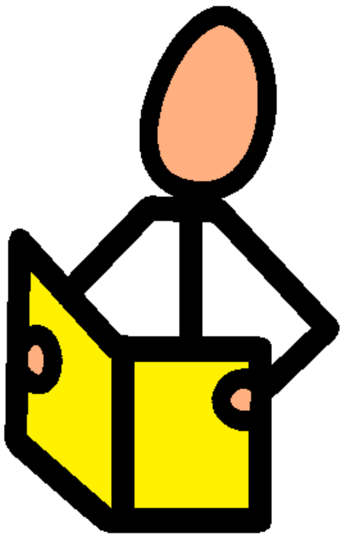


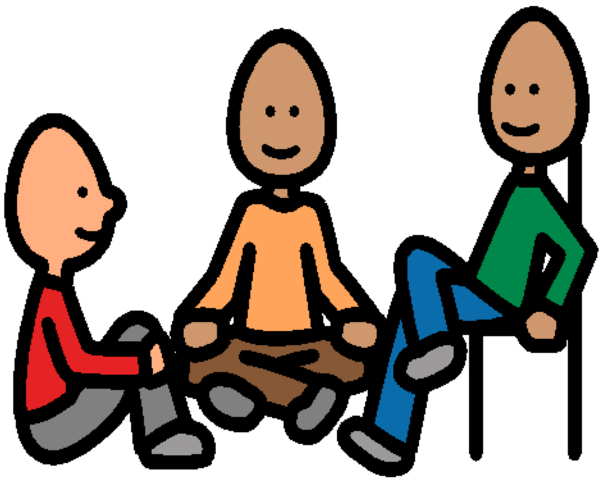
I want to show kids everything that I can do.

This is how I help in class.

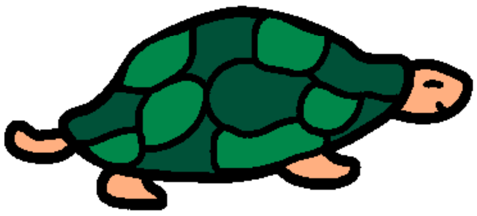


I do all of the things that you do.



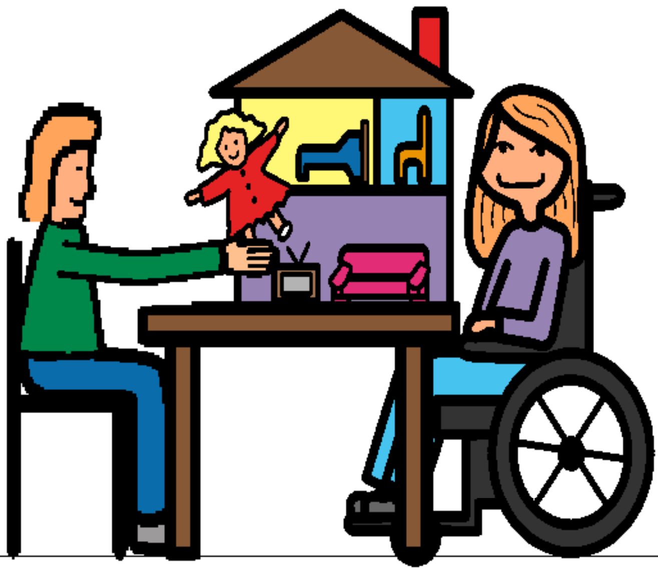


I do them a little more slowly sometimes



I can wait for you and you can wait for me

This is how we can play together.



This is How We Chat

We are all members of the Communication Assistance for Youth and Adults (CAYA) Vancouver Chat Room. Chat Room is a place for us to practice using our communication devices and our communication skills. Everyone is at a different skill level and we support each other while having great conversations and participating in a variety of activities. We hope you enjoy our stories about how we contribute to the meaning of

'Many Methods One goal: to Communicate.'

Derek Isobe

I have CP and a speech impairment. I used a qwerty board to communicate. This method (although better than using my voice) was very inefficient in expressing all but a couple of words at a time.

I now use a Dynavox VMax as my primary means of communication. I use it to communicate with people I know, in meetings and with complete strangers. I find it has improved my ability to be understood. I noticed an improvement in the way in which I communicate. I like talking in a rather verbose manner. Prior to the DynaVox, I was hesitant to express myself fully except with people who knew me well. The Vmax is making it easier to express my full thoughts on a topic. I am really enjoying the freedom it gives me!

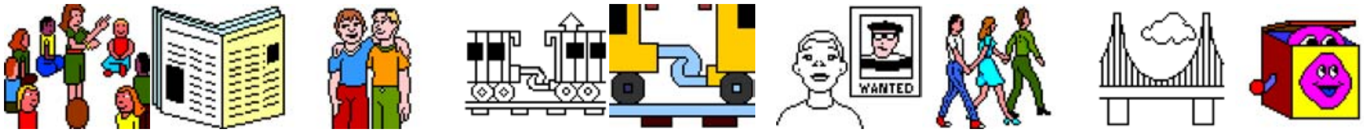
Rand Surbey

Hi My name is Rand Surbey.

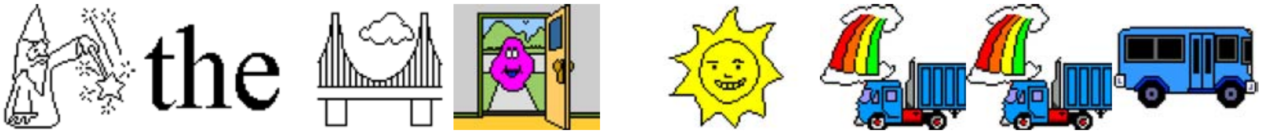
I love my Vanguard.

It help me big

time to speak to



my friends and people in



the outside like bus driver.

I think people like me

can teach the outside

world how to talk

people with computer like the

Vanguard. I like to go on SkyTrain.

Catherine Dudas

I use a DynaVox VMax for Augmentative Communication. I also use Sign Language, my voice and gestures. AAC and the Chat Room have added alot to my life in positive ways. I look forward to meeting the group, seeing old friends and making new friends. I think I've learned alot observing other people's aids and find it fascinating. Getting together always gives me new ideas. And I love sharing news with everyone.

TJ Boucher

I am using Palmtop to talk.

Feel happy using the

Palmtop

New like TV talking

I like using

Palmtop

Favorite - trucks, pumpkin big in room home, vacuum, basketball, I like swim home pool.

Rafael Francisco (The rest of Rafael's story was submitted separately)

I'm a 22 year old guy who loves cars, biking, and playing basketball!

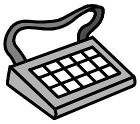
I mostly rely on my words, hand gestures, and role playing to communicate. But, that isn't always enough to get my points across so it's nice to have my palmtop around to help me. Ultimately, I want to master the palmtop and use it to help me meet, and communicate with new people!

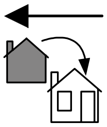
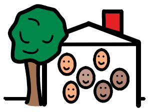
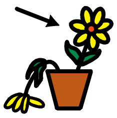
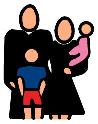
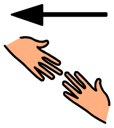
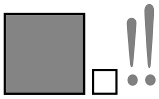
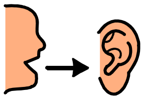
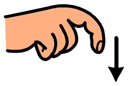
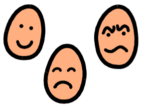
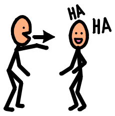
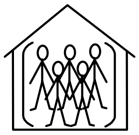
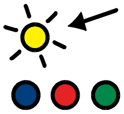
Cydney Wong

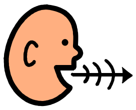
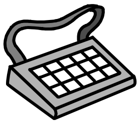
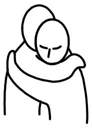
I use my DV4 everyday, pointing with my finger I choose items such as clothing, food choices, places to go, people I know, family members and conversation phrases to greet my friends and people I meet when I am out and about.

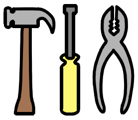
Andrea Paterson (the rest of Andrea's story is submitted separately)

I developed a rare disease in my early childhood called Leigh's disease, which has affected the muscles in my body and made it difficult for me to speak clearly. I have had the privilege of using two

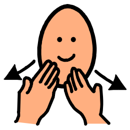

communication devices over the past 15 years, which has given me the
opportunity to express myself more easily.


Last summer I moved into a group home after 28 years of living at

home with my family. My Lightwriter helped me in this huge

transition by allowing me to communicate my needs and how I am

feeling - as well as joke with the staff (which is one of my

favorite things to do).


I try to communicate verbally with those around me as much as I can,

but my speech computer has allowed me to embrace so many more



opportunities. It has been a very valuable tool that I am so



thankful for.

ISAAC AAC Story Contest: **The Many Methods One Goal to Communicate**

October 2009

COLLAGE

A BRIDGE TO COMMUNICATION

DANAE ANTONIOU

Cyprus

It’s hard to understand art, but you can gain a lot while studying art and its history. After all, as the famous psychologist Abigail Housen argues, not all spectators react in the same way in front of art pieces, and this has nothing to do with age, but with personal experiences and stimuli.

In this article I will talk about the art of collage and how this has been a bridge to communication between me and other people, which helped me to get messages through and express my feelings.

Collage is day by day entering the world of traditional art, showing that art is now moving from the paint brush only and starts to represent reality in a different way. The road of Picasso and Braque is followed by a number of other artists such as Max Ernst, Joseph Cornell, Jim Dine, Jean Tinguely, Henri Matisse,o David Hockney, and Helen Black, but also a huge number of simple people, young people, like myself.

How collage influenced my own life

My name is Danae Antoniou and I was born in 29/8/86. Because of lack of oxygen during my birth the doctors diagnosed cerebral palsy. However, thanks to the people that are close to me and love me all these years and based on the inner strength and courage I developed, I am today a student at the University of Cyprus. Meanwhile I have managed to find ways to express my self, other than verbal communication that I lack, and ways to say what I feel, and lead a normal life. My needs are not different from other people. What is different is the way I am trying to express and respond to those needs.

I remember started using colours in the age of 3. Even though because of athetosis it was difficult for me, I started gradually drawing lines. Art was something that always calmed my soul. Always during the years, I was trying in various ways to express my need, my basic needs of safety and hug.

In the summer of 2007 during my occupational therapy session, I noticed a little child around 9 years old that was cutting and sticking faces of various actors from magazines, and trying to draw dialogues. I immediately felt that this was something I could use to start drawing my biography. I decided to present through collage the way my life has been described to me by my relatives and friends, and the way I perceive my life. Using figures out of magazines would be a way to utilise my own skills, since I love and I am able to do it. Then I would ask someone to write the dialogues for me, by showing them on my communication paper board, or even type them on my computer.

I loved my idea because it first of all helped me un-dig my needs and also discover new ones in order to respond to them. In addition this was the easiest and the most pleasant way for me to explain to other people what is cerebral palsy and how it influenced my own life. The technique of collage helped me general to get rid of anger towards people I thought as responsible for my difficulties, and hence its use became valuable for my life. It is a way that helps me create and express my feelings and experiences though pictures and colours. For me collage is a way to communication. It is a technique that serves my needs, based on my abilities, and by it I am creative and at the same time I am trying to be informative for the world around my, in order to get them understand my situation as well as the condition of other people with similar experiences.

This is the first time I have been devoted that much into something. I spend every moment of my free time in creating my biography, and it seems that everybody that has seen my work till today does really understand what I mean. After all, “a picture equals a thousand words”. Before starting the work, I first chose the particular figures (famous Greek actors) that would represent the persons of my life (parents etc). In this way, I could use any figures of bodies I needed and replaced the faces. Then, I was either typing or showing to a facilitator short dialogues which expressed the meaning of the picture.

Now I am sure that the art of collage is a communication method. And as a teacher, I can use it in my own students' education. The attached power point is a fairy tale I created using collage, for my own students, during my practice teaching experience at the University. The tale talks about the "Adventure of a letter", and wants to pass the message: "When there is a will for communication there is always a way, regardless any obstacles". The letter has finally reached its recipient! Enjoy it!

PICTURES FROM MY BIOGRAPHY


4
ΕΝΤΑΞΗ
ΠΑΙΔΙΑ ΥΕΗΧΗΑ
2
ΔΑΝ
3
ΘΕΛΟΥΜΕ Ν
ΠΕΞΟΥΜΕ

ΚΟΛΑΖ

ΜΙΑ ΓΕΦΥΡΑ ΕΠΙΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑΣ

ΑΝΤΩΝΙΟΥ ΔΑΝΑΗ

Κύπρος

Είναι δύσκολο να κατανοήσεις την τέχνη αλλά μελετώντας αυτήν και την ιστορία της μπορείς να κερδίσεις πολλά. Εξάλλου, όπως αναφέρει η γνωστή ψυχολόγος Abigail Housen δεν αντιδρούν όλοι οι θεατές με τον ίδιο τρόπο σε έργα τέχνης και αυτό δεν έχει καμία σχέση με την ηλικία του ατόμου αλλά με τα προσωπικά του βιώματα και ερεθίσματα.

Σε αυτή την εργασία θα προσπαθήσω να παρουσιάσω πως η τέχνη μέσω του κολάζ αποτέλεσε για μένα μια γέφυρα επικοινωνίας με τους άλλους ανθρώπους, με βοήθησε να περάσω μηνύματα και να εξωτερικεύσω τα συναισθήματά μου.

Το κολάζ αρχίζει πλέον να εισέρχεται όλο και πιο έντονα στην παραδοσιακή τέχνη θέλοντας να δείξει ότι η τέχνη ξεφεύγει από το πινέλο και μόνο και την απόδοση των αντικειμένων ως έχουν και παράλληλα να προσφέρουν κάτι το διαφορετικό.

Την πορεία του Πικάσο και του Μπρακ ακολουθούν κι άλλοι γνωστοί καλλιτέχνες ανάμεσα τους και ο Max Ernst, Joseph Cornell, Jim Dine, Jean Tinguely, Henri Matisse,ο David Hockney, η Helen Black αλλά και πλήθος κόσμου κι ανάμεσα τους πολλά παιδιά όπως κι εγώ.

Πώς επηρέασε το κολάζ τη δική μου ζωή

Ονομάζομαι Αντωνίου Δανάη και γεννήθηκα στις 29/8/86. Εξαιτίας έλλειψης οξυγόνου κατά τη γέννηση μου οι γιατροί διαπίστωσαν ότι έχω εγκεφαλική παράλυση. Παρόλα αυτά χάρη στους ανθρώπους που με αγαπούν και με στηρίζουν όλα αυτά τα χρόνια αλλά και στη δύναμη ψυχής που απέκτησα, κατάφερα σήμερα να είμαι μέλος του Πανεπιστημίου Κύπρου. Παράλληλα, κατάφερα να ανακαλύψω τρόπους να εκφράζομαι, να λέω αυτά που νιώθω και να κάνω τη ζωή μου όσο το δυνατό πιο φυσιολογική. Οι ανάγκες μου δεν διαφέρουν με αυτές των άλλων

ανθρώπων. Αυτό που διαφέρει είναι ο τρόπος με τον οποίο προσπαθώ να τις εκδηλώσω και να τις καλύψω.

Θυμάμαι να ξεκίνησα να παίρνω χρώματα στα χέρια μου σε ηλικία 3 χρονών. Παρόλο που λόγω της αθέτωσης δυσκολευόμουν θυμάμαι ότι ξεκίνησα να ζωγραφίζω γραμμές. Η τέχνη ήταν πάντα κάτι που ξεκούραζε τη ψυχή μου. Πάντα μέσα από το πέρασμα των χρόνων, προσπαθούσα με διάφορους τρόπους να δείξω τις ανάγκες μου που είχα. Οι ανάγκες αυτές ήταν πάντα: η ανάγκη της αγκαλιάς και της ασφάλειας.

Το καλοκαίρι του 2007 ενώ βρισκόμουν για μάθημα εργοθεραπείας, η προσοχή μου τραβήχτηκε από ένα μικρό παιδί γύρω στα 9. Παρατήρησα το παιδί και είδα ότι έκανε κολλητική βάζοντας πρόσωπο διαφόρων ηθοποιών και προσπαθούσε να κάνει διαλόγους.

Αμέσως, σκέφτηκα ότι θα μπορούσα και εγώ μέσα από την κολλητική να φτιάξω τη βιογραφία μου. Να παρουσιάσω δηλαδή μέσα από αυτό τον τρόπο τη ζωή μου όπως μου την έχουν περιγράψει συγγενείς και φίλοι αλλά και όπως εγώ την βίωσα. Αν χρησιμοποιούσα εικόνες από ηθοποιούς θα αξιοποιούσα τις δικές μου ικανότητες αφού μπορώ άνετα να ψάχνω μέσα από περιοδικά και να βρίσκω πρόσωπα. Στη συνέχεια απλά θα έλεγα σε κάποιον τους διαλόγους και θα τους συμπλήρωνε.

Η ιδέα μου άρεσε τόσο πολύ αφού με βοήθησε, πρώτον να ξεθάψω ανάγκες αλλά και να ανακαλύψω καινούριες που έκρυβα και να απαντήσω στο γιατί δημιουργήθηκαν. Επίσης αυτός ήταν ο πιο εύκολος και ευχάριστος τρόπος να εξηγήσω σε κάποιους τι είναι η εγκεφαλική παράλυση και πως επηρέασε τη ζωή μου. Η τεχνική αυτή και η τέχνη γενικότερα με βοήθησε να βγάλω από μέσα μου το θυμό για αυτούς που θεωρώ υπεύθυνους για το πρόβλημα μου. Η χρήση του κολλάζ στην ζωή μου είναι σημαντική.

Είναι ένας τρόπος που με βοηθά να δημιουργήσω και να εκφράσω συναισθήματα και βιώματά μου μέσα από εικόνες περιοδικών και εφημερίδων. Το κολλάζ είναι για μένα τρόπος εξωτερίκευσης συναισθημάτων και περιγραφή της ζωής μου. Είναι μια τεχνική η οποία με εξυπηρετεί, με βάση τις δυνατότητες μου, να κάνω κάτι δημιουργικό και εξίσου ενημερωτικό για τον κόσμο που με περιβάλλει για κατανόηση τόσο της δικής μου περίπτωσης όσο και των ανθρώπων που βρίσκονται σε παρόμοια θέση μαζί μου.

Πρέπει να προσθέσω ότι είναι η πρώτη φορά που έχω αφοσιωθεί σε κάτι τόσο πολύ και τόσο έντονα. Κάθε στιγμή ελεύθερου χρόνου αφιερώνεται στην βιογραφία μου και πρέπει να πω ότι όσοι έχουν δει την δουλειά μου μέχρι στιγμής φαίνεται με ευκολία να καταλαβαίνουν αυτό που θέλω να τους πω. Άλλωστε, ισχύει αυτό που λένε ότι μια εικόνα ισοδυναμεί με χίλιες λέξεις. Προτού αρχίσω την κολλητική, επέλεξα συγκεκριμένα τηλεοπτικά πρόσωπα τα οποία θα αντικαθιστούσαν τα πρόσωπα της ζωής μου. Έτσι κάθε φορά επέλεγα φιγούρες που χρειαζόμουν, ή πολλές φορές ακόμα δανειζόμουν ξένα σώματα και τα τοποθετούσα στο χαρτί. Στη συνέχεια με τη βοήθεια ενός δεύτερου προσώπου έγραφα μικρούς διαλόγους οι οποίοι έδειχναν πιο εύκολα το νόημα της εικόνας.

Τώρα είμαι σίγουρη πως το κολάζ είναι μια μέθοδος επικοινωνίας και το χρησιμοποιώ στην εκπαίδευση των δικών μου μαθητών…. στο Power Point που επισυνάπτεται είναι ένα δικό μου παραμύθι με τη μέθοδο του κολάζ. Το παραμύθι για την περιπέτεια ενός γράμματος, στοχεύει να δώσει στους μαθητές το μήνυμα: «Όταν υπάρχει η θέληση για επικοινωνία υπάρχει και ο τρόπος, ανεξαρτήτως των «εμποδίων»»! Απολαύστε το!

PICTURES FROM MY BIOGRAPHY

A VOICE.

What a wondrous thing the voice. A multilayered connection with the world. A dialogue past, present and future. Both intimate and general, creative and healing. A representation of who you are and what you think, feel, know, want and love. It passes through the mystical separation that divides all people. So when you lose your voice, what then? This amazing beautiful, necessary gift. What then?   What then?

The AAC communication computer is the what and now is the then. A multifaceted save-the- day miracle. Only recently available in time for me. Now I can talk through printing. Erase it, print it, or send and receive emails. You have control through the AAC device of your television thus keeping you current and entertained. AHA! Access to the Internet – Avenue Unlimited. The human brain needs stimulation, relationship, creativity and communication. These opportunities are available with slight pressure of your thumb. You are never so vulnerable as you are without a voice, but the AAC device can be your new wonderful voice.

The AAC device will bring some major losses I haven't mentioned. The loss of frustration, of anger, of hopelessness in regards to your ability to be heard and independent. There are personalized benefits – in my case I can continue writing poetry and print or save them. Another person may wish to write stories or journal things one finds worthwhile.

The AAC device opens doors, travels distances, knocks down barricades, accompanies and listens. A genie of "yes" from a bottle of "no".

Elsie Hudak
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

My Doll

My doll likes to eat chicken. I have fed her with a spoon.

Esha Bhattacharya
D.O.B: 20.10.04
Age: 4+

Esha uses a coloured picture communication display with 4 pictures to a page. During a doll play activity in class her teacher asked her "With what will you feed your doll? Esha pointed at the picture of spoon with her finger of her right hand. When she was asked, "What does the doll like to eat?" she pointed at the picture of chicken.

FEW STEPS TOO MANY !!

No, I was not dreaming! This old house, which was a simple management office, was transformed into a bank. As if there were not enough of them in this town of Marly le Roi (near Paris), where there are already thirty six thousand banks.

But come back to this new bank, which is not accessible to wheelchairs because there are four big steps in front of the entrance. People working in this bank do not know that disabled people are the same as others. They may be poor or rich.

And what if, during a full moon, I played bingo, and I were the winner. Yes, I know, everybody has this dream. And I will be very, very, very rich. An important question comes to my small mind: where would I put my money to make it grow? Probably, I will go to see the big banks. The ones, which will be accessible. Yes, accessible !

It's schocking that buildings without accessibility are still being built.

In France, a country of human rights, the word « accessibility » is often forgotten by architects. However there is the 1975 accessibility law, which says: all new public buildings must be built to be accessible to people with disabilities.

It's true that, since this period, there have been a lot of modifications of post offices, museums, cinemas and other public buildings. Some parking places are reserved. Many things have been done, however not enough yet. I think that able-bodied people often make fun of people with disabilities. They are in their egoist world. They are not civic-minded. I hope this will change in the near future.

Florence Jacob

QUELQUES MARCHES DE TROP !

Non, je ne rêvais pas ! Cette vieille bâtisse qui était un simple bureau de gestion, a été transformée en une banque. Comme s'il n'y en avait pas assez dans cette ville de Marly le Roi prés de Paris où il y a déjà trente six mille banques ?

Mais revenons à cette nouvelle banque qui n'est pas accessible aux fauteuils roulants car il y a quatre grandes marches devant la porte d'entrée. Les personnes qui travaillent dans cette banque ne savent pas que les personnes handicapées sont comme les autres. Ils peuvent être pauvres ou riches.

Et si un soir de pleine lune, je jouais au loto et que je gagnai le gros lot. Oui, je sais, ce rêve-là on l'a tous fait. Et que je deviendrais très très très riche. Une grave question se poserais alors dans ma petite tête : où vais-je aller faire fructifier mon argent ? J'irai sans doute voir les grosses banques. Celles qui seront accessibles. Oui, accessible !

Il est révoltant qu'à notre époque, on construit des établissements sans d'accessibilité.

En France pays des lois de l'homme où le mot « accessibilité » est souvent oublié par les architectes. Pourtant il y a bien une loi de 1975 sur l'accessibilité des personnes handicapées disait : Tous les nouveaux bâtiments publics doivent être construits avec l'accessibilité des personnes handicapées.

Il faut avouer que depuis cette époque, il y a eu beaucoup d'aménagements aux niveaux des postes, des musées, des cinémas et d'autres établissements publics. Certains parkings sont réservés. Pourtant il y a beaucoup de choses qui ont été faites mais pas assez encore.

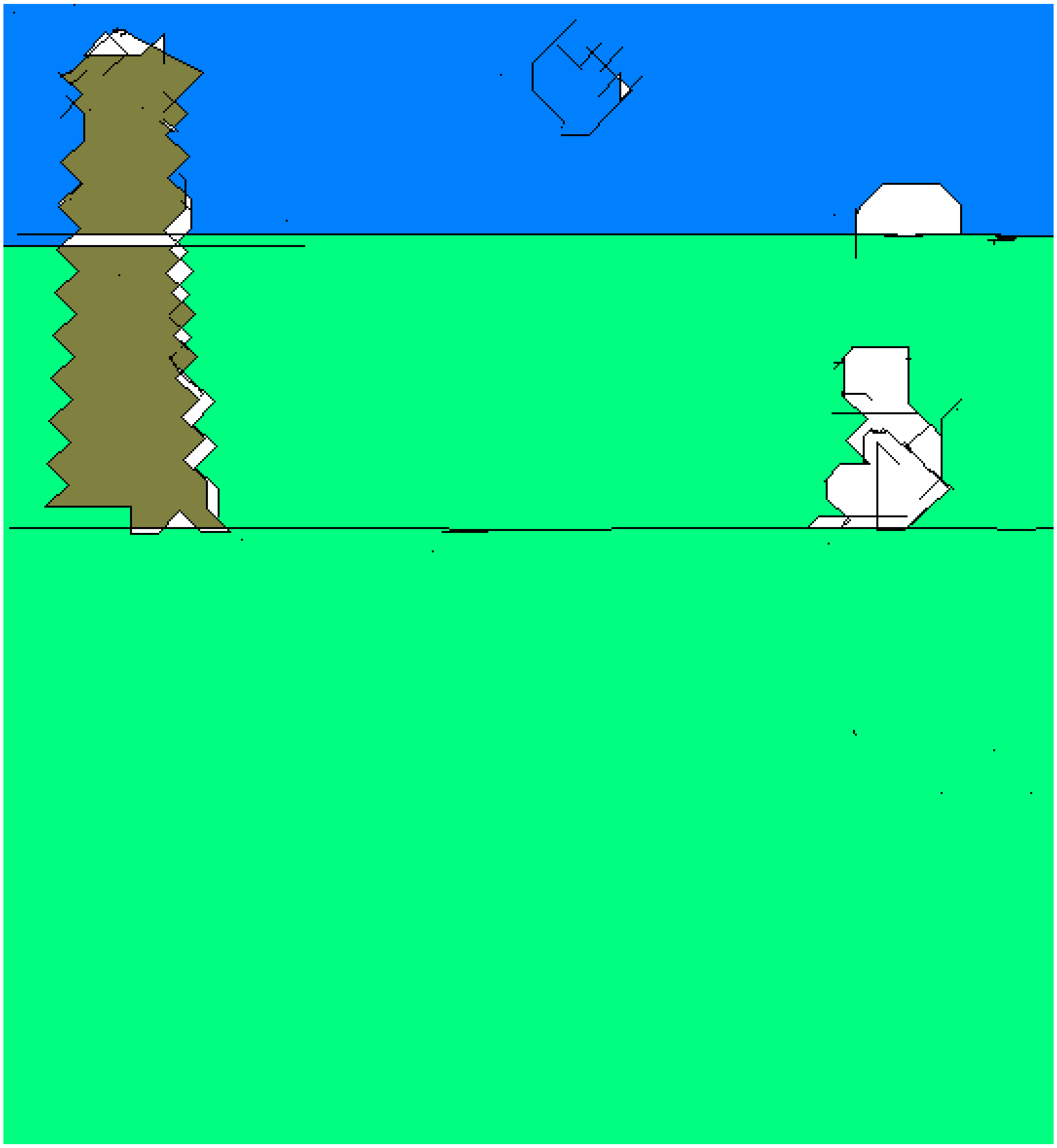
Je pense que les personnes valides se moquent bien des personnes handicapées. Ils sont dans leur monde d'égoïste. Ils ne connaissent plus le sens civique. Et j'espère que cela va changer dans les temps futurs.

Florence Jacob

France

A blog : http://unikom.blogs.apf.asso.fr by National Group of people who use AAC, in APF France
Groupe d'initiative national de personnes avec difficulté d'élocution et de communication
The Blog is done to exchange experiences, methods, advocacy, about AAC, inside the APF Organization (association des paralyses de France) and outside of APF.
We'll be happy to have participations from around the world, from Quebec particularly.

le monde des handicappés



de franck luthringer handicapé

Nous les handicapés on est votre rayon de soleil c'est avec nous que vous avancer chaque jour!je voudrais dire aux autres que on est pas pauvre !

On est pas dans notre monde on écoute tout , nous on se bas ne pas confondre les I M C mal entendant avec les I M C entendant . certain mal entendant ils ce bas pas ils ce laisse aller c'est dommage pour eux mais bon c'est la vie

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Issaac.fr

A GIRL AND A BOY GET HOPE by Jacklyn Irwin

So many times a child loses hope. I can show you what I mean.

The naughty boy was mean to a happy girl.

Songs rushed into the girls head but she could not sing. She had lost hope that singing aloud was possible. God took her voice and the naughty boy had confiscated her spelling board.

The board made it easy for family to feel that they could listen to her. The family asked her questions and she spelled the answers.

Does the boy not understand that the girl is trying her best because she is clever? Will he be hopeful like her family?

The boy thought about what he had done and gave the board back. He said he was sorry. He felt nasty. He realized that she only wanted to say something to him. She wanted to tell him she really thought he was a beautiful person. They laughed at their mistakes about each other.

So then they were sad and questioned what they could do together. Her mum said they should ask him to learn to type with her.

Does he have hope with braveness to learn to type with her? Maybe he will?

December 1, 2008

Dear Fellow Americans: Hello, I'm Jenell Gordon, and I am arguably one of the most unique patients in the world. I am a 43 year old African-American woman who lives at Lake Taylor Transitional Care Hospital in Norfolk, Virginia. My mission is to revolutionize health care. Once you have read this letter, you will understand why.

After receiving a master's degree in speech-language pathology from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, I began completing my required Clinical Fellowship Year (CFY) at Norfolk Public Schools (NPS) in Virginia. During this time, spring 1993, I met with my neurologist to learn what was causing abnormal sensations in my left arm and leg. He ordered MRI pictures of my brain. My suspicions were true. I was diagnosed with an arteriovenous malformation (AVM) in the pons, near the brain stem. A cerebral AVM is a collection of veins and arteries that malformed in the brain cavity. In my case, it was a congenital AVM and removal was highly recommended.

I was fortunate and blessed to meet Dr. Issam Awad at Yale-New Haven Hospital in Connecticut. This neurosurgeon established hope, for me and my parents, by suggesting his surgical procedure for safe removal. I was faced with life or death. I chose life and I am alive after a successful surgery!!!! My craniotomy was January 7, 1997. I was 31 years old. Afterwards, however, I was not given the equal opportunity for which this country stands.

My insurance company approved all the diagnostic tests and the brain surgery as well. Then, they demanded I go home to Virginia. They insisted I leave only 9 days after surgery without the intensive and aggressive physical therapy my neurosurgeon prescribed. Through the efforts of my mother and Dr. Awad, I was able to stay and receive care a little longer. My insurance company demanded my transfer from Gaylord Rehabilitation Hospital in Connecticut after only two (2) weeks of care. Just 2 weeks! I was denied the right to recover! My health was jeopardized! I was moved to Sentara Nursing Home in Norfolk, Virginia. It is a nursing facility providing custodial care for the elderly. As a result, at age 43, after almost 12 years, I have the same post-operative deficits. I am a quadriplegic who uses a wheelchair.

I watched the Democratic National Convention in August and I listened carefully. The speakers spoke of the great need for health care that is “high-quality”, “secure” as well as “affordable”. Yet, no one mentioned the need for health care to be appropriate. I believe health care should be appropriate to the patient. There is absolutely nothing appropriate about transferring a patient, who sustained a 9- hour brain surgery, from a rehabilitation hospital to a nursing home (in another state). Obviously, I was placed in the wrong facility. I remained there for 1 year.

My human rights have been violated! An injustice has been committed and I am determined never to give up on my full recovery. My personal relationship with the Lord gives me faith to stay positive. God is working through my parents, my family and my friends to provide love and support for my faith-based life. Even though I am very physically limited, I continue in my profession. Speech-language pathology is still in my heart. The American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA) has given me lifetime membership in my disabled state. I am a different kind of speech-language pathologist. I don’t have many years of clinical practice; I only worked 3½ years for NPS. However, I have many years of life experience as a patient. In fact, I think it makes me unique . . . I am a patient who just happens to be a speech language pathologist. I would like the opportunity to talk to our society.

There are 5 things that I would like to tell society:

1. Do go out of your way to engage in conversation with a patient. It is a way for both of you to stay mentally fit.
2. Do volunteer your time to help a patient. It is time well spent.
3. Do remember to use verbal greetings and closings with patients. It is a great way to acknowledge his or her presence.
4. Do remember that people skills are essential. The progress of technology is great, but it can’t take the place of human contact.
5. Do take the time to visit a patient. It will be a blessing for both of you.

In conclusion , I wish to inform you that the National Education Association (NEA) has given lifetime membership to me in my disabled state as well. I feel it is a privilege to educate the community about my condition and my disability. I use a communication board, an augmentative/alternative communication (AAC) device as well as the

American Sign Language (ASL) alphabet to communicate my thoughts and feelings. Change is good. I look forward to the change that President-elect Barack Obama speaks of for this country, the United States of America. His ideas, visions, and values are what America needs at this time. Thank you for your time.

Please share my story with legislators and others concerned about the health care system. If you wish to contact me, my email address is jenellgordon@yahoo.com You can reach Mr. and Mrs. Arthur V. Gordon, Jr. (my parents) at 757-424-3060.

God bless you,
Jenell Y. Gordon

Hi. My name is Juwaan Espinal. I live with my mom sister and my dog in Centreville, Virginia. I am 12. I use a Vmax for e-mailing and for telling about things that happen. I do school work on it.

My school is Centreville Elementary. I am going to Stone middle in September. I am scared about classes, lunch at school and driving in the hallway.

I like to tell jokes. Why does a humming bird hum? Because it doesn't know the words.   Some of my favorite things are friends, playing video games, going to IHOP and e-mailing. Thanks.

Our Visitor

We had a visitor in class. She is our good friend, Dr. Dadina. We decorated the class especially for her. Everyone said our class was looking very nice. I told her about my class and friends through my picture communication board and Kathamala.

Kaberi Majhi
D.O.B: 22.05.02
Age: 7+

Kaberi uses a multi page picture communication display with 8-9 pictures to a page. She also uses Kathamala (VOCA). Kaberi pointed at the pictures of her communication display and her teacher wrote it down which was later recorded in the VOCA. Before recording, the teacher asked her if this is what she wanted to tell her peers. During Circle Time (exchange of messages) in the class Kaberi pressed each of the messages which were represented by pictures.

ACC MY BIG OPPORTUNETY IN MY LIFE.

Back in 1964 when I started school at Marathon special school in Melbourne Australia there wasn't anything like computers or any ACC devices all there was some typewriters that you had to fight with to get your school work done. I couldn't use head piece Because I didn't have the head control to use it. Over many years my OT or speechie would say I want you to try a head piece again and I would think to myself it wont work but I will give it a go. But it never worked.

In 1977 I attended a day center run by Scope and the handy man developed splint that went over my left foot and I gilded the spring to the letter I wanted. This was a Long slow process, but that meant I could communicate independently and I was thrilled with myself.

In 1981 I was doing a correspondents course through Box Hill Tafe and my teacher's was best friend was married to an electronics lecturer at Swinburne University and wanted to develop some technology that would help somebody with a disability improve their quality of live. The Swinburne communicate was born it was a box of lights by ten by ten and hooked a full sized printer which took up nearly half the room, it was huge. It I was so excited, I was expecting it would so easy but I so wrong I couldn't get a word typed until I remembered those sessions with the head piece and being told look at the letter you want and move the head piece to it I could never do it using a head piece but it did work when I am using scanning. I am the only person that teach myself to it nobody else could ever teach me.

I have left That big old printer behind me now I use a panasonic Tough book computer on my tray Of Wheelchair and it is terrific now Because I can do do so much like I can talk to people , send emails to people, and write anything I like, and access the web. And technology will only get better.

Using An ACC device requires you to have good technical support around you otherwise it very difficult Because of break downs. I use James Dean at Technical Solutions he is terrific Because he is really dedicated to people who use Acc devices. I really respect him.

The End
By Shane Kelly

”I'm fed up, I want to be listened to!”

Hello,

My name is Laetitia. I am 11 years old. I live in Sarcelles (near Paris). At school, there are many disabled children.

Do you know why people are born with disabilities?
Me, I drool, and I walk like a grandpa and grandma swinging a bit.

Mummy told me that at my birth, there was a big problem because I had a problem breathing.

You know people don’t understand disabled people when they speak, so we shout at them!

In fact, when we can’t speak, we speak with hands. It’s for this reason, that disabled persons can speak a little.

You know even when they can’t write with words, in my school, there are many children who speak with a speaking device.
In fact, we speak a lot with hands or mouth. When I was young there was a Chinese girl, Helena, in my school, who spoke with her feet. I wonder why people write with their feet and how Chinese people with disabilities speak in China?

But me, I can speak a little. I have a communication board with pictures and letters.

You know, Mummy she tells me that I made a lot of progress
.

Laetitia R.
Paris, France
September 2009

« J'EN AI ASSEZ, JE VEUX QU'ON M'ÉCOUTE »

Bonjour,

Je m'appelle Laetitia et j'ai 11 ans. J'habite à Sarcelles (près de Paris) et à l'école, il y a beaucoup d'enfants handicapés.

Vous savez pourquoi on naît handicapé ?
Moi je bave et je marche comme un Pépé et une Mémé, en me balançant.
Maman m'a dit qu'au début de ma naissance, il y avait un gros problème parce que, moi, je n'arrivais plus à respirer.

Vous savez, les handicapés même quand ils parlent, les gens ne les comprennent pas : alors nous, « on gueule » !!

En fait, quand on ne peut pas parler, on parle avec les mains, c'est pour ça que les handicapés peuvent un peu parler.

Vous savez même quand ils ne peuvent pas écrire des mots, dans mon école, il y a beaucoup d'enfants qui parlent avec une machine pour parler. En fait, on parle beaucoup avec les mains ou la bouche.

Quand j'étais petite, il y avait à l'école une fille chinoise, Hélèna, qui parlait avec les pieds. Moi, je me demande pourquoi on écrit avec les pieds et comment les personnes handicapées parlent en Chine?.

Mais, moi, je peux un peu parler. J'ai un code de communication avec des pictos et des lettres.

Vous savez Maman, elle me dit que j'ai fait beaucoup de progrès.

Laetitia R., 12 ans,
Septembre 2009

My Social Life

By Lateef McLeod

I have been using AAC devices to communicate since I was six years old in the first grade when I received a Touch Talker. Through my extensive education and charismatic personality that I was able to display with the use of AAC devices, I have built an extensive social network. The set of connections consists of many colleagues, friends, and family who I routinely interact with and are there to support me. This support enables me to lead a very dynamic life participating in a career, hobbies, and community service activities that sufficiently uses my time and skills. As a result, I am a prime candidate to receive the ISAAC Awareness Award. For my disability does not define the quality of my life, but rather it is my never-ending striving to have the life I think I deserve.

One place that I show my extensive communication skills is through my job for DynaVox Mayer-Johnson, where I work as a consumer consultant. For the main part of my job, I give presentations in front of groups of people, usually speech language pathologists, using my Vmax from DynaVox. The presentations usually cover different aspects of my life such as the other jobs that I do and the hobbies that I participate in. My audiences usually have questions asking me to demonstrate and explain how well I communicate with my Vmax. If there is time in the presentation I typically read some of my poetry stored in my Vmax. These readings are usually crowd pleasers. After I finish I make sure that I mention after I finished my poetry book A Declaration of a Body of Love is coming out in a few months.

At home I normally use the DynaWrite also from DynaVox to communicate. The device is used mostly to direct my personal care assistants through the process of my daily routine and activities. Thee device is utilized to communicate with my roommate, Fred, who I lived with for five years. I also bring my DynaWrite to appointments like when I go to the physical therapist or to the doctor's office or when I do errands like grocery shopping.

Sometimes when I go out to social outings with friends I use my Lightwriter once manufactured by Zygo Industries. It is light, compact, and portable so I can use it on my lap without my tray. I mostly use it while participating with power soccer practices and games because I cannot use my tray when I am playing soccer. I also use it when going to dance clubs where I socialize and dance with woman in places that can be confined. Displaying the Lightwriter with its LTD screen in front has been a good conversation starter with a few beautiful ladies.

In all three instances I have illustrated how I excel in socializing with people. I have a full life with professionally and socially and feel that I am fully integrated in society. If you pick me for the Awareness Award, I will be humbled and continue to promote AAC awareness.

My Life by Luo Yi Fan

问：你叫什么名字？你今年几岁了？

答：我叫罗异凡，今年12岁。

问：你家住在什么地方?

答：我家住在河南省洛阳市老城区中原菜市场，柳树街。

问：你有兄妹吗?

答：我有个妹妹叫罗诗佳，今年4岁了。

问：在交流中你的困难是什么?

答：我的困难是别人听不懂我说的话。

问：你是怎么和父母交流的?

答：我和妈妈说话的时候是通过先说话后指物，如果不确认再说几遍。

问：你是怎么和老师交流的?

答：我和老师说话的时候，老师看着我的口型，还有的时候是我用电脑打出来的。

问：你是怎么和朋友交流的?

答：我和朋友说话的时候是通过先说话，如果听不懂再看口型和指物。

问：你最喜欢的食品是什么?

答：我最喜欢吃我妈妈做的烧茄子，还有瓜果蔬菜。

问：你最喜欢的事情是什么?

答：我最喜欢打电脑和玩拼图，还有就是给我妹妹买东西。

问：你最喜欢的人是什么？

答：我最喜欢的人是我的家人还有老师。

问：你最幸福的事情是什么？

答：我最幸福的事情是我一家人带着我出去玩儿，我感到很幸福 。

问：你在康复中心每天都做什么？

答：我在康复中心上课学习一些基本知识，还有按摩、理疗、导推、语训。每天训练扶条床走，团团转，靠墙走，老师扶着我走路，四爬等。

问：你高兴回答这些问题吗？

答: 回答这些问题我很高兴。

问：为什么？

答：因为我想跟别人更好的交流。

问：你是通过什么途径回答这些问题的？

答：我是用电脑打出来的。

问：手机有助于你和别人的交往吗？

答：手机对我有用。

问：你是怎么使用它和别人交往的？

答：如果我生病了我会给妈妈打电话，让她来接我。还有我和别人说话别人听不懂，我可以用手机打字和他们交流。

问：除了这些问题之外，你还有什么别的想代表语言有障碍的人想表达？

答：我想代表说话有困难的人们，请大家耐心的听我们说话。还有我想找一个电脑芯片，如果我想喝水，它就会自动说出来。

“Silly Voices, Fun Voices”

By Pamela Kennedy

Have you ever thought about all of the different silly and fun voices there are in the world? Yes, there are boy voices, girl voices, man voices, woman voices and other voices too.

When my brother and I pretend we're firemen in the house, our Mom often says, “Please use your indoor voices.”

We whisper, “Sorry Mom.”

She shakes her head and smiles, “You are very silly.”

Captions by Pamela Kennedy
Photo from: http://staceylow13.blogspot.com/2008/03/firemen-to-rescue-1203.html
Accessed on: 12 June 2008 by Pamela Kennedy.

Mom laughs when we use our “robot” voices outside.

Yesterday, I walked over to her and said, “Hello Mom.
I’m Zargon, a robot from Mars. How can I help you today?”

Captions by Pamela Kennedy
Photo from: http://www.photobasement.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/02/robotchild.jpg
Accessed on: 12 June 2008 by Pamela Kennedy.

She laughed, “Zargon, please use your outdoor voice and roll in the grass with me!” We had a lot of fun!

Captions by Pamela Kennedy
Photo from: http://brucemontgomery.com/images/2007%2011%2011%20145.JPG
Accessed on: 12 June 2008 by Pamela Kennedy.

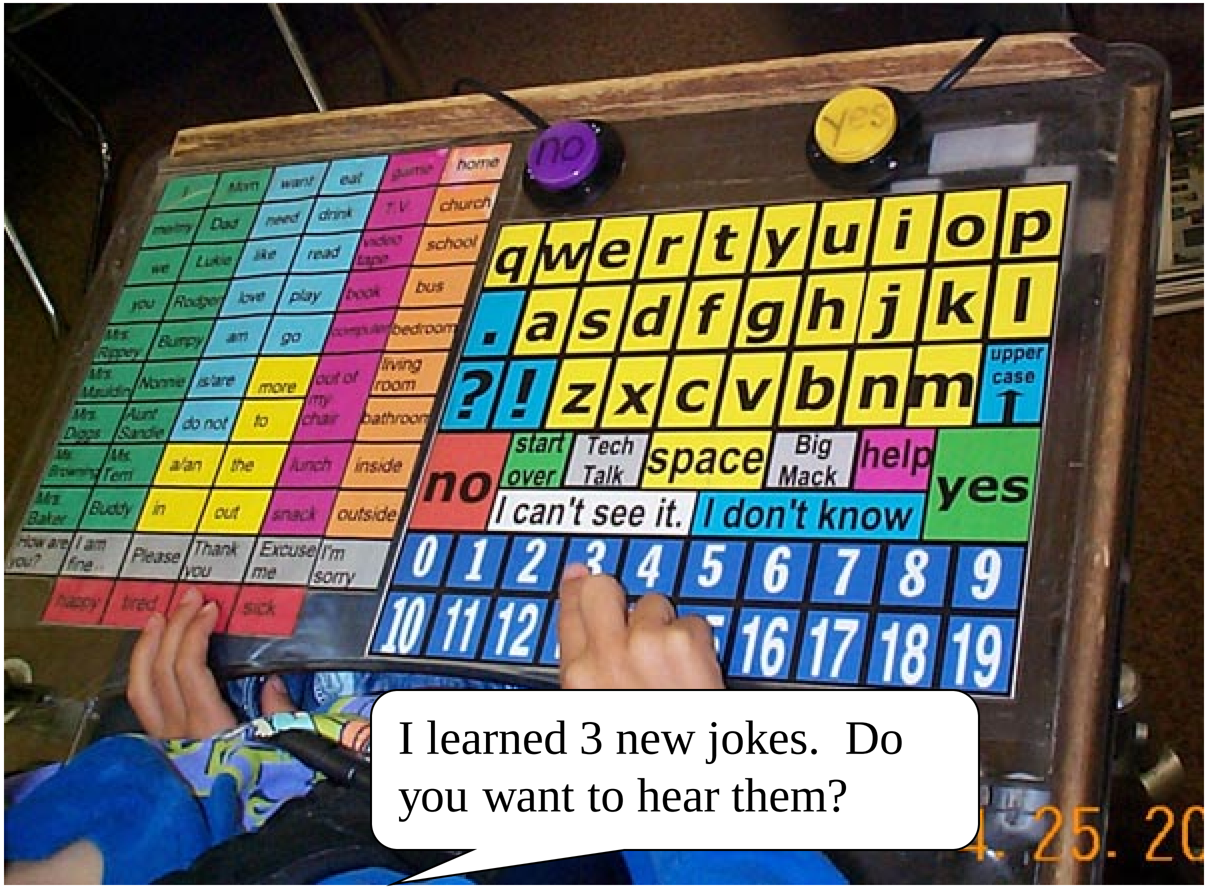
To understand what my dog and cat say to me, I need to watch them carefully and be patient. If Mac barks and sits by the door, he's saying, "I want to go outside." When he sits next to me and puts his paw in my lap, he's saying, "I'm lonely. Please touch me."

Captions by Pamela Kennedy
Photo from: http://www.barkbusters.ca/trainers-winnipegsw.html
Accessed on: 12 June 2008 by Pamela Kennedy.

My cat, Shadow, says the same things in different ways. To tell me she wants me to open the door, she meows and scratches at the door. If she's lonely, she sits in my lap. I know she's happy when she purrs and licks my hand with her tongue. What a silly cat!

Captions by Pamela Kennedy
Photo from: http://www.inspirationline.com/EZINE/26NOV2007.htm
Accessed on: 12 June 2008 by Pamela Kennedy.

My friends and I have different ways of communicating too. We're a little slower. But, it takes time to make others smile!



Captions by Pamela Kennedy
Photo from: http://education.gsu.edu/PhysicalDis/AT/index.htm
Accessed on: 12 June 2008 by Pamela Kennedy.

Charlie uses his eyes and the look on his face to talk. We like to chat about food and soccer. Like you and me, he smiles when he’s happy and frowns when he’s sad.

I need to ask him questions so he can answer “Yes” or “No.” To say “Yes,” he looks at the ceiling. To say “No,” he looks down.

So I’m sure I understood what he said, I repeat what he told me. When he doesn’t want to talk anymore, he looks away and closes his eyes.

Last Monday, I asked him, “Did you go to the parade this weekend?” When he looked down, I replied, “You didn’t go to the parade. Right?” He looked at me and grinned. I said, “Okay. You went to the soccer game. Right?” He giggled.

Captions by Pamela Kennedy
Photo from: http://www.interface-sa.org.za/news.html
Accessed on: 12 June 2008 by Pamela Kennedy.

My friend Natalie's silly too! She tells jokes by touching pictures and words in her book and making signs with her hands. The teacher understands her signs. But she communicates with me by using her book. I always repeat the name of the picture she touches, so she knows I understand what she says.

I’m having so much fun! I can talk and ride bike at the same time! Wow!

Captions by Pamela Kennedy
Photo from: http://www.starprogram.state.mn.us/matln_website/matln.html
Accessed on: 12 June 2008 by Pamela Kennedy.

I also have a fun and silly way of talking. I use a special device with pictures and words on it. It’s kind of like Natalie’s. But, it has voices that people can hear, even a real robot voice!

Everyone talks in his or her own way! One thing is for sure! We’re all funny and silly!

Notes from the Author

- Augmentative and Alternative Communication, advocacy and writing are my passions! I'm an AAC-RERC Writers Brigade Participant and USSAC's Co-Vice President of People Who Use Augmentative and Alternative Communication.

- Although I've had cerebral palsy and complex communication needs all my life, I just acquired a speech-generating device, (the DynaVox Vmax,) six months ago. Explaining the change in my modality to my nieces, nephews and children in my neighbourhood was a challenge because my AAC seemed like tabletPC to them. "Silly Voices, Fun Voices » is endeavour to introduce different modalities of AAC to young minds by using humour and concepts they already know. To illustrate the story, I found royalty free photos on the internet related to the content and placed captions in bubbles. To appeal to a broad audience, the narrator doesn't reveal his/her name or gender; and, individuals in the photos are culturally diverse.

Pamela Kennedy

Honneur et loyauté

Heureusement dans ce monde fait de « blé » et de politique il y a des hommes d'honneur et de loyauté

Comme Martin Luther king qui n'avait pas peur de parler du gros défaut des États-Unis

Comme sa protégée Rosa qui s'est faite tuer parce qu'elle voulait une place dans un bus !

Moi je dis qu'elle est morte au combat.

Le 20 janvier 2009 le rêve de Martin Luther king se réalise Barack Obama entre à la Maison Blanche pour faire oublier Georges Busch.

Heureusement dans ce monde fait de « blé » et de politique il y a des hommes d'honneur et de loyauté

Comment   oublier ces types qui se sont battus pour leurs pays, pour leurs nations

Moi je dis que ça vaut vachement la médaille d'honneur

et l' appel de De Gaulle un appel qui dit non à la guerre

Heureusement dans ce monde fait de « blé » et de politique il y a des hommes d'honneur et de loyauté

Ces hommes étaient des combattants dans leur vie mais des combattants d'honneur et de loyauté

Texte de rap écrit par Pierre Chevaillier .

Fulfilment

One morning, the air was filled with the fragrance of white ‘sheuli’ flowers and ‘kash’, the cream coloured bushy plant that heralds the coming of Durga, the Mother Goddess, and the drumbeats of drums were welcoming Her. The world was brimming with joy. Everyone was in a festive mood.

Mita and her parents also were a part of this and were visiting puja pandals one after another and praying to ‘Ma Durga” for all her choicest blessings.

On their way home they met Mr. Ghosh, Mita’s father’s colleague. His face was strangely grim and sad. He had had some very bad news – the jute mill where he and Mita’s father worked together had suddenly shut down owing to an indefinitely long strike.

It was as if lightening had struck Mita’s family. In a flash, all their joy and festive spirits vanished. Mita’s mother could not hold back her tears. The teardrops just poured down her cheeks as she turned to her husband and asked “How will we overcome this crisis?”

Mita’s marriage had just been arranged with a very suitable young man. But how could her parents begin to worry about incurring the huge expenses of their daughter’s dowry and the wedding when they were now not even sure how the family of four would survive without her father’s income. It was a terrible dilemma.

Mita uttered not a single word but only kept hoping and praying that God would lead them out of these dark days. In her heart she kept asking Goddess Durga how she could be so unkind to her and her poor family.

During these hard times, one Sunday morning Mita was, as usual, going through the newspaper when an advertisement in the matrimonial column caught her eye. This is what was stated ‘Man aged 40, a widower with two children, is looking for a life partner with no demands for any dowry’.

Mita felt her ardent prayer had just been answered. Though her parents were mentally unprepared to settle for such a match for their young daughter, Mita gave the offer serious consideration. She felt it was now the only option left which would save her family all the financial consequences and social embarrassments.

Mita went ahead with her resolve to meet the widower and committed to marry him without trying to get to know him any better. The kind gentleman immediately offered Mita’s brother a job which was a boon she had not hoped for or expected! She thanked God sincerely with all her heart for solving all her family’s problems so conveniently.

Soon Mita’s family finances stabilized with her brother’s steady income. Mita’s wedding took place. But no one was blind to the heavy price that had been paid in order to procure the family’s welfare. One day Mita’s father asked her a strange question. How had she had the courage to give up her young suitor and decide to marry someone with two children - a man who she had met only once in her entire life? How could she bring herself to make such a life changing sacrifice?

Mita’s answer was soul stirring. She said that in a country like India, sacrifice was a reality that could not be avoided. She had realized that for a girl from a poor family like hers dreams could never come true. However, the sense of fulfillment lay in the fact that her sacrifice had helped save two families and that was the biggest reward she could ever expect in her whole life.

Putul Biswas

Putul Biswas, 41 years, uses an alphabet board. Her facilitators, all familiar communication partners write for her. As each sentence is composed, the partner reads it out to her. She attends the services of IICP's Adult Day Centre.

I Can Dance !!!

Me dance?
Me?
Who, me?
Yes…
Freely, whirling, with grace

And a teacher too
Teacher of life
Teacher of joy
Spreading laughter in the midst of
Bombs clashing and words which strike us.
Advocate of strong will and continued hope.

I am a voice
Sometimes fun, silly
Sometimes certain, firm
Working for justice
Working for peace

A strong spirit, a woman of faith.
I live my faith
I dance it.
And I dance…

I dance for joy in life's gifts
I dance in sorrow for friends lost

I am a friend
The bonds I make are rooted
Deep within.
These bonds weaving a web,
A network
A heart network.
I am a connector
Bringing people together
Bringing people to encounter
A way of just being
People transforming
Ideas
Bodies
Hearts
When I dance
Yes
I dance

By: Rebecca Beayni (as recorded by Anna Mongillo)

Gabloo Zamindar (A landowner named Gabloo)

There was once a village boy. His name was Gabloo. He had two younger brothers who were very very naughty. But Gabloo was a good boy and a bright student. Believe it or not, Gabloo had a very, very special pet – an elephant! The elephant was called Raja and you can well imagine how terribly proud and fond Gabloo was of him!

Once Gabloo grew up he used to often go for long rides on Raja's back. One rainy day, while returning from the dense jungle, Gabloo saw that the local Zamindar (landowner) had fallen off his horse into a deep pit.

Ever happy to be of help to one and all, Gabloo rushed to rescue the Zamindar immediately. He and his elephant managed to lift the unconscious man from the deep well. When he recovered, the zamindar was most grateful and he offered his beautiful daughter to Gabloo in marriage. After the old Zamindar died some year later, Gabloo became the Zamindar of his village and the elephant, Raja became his favourite minister! They looked after their village very well indeed!

Saikat Mitra
D.O.B: 24.10.93
Age:15+

To communicate, Saikat uses a few gestures (e.g. elephant) and alphabet board. He also uses speech but it is slurred and is difficult for a person who is not familiar with him to understand. Saikat pointed at the letters in Bengali and teacher wrote the words. After each sentence was constructed the teacher read out the sentence to him for change or confirmation.

My Durga Puja Days

Durga Puja in Bengal is so special! I cannot begin to describe the pomp and show! All I can do is tell you about how I enjoy this fantastic festival.

Everyday my Baba, Ma, my sister and I go out together to see the gorgeous ‘Pratimas’ all over Kolkata. For these occasions we wear our new outfits. My sister makes a special effort to dress me beautifully with clips and ear rings to match my colourful clothes. I like the ‘bindis’ (dots worn on the forehead) the best!

During the festival we often eat out in various hotels and snack-bars which serve delicious food from all parts of India as well as the world. There is chow from China, momos from Tibet and pizza from Italy. We also find tasty chops and cutlets, freshly made Indian sweets and snacks in the stalls around the famous puja pandals.

The pandals are so full of intricate details and of such a wide variety that we are all stunned and speechless! When we recover, we cannot stop talking about them for many, many days to come!

My Durga Puja days pass like an extremely beautiful and exciting dream that lingers on and on….

Sayari Sarkar
D.O.B: 25.08.94
Age: 15+

Sayari uses a multi-page picture communication display and gestures to communicate. She pointed to each picture word with her right hand index finger and the teacher wrote it for her. After construction of each sentence it was read out to her to change or confirm.

WHAT AUTISM IS

By: Shannon Barnes

Autism is the reason i do not process or use information the same as others do.

Autism is the reason my sensory systems are very sensitive and cross-wired.....this being, my hearing, touch, vision, taste, and smell.

Autism is the reason why I have trouble relating to people, making friends, ect.

Autism is why I have trouble communicating smooth and easy without the aide of a computer.

Autism is why I can say words, but not always communicate

Autism is what makes me able to fling myself on the floor kicking and screaming, having a "class A" tantrum even when I am 36 years old.

Autism is why taking in simple daily life things can cause me to stress out and overload.

Autism is how I am so good at and enjoy doing repetitive tasks and behaviors.

Autism is what makes me stimulate, relax, focus, and pleasure from rocking, flapping, making vocal sounds, rubbing, bouncing, and repeating or listening to things over and over.

Autism is why I am really good at certain things but not others.

Autism is what makes me like a young child with child interests, manners, and expressions. But at the same time I possess great knowledge, special gifts, skills and wisdom.

Autism is the reason I have special gifts that most normals dont have.

Autism is why I can't make eye contact, or remember who people are, or even control my own facial expressions and movements.

Autism is why I still need a constant security object...always an unusual object that I am attached to and need with me at all times.

Autism is why I naturally put my fingers and other objects in my mouth for various reasons from sensory input, to comfort needs.

Autism is why I explore the world and things around me in unique ways compared to most people.

Autism is why I take in feelings of others, and how I express my feelings and emotions different then the normals do.

Autism is what causes me to scream and cry when I have had "too much"

Autism is why I find most physical contact overwhelming and some even painful....but a very light, gentle touch or rub, I find extreme pleasure and calmness in.

Autism is the reason the things I like to do, eat, see, how I talk and act....all might seem different or even weird to you.

Autism is many things, it is very complex

Autism makes me stand out to some, autism makes me different from the rest.

Autism is not "normal" you say ? , it is to me. but what is normal? and who's to say what is and isn't normal.

Autism is me, it is special and unique

Autism is awesome.

I am unique and awesome. Autistic and PROUD !

The Cactus Flower

There was a cactus plant in Charulata's courtyard. On 25th December she saw an orange flower on it. This plant was planted by her son Jishu. His birthday was on 25th December. Charulata named him Jishu, after Jesus. Jishu was a beautiful gift from God. He was not only Charulata's 'sun and moon', but her entire universe! Jishu's father was a very busy businessman. At home Jishu kept himself busy - watching TV and reading newspapers, especially political news.

Jishu was a calm and attractive child. He was loved by all. When he started school, all day Charulata eagerly awaited his return. She kept sweets and snacks ready – Rasogulla and sandesh (Bengali sweets) and other food good for his health. She taught him Bengali songs composed by Rabindranath Tagore, a famous poet and composer. When mother and son sang together they created immortal music. As Jishu grew older he started writing poems inspired by nature and his mother. He used to say, "God is truly great, He has made such a beautiful world and given me a mother like you!"

Jishu wanted to be a computer engineer. With this goal, he started attending college. After coming back from college, Jishu and his mother used to sit together with evening snacks and tea. During this time Jishu talked about his college friends. Charulata used to take a lot of interest in those anecdotes. Once Jishu went for a picnic and he brought a turquise blue bangle for his mother. Charulata was so excited that she showed the bangle to each of her friends.

One day when Jishu came from his college he told his mother that he had got a scholarship and he would like to go to the USA for higher studies. Charulata was very sad but seeing her son's excitement, she immersed herself in his joy. Jishu started making arrangements for his passport and visa.

It was around the time of the first monsoon showers. Returning home from college, Jishu asked his mother to make pakoras (a dry snack) along with tea. Jishu looked forward with a feeling of pleasure to the snacks and gossip with his mother.

Outside there was a gale blowing. There was tremendous lightening in the sky. It was as if, Mother Nature was wielding swords of lightening swords. Jishu was leaning on the railing. Suddenly lightening struck. There was a scream and then complete silence.

Charulata was shocked and panic gripped her. The plate full of onion pakoras crashed down. She rushed towards the balcony. Astonished and panic-stricken, she did not find Jishu in the balcony. Mad with fear, she looked for him throughout the house. Suddenly she heard cries of horror coming from the ground floor. She looked down from the balcony. Jishu was lying face down surrounded by a crowd of shocked neighbours.

With panic, fear but also hope, she ran down. She found him unconscious and still. Charulata took Jishu in her lap. She called out his name again and again but received no response. Jishu was dead. Her world was ruined. Her life was meaningless now.

Charulata often makes onion pakoras towards the evening and holds the plate in front of a portrait of Jishu. She imagines Jishu will come out of the picture frame, eat his favourite snacks and they will chat once again.

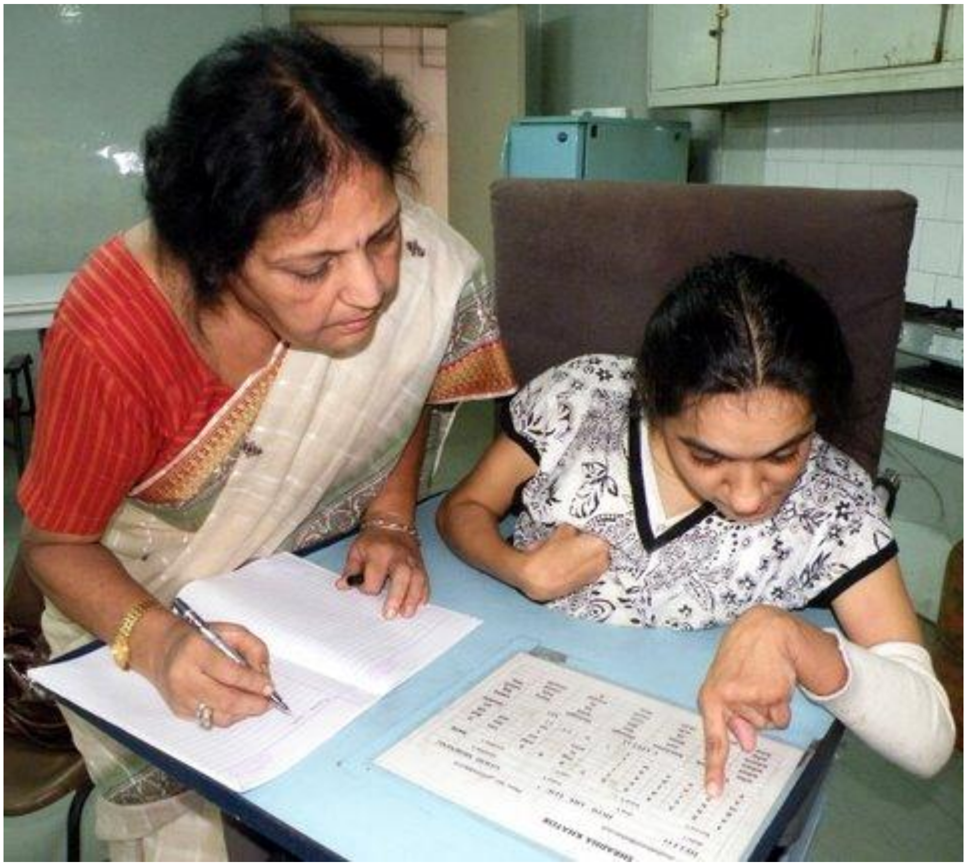
When Charulata saw the orange cactus flower this morning, she felt as if her son has come to meet her. The cactus plant had been planted by Jishu on his birthday. However, soon she realized that after a few days the flower would fall and merge with the dust. Just the way Jishu did. The scene of her son's death frequently haunts Charulata. It has left an indelible scar in her mind and heart.

One day, a neighbour brought Charulata to my house. I communicated with her through my alphabet board and told her how happy I was to meet her. Charulata asked me, "When is your birthday?" I replied, "15th December". She gave a smile. She said, "My Jishu's birthday was also in December, 25th of December". I introduced myself, "My name is Shradha Khator. I like to 'write' short stories but unfortunately I cannot write with my own hands. Will you be my writer?" I wondered if she would agree to help me. After a few seconds she said, "Yes". Now, when I want to write a story I call her and she comes over. She chats with me and is very happy to be with me. Sometimes, she even sings Rabindra Sangeet on my request. I feel very glad and happy when I see her smile.

I use a wheelchair and I cannot go the temple. However, when Charulata smiles in my company, I feel I have worshipped God. It is as if I have offered a flower at God's feet. It is very beautiful to see someone smile. It is even more beautiful to be the reason behind that smile.

Shradha Khator

Shradha Khator, 32 years, uses an alphabet board. Her facilitators, all familiar communication partners write for her. As each sentence is composed, the partner reads it out to her. She attends the services of IICP's Adult Day Centre.



Shubojeet overcomes a barrier

My name is Shubhojeet Sen. I am 19 years old. I “speak” through a communication board. My studies and exams pose a big problem. Initially, many people thought that I was not a fit candidate for giving exams. Then Mrs. Kaul and my teachers took a very firm and positive stand. But even after getting their support I still had a problem sitting for the exams as we were unable to find a suitable writer who would understand my method of communication. Later, with the persistence and help of my teachers, I did find a writer who was helpful and capable.

On 6th, October 2008, for the first time in my life, I appeared for a Board examination in Bengali. I am happy and proud to say that I passed the examination!

After the first effort, I have gained a lot of confidence. Now I believe I can pass all my subjects, one at a time and with Gods grace and my teacher’s help, I hope to find a competent writer for each exam!

Shubhojeet Sen
D.O.B: 30.07.90
Age:18+

Ma vie

Je m'appelle Sofia. J'ai 15 ans. Je suis handicapée moteur.

J'ai besoin d'une synthèse pour parler sinon les gens ne me comprennent pas. Je vais en acheter une, je vais l’avoir dans un mois.

Je tape avec mes doigts sur des lettres pour faire un mot. Si les gens ne me comprennent pas, je fais un autre mot. Depuis 3 ans, je sais bien écrire des phrases. Avant, j’avais une grille avec des lettres et un cahier de pictogrammes.

Je préfère la synthèse vocale parce que c’est plus pratique pour moi pour communiquer avec les gens de l’école, et mes amis de la maison.

Quand il pleut, je ne peux pas emmener ma synthèse, j’utilise ma grille de lettres. Avec mes amis, des fois, ma sœur parle pour moi, elle comprend quand j’écris un mot sur la grille de lettres.

C’est important d’essayer de communiquer avec les gens de dehors, les amis. Si vous commencez à parler, c’est bien !

Sofia B., 15 ans

Paris, FRANCE

Durga Puja

I have two new dresses for the Puja. Ma (mother) has bought them for me. I will go out with my Ma and Baba (Father) in a car. I will have lots of fun.

Somarathi Chakraborty
D.O.B: 23.03.96
Age: 13+

Somarathi uses a picture communication display with 4 pictures to a page. She also uses Kathamala a Voice Output Communication Aid and a few gestures. Somarathi pointed at the pictures of her communication display and teacher wrote it down which was later recorded in the VOCA. Before recording the text, the teacher asked her if this is what she wanted to tell her peers. During Circle Time (exchange of messages) in the class, Somarathi pressed each of the messages which were represented by pictures.

In the land of happiness

Long long ago there lived a king and a queen in the land of happiness, 'Sukhinagar'. They lived in great bliss with their son, Arup and daughter, Priya. King Manik and Queen Heera were very kind, just and generous to all their subjects. In their kingdom everybody was very happy. The king used to be upset when his subjects were even the least bit sad and took immediate measures to solve all their problems. Time passed without any trouble for many, many years.

Then one day, another king started visiting Sukhinagar. He was a wicked king. He started to give bad ideas to the king of Sukhinagar. When the queen came to know about this, she wanted to find a way so that the two kings did not become friends.

Arup and Priya and Queen Heera started to formulate a plan. They thought and thought till they had a wonderful idea! King Manik invited the wicked king to his durbar (court). He was given a royal reception. The wicked king was greeted with flowers and with honour and even given a royal treat. Finally it was time to leave. King Manik called for his minister to speak on this beautiful occasion. The Minister, after thanking everyone, started to recite a magic Mantra (spell) and to everyone's astonishment the wicked king gradually became smaller and smaller and then was trapped inside a balloon! The balloon began to fly high up in the sky and floated away further and further, never to return!

The country thus got rid of the wicked king and everybody was happy again. Never since has anybody tried to do Sukhinagar any harm and it has remained a land of happiness, forever more.

Sudip Dutta
D.O.B: 22. 07.95
Age: 14+

Sudip uses a communication display which has few words with pictures and all the letters of the Bengali alphabet. Sudip pointed at the letters to form a word and the teacher wrote it for him. After construction of each sentence the text was read out to him. After 3-4 sentences, it was read out to him again and he had the choice of continuing with the sequence or modify the text. Sudip was also given a few key words to help him develop the story.

(see photo below)

My Durga Puja Holiday

My mother has bought me a new dress for the Puja. During the holidays I will see lots of Durga Pratimas (images made of clay). I will offer my prayer to the Goddess. I will listen to music on the cassette player.

Sushmita Ghosh
D.O.B: 10.05.95
Age: 14+

Sushmita uses a picture communication display. She also uses Kathamala (Voice out put device) and few gestures e.g., mother, father. Sushmita pointed to the pictures on her communication display and teacher wrote it down which was later recorded in the VOCA. Before recording the teacher asked her if this is what she wanted to tell her peers. During Circle Time (exchange of messages) in the class Sushmita pressed each of the messages which were represented by pictures.

INTRODUCTION:

Todd was thought to be seriously retarded throughout his school years and well into adulthood. Good things mushroomed at age 39 when he began communicating in earnest with his mom. He is now a happy camper since he is working on a real high school diploma and college courses are within sight.

(see p.2)

FRUSTRATION GALORE

by Todd Washburne

I am an adult with autism and was unable to communicate until I began using facilitated communication with my mom. We took off big time almost four years ago and I developed writing skills relatively quickly. I am able to take pride in my accomplishments and I am so glad that people can't underestimate me any more. My mother has helped me to do this.

I am feeling angry that for much of my life everyone assumed I was retarded. I was simply unable to talk and I didn't show them my true intelligence. I was doomed to a life of silence and aloneness because of this deadly combination until fc finally came into my life. This didn't happen until well into my adulthood and I have definitely improved my life.

I had become a massive game of catch-up. This was tremendously difficult because of the many years of bad habits that were ingrained within my soul. I was going to give it my all because it was not in me to just do it naturally. I tried not to fight the pushing of others who were trying to help me to reach some of my goals. The best thing in my favor has been having a mom who is like a bulldog; she has given me countless hours of her dedicated service despite having to give up much of her retirement way of life in order for me to make progress. I am in a better place today because of her efforts since the system has been unbelievably reluctant to become the helpers they should have been.

The system wasted more of my time by not listening to my mom or me. Recently, it became necessary to switch to a new agency in order to get any kind of stability in my program. I am happy to report that the new agency is going great guns and I now have the basic service I deserve. We now have a good team working on my catch up game. I can now concentrate on becoming the person I want to become. It is a great feeling to be treated like the intelligent person I am and not be underestimated any more.

Working Out

When I first started to working out at the gym with a personal trainer. I couldn't do hardly anything. People had tied my arm into the gym equipment because I didn't know how to grab things with my hands. I had to retrain my mind to train my body to work out correctly. It was hard at first and it is still hard. I had never learned to take everything really slow to get in shape. My trainer really helps me to figure out how to work with my disability to get a normal routine at the gym. It is tons of work to my mind set on working out with a disability.

I wanted to get my body into shape because I wanted to feel better about my body. I was turning 30 and I could feel my body getting sorer over time. I didn't know how to make my soreness go away. I went different therapists and they couldn't figure out my pain. The therapists said it is my Cerebral Palsy is giving you trouble with your age. I was really worried about my well being because I really felt like an old man.

When I started to work out, I had no idea where it was going to take me. I just wanted to get bigger and look I had mussels but I didn't have a clue how hard would I work. The trainer who I had hired to train me, he really pushes me to the limit of breaking. My trainer really did show me, it is the little things what really does matter. He used to have me sit in a raigur chair for an hour to work on sitting because I wasn't sitting up right in my wheelchair. I had to sit with four-pound weights on my arms. It was a total work out; just having to sit up right a chair was totally hard! I was learning to do really small thing will help me to lead up to better stuff.

When we started working standing, I thought this dude was totally crazy! We have been working with each other for over a year. He knew how to work with my body and he knew what I was capability of. My trainer wanted me to hold a bar with using my hands to hold myself up. It was very hard and I couldn't do it at first. I was working my entire body. I got to where I could walk to side to side with my trainer coaching me. He was coaching me how to hold my own body up. I felt great

I was learning how to take care of myself, finely. I learned by having a trainer at the gym, how keep myself in sharp. Working out at the gym will be always a need. I am realizing people with disabilities really need to stay fit for life. I really need to stay fit for life because I want to have my independents to help those people are going to help me. I want to stay healthily for my friends, and my family and my children.

Author: Tyson Renze

Author: Valeria Gervasini

Body signals: a way to achieve communication

The story written last year, titled "The voice of the glance" is the fruit of my great desire to communicate and tell my story. It wasn't easy because my thoughts, especially when the topic is emotionally difficult, become distorted, and I feel them chase each other, and I cannot sort them out in an orderly fashion.

When this happens, my mother steps in and helps me to proceed methodically.

Regarding the writing of my story, this is how we proceeded:

First we put on paper all the thoughts that crowded my mind. Then we set them in time and organized them grammatically and syntactically.

All this preliminary work allowed me to remember and peacefully reflect upon the experiences and put them on paper more convincingly, driving away the doubts that kept arising in my mind.

Furthermore, my story allowed me to grow stronger as a person, at a time in which my work environment fostered the view of a person who had reached the pinnacle of her achievement and who should settle for what had been proposed for her.

I always felt I was a lively person. When I was little I would, through vocalizations, glances and smiles, draw the attention of all around me to obtain what I desired.

I remember the first time I got a doll by staring at it on a shelf, during a rehabilitation session. It was a cause for celebration for all who were present: "Hurray, Valeria found a way to ask for a doll."

"How did she do that? It's not possible," others said.

"She stared at the shelf, vocalizing, and when I gave her the doll, she smiled," replied the physiotherapist.

Since then there have been a series of more and more precise discoveries in communication.

The glance is the starting point

- Looking up during moments of reflections
- Nodding or shaking my head to agree or disagree
- Smiling to acknowledge recognition of persons or things or
- Smiling as an expression of happiness and well-being
- Squealing in delight when entering the water in my swim ring
- The total rigidity of my body, announcing a state of tension or pain
- Body spasms indicating joy at seeing someone or at the attempt, for example, of getting out of the wheelchair by myself. One of these days, I'm likely to take a tumble and hurt myself.

- The total relaxation of my body, when spending time with a group of people, listening to their stories
- The perplexed glance in seeing people who are surprised that I communicate with the board
- Smiling broadly, upon discovering people who appreciate my mode of communication
- The rigidity of my body, as a reaction to people's indifference
- The lack of physical reaction when I feel misunderstood, undervalued

5

There are dozens of expressions that I am able to utilize to communicate with others. But are others able to interpret my signals?

I wonder what would've become of me had I not had around me all these years, but especially in the first years of my life, people who were able to value my way of communicating, to the point of fighting alongside me in order for me to have an instrument that would leave no doubt as to my intention.

My mother explained to me that all these expressions are part of a code that each person expresses in the first years of life. I kept these expressions, while also acquiring the alphabetic code that allows me the opportunity to enter into a relationship with all those who desire to know me and are patient enough to let me build sentences.

I know I am slow, but then I say, "you try writing everything letter for letter!"

Sometimes, in order to be faster, I write in a succinct manner or through "key" words. For those who don't know me or for those who know the pathology but not the person, this is evidence that I don't know how to express concepts, desires, notions, and therefore, that I'm not intelligent.

In the last few years, I have added to my written and physical communication another mode of expression: I use color (painting is a word I still won't use). I like very much to use color, and I do so following the instruction of an art teacher who has devised for me, without requiring any type of movement, instruments and positions that allow me to use colors in a personal way.

I hope that this description of my diverse modes of communication, along with its accompanying video, may be of help to those who find themselves living with others who cannot comunicate verbally.

For me, learning to communicate has been the greatest joy.

3 Ottobre 2009
Milan, Itally

Relazione
Valeria Gervasini – Milano (Italy)

"I segnali del corpo: un modo per raggiungere la comunicazione"

Il racconto scritto lo scorso anno e intitolato "La voce dello sguardo" è il frutto del mio grande desiderio di comunicare e di raccontarmi. Non è stato semplice perché il mio pensiero, soprattutto, quando il tema da affrontare è difficile da un punto di vista emotivo, diventa distorto, sento i miei pensieri che si rincorrono ed io non riesco a fissarli con ordine.

Quando questo accade, entra in scena la mamma e mi aiuta a procedere con metodo.

Per quanto riguarda la scrittura del mio racconto abbiamo proceduto come segue:

Prima abbiamo fissato sulla carta tutti i pensieri che affollavano la mia mente. Poi li abbiamo collocati nel tempo e infine li abbiamo organizzati sotto il profilo grammaticale e di sintassi.

Tutto questo lavoro preliminare mi ha consentito di ricordare, trattenere con serenità le esperienze fatte e metterle sulla carta con maggiore convinzione, allontanando i dubbi che man mano si affollavano nella mia mente.

Il mio racconto, inoltre, mi ha consentito di rafforzarmi come persona, in un momento in cui l'ambiente di lavoro (centro diurno), sembrava volermi rimandare solo l'immagine di una persona giunta al massimo delle sue possibilità per cui si doveva accontentare di ciò che le era proposto.

Io mi sono sempre sentita una persona vitale. Fin da piccola richiamavo, attraverso vocalizzi, sguardi, sorrisi, l'attenzione di tutti quelli che mi stavano intorno per ottenere ciò che desideravo.

Ricordo la prima volta in cui ottenni una bambola guardando insistentemente su di una mensola, durante una seduta di riabilitazione. Per tutti i presenti fu una festa: "Evviva, Valeria ha trovato il modo per chiedere la bambola".

"Come ha fatto non è possibile" chiesero altri"

"Ha guardato con insistenza sullo scaffale, vocalizzando e quando le ho dato, la bambola ha sorriso."
Rispose la fisioterapista.

Da quel momento è stata una successione di scoperte comunicazionali sempre più precise.

Lo sguardo è il punto iniziale

- Lo sguardo rivolto verso l'alto nei momenti di riflessione

- I movimenti del capo per dare assenso o negare una proposta.

- Il sorriso la conferma di riconoscere persone o cose o

- Il sorriso come espressione di felicità e di benessere

- Le urla di felicità quando entro in acqua con il salvagente

- La rigidità estesa del mio corpo denuncia uno stato di tensione o di dolore.

- L'eccitazione motoria del corpo evidenzia la gioia di incontrare qualcuno o il tentativo, per esempio di scendere da sola dalla carrozzina. Un giorno o l'altro farò uno di quei capitomboli e mi farò male perché non tengo conto che chi mi sta aiutando in quel momento potrebbe farmi scivolare.

- Il rilassamento del corpo quando mi trovo in un gruppo di persone ad ascoltare ciò che raccontano.
- Lo sguardo perplesso nel vedere le persone che si sorprendono nel vedermi comunicare con la lavagnetta.

- Sorriso aperto quando mi accorgo che la gente apprezza il mio modo di comunicare.

- Il corpo che s'irrigidisce quando noto l'indifferenza delle persone.

- Il corpo senza reazioni quando mi sento non compresa, sottovalutata.

Sono decine le espressioni che sono in grado di utilizzare per comunicare con gli altri. Ma gli altri sono altrettanto
capaci di riconoscere i miei segnali?

Io mi chiedo cosa sarei stata se non avessi avuto accanto a me in tutti questi anni, ma soprattutto nei
primi anni di vita, persone che hanno saputo valorizzare il mio modo di comunicare fino a lottare con me per avere uno strumento che non lasci dubbi sulla qualità del mio pensiero.

Mia madre mi spiega che tutte queste mie espressioni fanno parte di un codice che ogni persona esprime
nei primi anni di vita. Io li ho mantenuti acquisendo anche il codice alfabetico che mi consente di rapportarmi con tutti quelli che hanno desiderio di conoscermi e la pazienza di vedermi costruire le frasi.

Io lo so di essere lenta ma ogni tanto dico: “Provate voi a scrivere lettera per lettera un concetto.”

A volte per essere più veloce scrivo in modo sintetico o per parole “chiave”, ma questo risulta essere, per chi non mi conosce o per chi crede di conoscere troppo la patologia e non la persona, la dimostrazione che io non so esprimere concetti, desideri, nozioni e quindi non sono intelligente.

Negli ultimi anni ho aggiunto alla comunicazione scritta e del corpo un altro modo di esprimermi: uso il colore (dipingere è un termine che non posso ancora usare). Mi piace molto usare il colore e lo faccio seguendo i consigli di un maestro d’arte che ha architettato per me, che non coordino nessun tipo di movimento, strumenti e posizioni che mi consentono di usare i colori in modo personale.

Io spero che questo mio contributo cui allego un video che documenta i miei diversi modi di comunicare
possa essere d’aiuto a chiunque si trovi a vivere con persone che non hanno la possibilità di esprimersi verbalmente.

Per me imparare a comunicare è stata la gioia più grande.

Ottobre 2009
Milan, Italy

The Phillies Save the Day

by Heath Goldberg, Jake Grunning, Caroline Lanctot, Jacqualinn Wharton with support from Mrs. Ferber, Mrs. Enders, and Mrs. Cook

One morning on Monday, January third, Rachel and Mom went to Uno's. They hoped to get pancakes and croissants for breakfast. Mom wore sweatpants. She was so excited to have breakfast with Rachel that she started skipping. Of course, Rachel had her pink DynaVox VMax with her so they could talk! Mom and Rachel went into Uno's and found a table. The waiter came and said, "What can I get for you?" Mom asked him, "Do you have pancakes and croissants?" He asked mom to choose something different because there were no more pancakes and croissants. He said a hungry boy named Heath ordered ALL the pancakes and croissants using his DynaVox. None were left. Mom and Rachel were so angry that they charged through the hallway and out of Uno's without eating anything! They couldn't believe that bad guy Heath ate ALL their food! He must have eaten a mountain of pancakes and croissants! Next, they went to the bakery near the airport. When they asked the clerk if he could feed them, he said, "No! We sold all our food to a boy named Heath who ate the food with his mouth!" Rachel and Mom bounced because they were so hungry. "What should we do?" asked Rachel. The clerk said, "Listen. If you want to eat, you're going to have to cook it yourself. We're closing!" Rachel said, "Big gas giant!" Mom said, "You're right. He is a big giant man who's full of gas! What a mess! Let's move!" Then, Mom and Rachel walked to the grocery store where they heard applauding and music. The Phillies were there! Mom jumped frantically and Rachel yelled, "Go!" Mom said, "You want me to do what?" Rachel said, "Go!" Mom said, "Oh! You want to go see the Phillies?" Rachel said "Yeah!" on her DynaVox. "Look!" said Mom. "They're over there on that square on the floor." "Come!" said Rachel. They were so happy that they bounced and danced toward the Phillies. They cut in line fast because they were hungry. When they got to the Phillies, Mom and Rachel asked if the team could help them find pancakes and croissants to cook. The Phillies couldn't believe Mom and Rachel. They said, "Are you tricking us?" Mom and Rachel said, "No!" Chase Utley said, "Oh! We hate when people want food and can't find it! We'll take you to Applebee's and call the waitress. If she doesn't come over, we'll repeat ourselves." The young waitress came over fast because it was Chase Utley! It was easy for her to wait on famous people. She asked what everyone wanted just before a Barbie crashed into their table. "AWESOME!" yelled Rachel. She loved Barbies. Chase said to the waitress, "Hello. We came here for pancakes and croissants " The waitress said, "Keep talking. I don't believe it. You want pancakes and croissants??” Everyone yelled, "YEAH!!” Finally, the waitress brought pancakes and croissants. Rachel said thank you to Chase. Everyone was happy.

The Sea in My Heart

On the May 8th of 2007, it was a sunny day; my Grandma, my parents and I were traveling to the seacoast city for our holiday. We arrived in Rizhao, a nice seacoast city after one night’s journey. We had a simple breakfast and then we went to the seaside. It was the first time I had ever seen the sea which was beautiful and rich. The sea in the morning was so quite and gentle that made me have a feeling of wanting to kiss it. My heart was full of excitement from the surging waves.

Looking at the boundless sea, the rolling waves and the surge of the sea, the back surge pushed the front one and the waves were thrust higher and forward in lines. It sounded like thunder, and the spectacle of the sea was like ten thousand horses galloping ahead. Suddenly the sea became a boundless war place. Sea wind made the sound of a bugle horn; the sea wave was like millions of brave soldiers attacking the bank with a loud boom. The rocks on the shore of the sea sink into the bottom suddenly, pushed down gently by the surge. After seeing this splendid spectacle of the sea, I believe the vastness of it contains infinite power and I want to write a poem to indulge in an infinite reverie.

How time flies! We are unaware of the sunset. Not long after the sunset, the sky is in the west is filled with blue and golden sunlit clouds, yet the sea is turning red from the changing cloud cover. It looks more splendid than the sky, as it can move. On the rolling waves the rosy rays of sunlight are bright and red, like flames are burning, flashing, rolling and disappearing as the back wave still rolls forward with a flash. In such a graceful evening, I walked slowly along the seaside while stepping on the soft beach. The brine touches the beach quietly with a gentle sound. The evening sea breeze is pure and fresh, I was so excited and filled with contentment. I love this place, Rizhao.

The sea is unforgettable and peaceful. Standing on the bank of the sea and looking at a distant place, the sky and brine merge together; I could not separate the water from the sky clearly. It is so-called: fog surrounds a hill and a hill surrounds the fog, the sky links with the water and the water links with the sky. The seawater far off looks like fish scales laying on the surface of the sea and like naughty children jumping over the bank under the bright sunshine. The pure and mild brine with a sea fishy smell, a breeze blowing through people’s hair, on their faces and each part of their bodies all make it a wonderful picture. Overlooking it all I see many sails in sight, sun-burnt skin, sharp-eyes, kind-smiles and skillful fishing-nets moving but they were not appreciating the scene as me; maybe they’re used to seeing all this. They are concerned about the direction of their sailing, the weather for sailing and the rocks under the ship. Looking at the sea, our mind becomes more broadened and we feel relaxed and carefree in this stature. The tide is rising, the waves are surging toward the bank like rolling hills. Some waves hit a rock and, sprayed their foam meters high and with a “Huahua” sound. (That I could not describe proper words.)

The Sea, the real sea; same as the northern highlands, cohesive with a mysterious vitality. It makes people have a feeling of something beyond nature! I love the sea, as it fills me with happiness and deep feelings! I love you, Sea!!!

ZHANG Long Long
Luoyang, CHINA
September 2009

心中的大海　　[The Sea in My Heart by Zhang Long Long]

2007年5月8日是个天气晴朗的好日子，我和爸爸妈妈还有奶奶一行4人来到了海边旅游，经过一夜的行程颠簸我们来到了美丽海滨城市日照，吃过简单的早饭后我们便坐着大巴车来到了海边，那是我第一次看到美丽而又富饶的大海。清晨的海是那么的平静，那么的安详，突然之间有了一种想亲一亲大海的冲动，看着那一次又一次翻涌的浪潮，我的心也跟着澎湃着…..

望着一望无际的大海，和那一浪接一浪的海朝，潮来了，汹涌的潮水，后浪推前浪，一排排白花花的潮水簇拥着冲过来，声似雷霆万钧，势如万马奔腾。大海霎时间变成了无边无际的战场，海风吹着尖厉的“号角”，海浪似乎是千百个英勇的战士，向海岸猛烈地进攻着，发出隆隆呼喊。岸上千斤重的巨石，只要被潮水轻轻一拂，就仿佛一下子“沉”到“海底”去了。一排排浪撞在岸上，溅起一片片浪花。这壮观的海潮，使我感到，在浩瀚无边的大海里，蕴藏着多少力量，这茫茫的海水引起多少诗人无限的遐想。

时间总是过的是那样的快。转瞬即逝，不知不觉太阳落山了…. 夕阳落山不久，西方的天空还燃烧着一片橘红色的晚霞。大海，也被这霞光染成了红色，但是，它比天空的景色更要壮观。因为它是活动的，每当一排排波浪涌起的时候，那映照在浪峰上的霞光，又红又亮，简直就像一片片霍霍燃烧着的火焰，闪烁着，滚动着，消失了。而后面的一排，则又闪烁着，滚动着涌了过来，在这幽美的夜晚中，我踏着软绵绵的沙滩，沿着海边，慢慢地向前走去。海水，轻轻地抚摸着细软的沙滩，发出温柔的“刷刷”声，晚来的海风，清新而又凉爽，我的心里，有说不出的兴奋和愉快，有海的那些地方都令人喜爱，然而，我最爱的还是这儿——日照。

海是难忘的，也是安详的，常常去会想那次看海。屹立在岸边的沙滩上,向远处望去,只看见白茫茫的一片.海水和天空合为一体,都分不清是水还是天.正所谓:雾锁山头山锁雾,天连水尾水连天.远处的海水,在娇艳的阳光照耀下,像片片鱼鳞铺在水面,又像顽皮的小孩不断向岸边跳跃。难忘那清爽的潮湿的带着谈谈的海腥味的海风，吹拂着人的头发、面颊、身体的每一处的感觉。就像艳丽丰盈的女人一样的诱人。伸展眼睛，眺望去，不见白浪滔天，但见渔帆点点，那晒的古铜色的发光的皮肤，那敏锐的眼神，善良的笑貌，再拿出海值试的掌航本领的掌握之后的娴熟撒网的动作，他们不会去欣赏者所谓的风景，或许是看惯了，而之一的是起航的方向、船下的岩焦和天气的变化。看那片蓝与远天衔接，犹如一块缓缓隆起的蓝色大陆，闪着远古洪荒般的琉璃瓦的光泽，拓宽者茫茫无限的空间。看着大海,我们的心胸似乎也变得开阔了.在这种境界里,使人神清气爽,心旷神怡.海水涨潮了,海水中的波浪一个连着一个向岸边涌来.有的升上来,像一座座滚滚动的小山;有的撞了海边的礁石上,溅起好几米高的浪花,发出“哗......哗......”的美妙声音！那种声音是无法用语言来比喻的~!

海，真的海，同北方高原那片苍茫的土地一样，凝聚着一种无法言说的神秘的生命力，他总是给人一种超越自然的感觉和超自然的深刻！我爱大海,因为他给了我太多的遐想和太多的感悟，大海，我永远爱你！！！

Babel Fish Translation from Chinese-simp to English

In heart's sea

May 8, 2007 is the clear weather the auspicious day, I and father and mother also had paternal grandmother and the party of 4 people to arrive at the seashore traveling, after the traveling schedule which passed the night jolts we to arrive at the beautiful coast city sunshine, after having had the simple breakfast, we then ride the bus vehicle to arrive at the seashore, that was I first time sees beautiful and the bountiful sea. Early morning's sea is such tranquility, then the serenity, had one kind to want suddenly to kiss the sea the impulsion, looks that turned the tide which time and time again welled up, my heart with was also rushing ..... Is looking at the vast sea, met a wave with that wave the sea dynasty, the tide has come, the turbulent tide, before the latter wave pushed the wave, row of white and shiny tide crowded around is breaking through, the sound resembled as powerful as a thunderbolt, the potential like goes full steam ahead. The sea turned the limitless battlefield in a twinkling, the sea breeze has been blowing the point severely “the bugle”, the ocean waves as if were a lot of heroic soldiers, was attacking violently to the seacoast, sent out rumble shouts. Shore over a thousand catty heavy megalith, as soon as so long as is stroked gently by the tide, as if all of a sudden “sank” “the seabed” to go. A row of wave hits in the ashore, splashes piece by piece spray. This magnificent sea tide, makes me to feel that in the vast boundless sea, is containing how many strengths, this boundless sea water causes the how many poet's infinite daydream. What the time always crosses is such quick. Is written in water, the unconscious sun has set…. The setting sun sets soon, West's sky is also burning a piece of red-orange sunset glow. Sea, is also dyed red by this multi-colored sunlight, but, it must be more magnificent than the sky scenery. Because it is the activity, whenever a row of wave surges, that shines upon in the wave peak the multi-colored sunlight, also red is also bright, looks like sound of sword is burning a piece by piece the flame simply, is glittering, is rolling, vanished. Then a surface row, is glittering, rolled has been welling up, in this serene and beautiful night, I was treading the soft sand beach, along seashore, slowly stand forth. The sea water, is stroking the valuables sand beach gently, sends out gently “brushes” the sound, late comes the sea breeze, is fresh and is cool, I at heart, have not being able to say excitement and the happiness, has sea these places to be pleasing, however, I most love here - - sunshine. The sea is unforgettable, is also serene, goes to be able frequently to think that time looks at the sea. Stands erect in the shore sand beach, looks to the distant place, only sees vast whiteness a piece. The sea water and the sky be in one, cannot distinguish clearly is the water or the day. Just so-called: The fog locks mountain top Shan Suowu, the day company water tailwater day after day. Distant place sea water, under the tender and beautiful sunlight shines, likely piece by piece scale shop in water surface, also looks like the mischievous child unceasingly to the shore caper. Unforgettable that neat moist is bringing the sea fishy smell sea breeze which chats, is swaying person's hair, the cheek, body's each feeling. Looks like the gorgeous abundant woman's same attraction. Extends the eye, looks into the distance from a high place, does not see the whitecap to be dreadful, but sees a fishing sail spot, that exposes to the sun the bronze illumination's skin, that keen look, the good smiling face, takes the going to sea value trial palm navigation ability after again the movement which grasps to cast a net adeptly, their appreciation so-called scenery, perhaps will not get used to seeing, what but one will be sets sail under the direction, ship's crag to be burnt and weather change. Looked that piece with the far-off skies engagement, just likes the blue color mainland which blue sticks out slowly together, was dodging the ancient times great antiquity glazed tile's gloss, the expansion boundless infinite space. Looks at the sea, our heart as if also became widens. In this kind of boundary, causes the person god fresh air to be crisp, completely relaxed. The sea water was rising tide, in sea water wave Lian Zhuo wells up to the shore. Some rise, looks like one to roll the trundle the hill; Some have hit on the seashore reef, splashes several meter high spray, sends out “whish ......Whish ......” wonderful sound! That kind of sound is unable ~ which analogies with the language! The sea, the real sea, is the same with north plateau that boundless land, is condensing the mystical vitality which one kind is unable to speak, he always gives the human one kind of surmounting natural feeling and supernatural profound! I love the sea, because he has given me too many daydreams and too many feelings becomes aware, the sea, I forever love you!!!

Babel Fish Translation – Chinese—traditional—to English

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