

Relationships in AAC

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<https://aacdisasterrelief.recovers.org/>

AAC Disaster Relief

Community Admin



This site supports individuals who use AAC so they can re-establish their communication. The United States Society for Augmentative Communication (USSAAC) manages the site and is currently focused on the aftermath of hurricane IRMA.

I Have A Need

Get assistance:
connect with the goods
and services you need.

I Want to Give

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connect with people
who need them.

I Want to Volunteer

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connect with people
who need your help.

Locate or suggest donation centers, shelters, and other recovery resources:

Find Resources >

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Emergency: 911

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Community Updates

Post Updates

Welcome to AAC Disaster Relief for Hurricane Irma [Edit](#)

posted 1 day ago by CERV from [Community Emergency Response Volunteers of the Monterey Peninsula](#)

No comments yet • Labels: hurricane irma aac ussaac communication needs

This site assists people with severe speech and language disabilities who use augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) to enable them to communicate. We are focusing on the aftermath of Hurricane Irma. Help us get the word out!

Individuals who use AAC and their family members can request help or sign...

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New Site added to address needs of people who use AAC and their family members impacted by Hurricane Irma [Edit](#)



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Relationships and AAC

LANCE MCLEMORE

AMBASSADOR FOR PRENTKE ROMICH COMPANY AND THE
CENTER FOR AAC AND AUTISM

- ▶ Lance McLemore is a contract employee for PRC and the Center for AAC and Autism. He is being compensated for presenting at USSAAC 2021.

- ▶ Describe one or more problems an AAC user might have in trying to form relationships.
- ▶ Identify one or more ways to support an AAC user's social interaction.
- ▶ Discuss one or more possible opportunities for an AAC user to be able to break out of their isolation.
- ▶

Introduction

- ▶ Humans are social creatures. We all want and need to be connected to other people. This is the overriding theme of my presentation. Much of my life has been defined by a struggle to communicate and to connect with other people. I believe the primary reason we communicate is to connect with other people, to develop relationships.

- ▶ I believe that it is the relationships in our lives that make life worth living. It is our connections that enliven and enrich our existence. Someday when I take my last breath, I won't be thinking about all the material trappings I will have collected. I will be thinking about all the people whom I had loved and who loved me. I consider myself lucky to have figured this out while I am a young man. And a soul unable to understand this is greatly impoverished.

- ▶ In the Bible in the book of Genesis, God spoke creation into existence. As a person for whom communication is not easy, this image is quite meaningful to me. To me it beautifully illustrates the power of language and communication. Words have the power to create, transform, or destroy. If a person cannot communicate, they are powerless passive objects.

- ▶ I spent more time than I care to remember living without a good communication system. It helped me to understand a brutal truth about communication: if you don't have it, in effect you are invisible, a non-person. In a way it's like being dead. It's a kind of purgatory; you can't go forward or backward. You're just stuck. I was not a complete human being. Communication seems to be an essential part of being human.

Elementary School

- ▶ In many ways my life has been unremarkable, or it started that way. I was born in northern Alabama 35 years ago. I went to public school like everyone else. I should mention that my speech was normal at that time. I will get more into that later. Some of my earliest memories are from PE. Everyone was allowed to roam around the playground and do whatever they wanted.

- ▶ This was the first time that I had the feeling that I was not like everyone else. Everyone made themselves busy with all kinds of silly games and chatter. I was amazed by it, and how effortless it was for them. My classmates befriended each other, played their games, and chatted with each other so easily. I really did try to join in, but I was never really accepted into any group.

- ▶ It's like they somehow knew I was different. I seemed to have an invisible mark on me that let people know to stay away. It seemed that in the kindergarten caste system I had been relegated to the untouchables, and my lowly social status persisted for many more years. Since I couldn't have friends, I developed many solitary interests.

- ▶ I would often spend my time digging alone in the dirt looking for quartz, and I loved it. And I would often spend the time swinging losing myself in the repetitive motion almost hypnotizing myself. I became very interested in science, especially astronomy, which was the subject of many of the books I checked out from the library. I was and still am a huge nerd which didn't help my social standing.

- ▶ I also remember spending some time in special education classes. Every day after lunch I and a few other children would go to a separate classroom. I think it was some kind of reading class. That's puzzling to me, because I could read fine.

- ▶ Elementary school was not all terrible. However, what sticks out in my mind the most is the social isolation, the friendlessness. It seems like most people can talk about close friends they had in childhood, but I can't. It was always just out of reach.

Middle School

- ▶ Middle school was a difficult transition for me. There was a lot of new people to meet. The one bright spot, at least socially, was that I made my first friend when I was about 12. I would often have to stay in latchkey after school because my mother couldn't pick me up right away. I met another kid named John. He was a nerdy misfit just like me. And we remained friends for many years after.

- ▶ Unfortunately, I didn't have any classes with him, and I never saw him at all during the day. He was in special ed, and when I got to middle school I no longer received any kind of special ed classes. Around this time I joined the school band. I played French horn. Music was very important for me at that time. It was the only thing that I looked forward to everyday. It was really the only thing that made the whole experience somewhat bearable.

- ▶ I started to become more self aware at this time. When I was younger, I always had this vague feeling in the back of my mind that I wasn't like everyone else. I felt misplaced. I felt like some kind of intruder going where I shouldn't be. In my 12 year old mind it was no longer relegated to the deep recesses of my mind. It was something enormous and front and center in my awareness. It was a realization that caused me great sadness and frustration.

- ▶ I asked my mother to be homeschooled, and I was from grade 9 to 12. I had little social interaction during that time, but it was better than the overwhelmingly negative social experiences I'd had up until that point.

College Years: Calhoun Community College

- ▶ College was an interesting experience for me and very positive in some ways. I started at Calhoun Community College in Alabama. I was a music major. I was obsessed with music, especially Baroque and Classical music. I took up the piano, and I progressed quickly, or at least I think I did. I worked on my general education requirements.

- ▶ I desperately wanted friends. When I went into college, for some reason I had this naïve notion that college would be very different from my previous experience in public school in regards to my socialization. I thought that maybe I would finally be able to make friends. I was quickly disabused of that silly idea, when I realized I was still just as clueless and awkward as I was when I was 12.

- ▶ It was a crushing realization, and there was no help. Where do you go to have someone teach you how to make friends?

- ▶ By this time, I couldn't deny that my speech was really starting to interfere with my life. It was the first time that I became aware that I had started to avoid interacting with people. It felt like being torn in half. I avoided asking or answering questions in class. In many ways I felt like a prisoner. I was trapped behind a wall that no one could see.

- ▶ I felt some release through the music I played. It might sound funny, but in a way a piano was like an AAC device for me. I couldn't convey words, but I could convey feelings. During that time, I was often attracted to very stormy pieces. It matched very well with the frustration I often felt.

- ▶ At some point I also decided to try art classes. I had the great fortune to meet a cheerful and eccentric teacher. To me, art was another means of expression which I badly needed. With music I could tell people what was going on inside, but with art I could show them. When people looked at my paintings, it felt like it was the only time that they really saw me.

Diagnosis

- ▶ During this time something important happened. I considered it a pivotal event. Through a complex series of events I found myself in Birmingham, Alabama in the office of a neuropsychologist. It was February 1, 2006. I was 20 years old at the time. It was a cold dreary day with an overcast sky. I went through about eight hours of testing. He asked so many questions, and it was exhausting.

- ▶ On March 1st at about 10 a.m. my mother and I got a call from that neuropsychologist. I found out something I already knew, that I was on the autism spectrum. I had suspected it for many years, but then I knew for certain.

- ▶ I think many people would assume that that kind of news would be difficult to take in, but not for me. I was relieved in a way. I had felt like a freak all my life. I often got angry at myself. I would often think to myself, “why can’t you just be normal like everyone else?” Finally, I knew I couldn’t be normal because I just wasn’t built that way.

- ▶ I finally understood why I was always out of step with the rest of the world, and why there always seemed to be a wall between me and everyone else.

- ▶ I was in my college's library one day. By chance I saw an interesting book about assistive technology. I checked it out and read through it. There was a chapter in it about AAC. I also distinctly remember a picture of a Pathfinder. I remember thinking to myself, "is that something that could help me?" I was already familiar with AAC.

- ▶ The only person I knew about who used it was Stephen Hawking. I was under the impression that AAC could only be used by people who couldn't speak at all, and I didn't have anyone to correct me. Even though I didn't take it too seriously at first, the idea stayed in the back of my mind.

- ▶ I wanted to take a little time to explain my communication challenges. People often seem confused by it, and in the past, I have probably not done a good job of explaining it. Starting some time in middle school, when I would try to talk, I sometimes I had this feeling of being stuck. I knew what I wanted to say, but I couldn't make my mouth do as I wanted. Over the years it gradually got worse. The connection between my brain and mouth seemed to deteriorate.

- ▶ It usually didn't come out right, and there might be a significant delay in my response. I think a lot of people might not understand the mental and physical fatigue that comes with me trying to communicate verbally. Even if someone managed to understand me, speaking would still drain my energy quickly. As my energy drains, my intelligibility goes down with it.

College Years: University of Alabama Huntsville

- ▶ After getting most of my general education requirements, I transferred to the University of Alabama in Huntsville. I should point out that by the time I got there I was almost entirely non-speaking, at least with anyone other than my immediate family. My time there was filled with extremes. It was very positive in some ways and quite negative in others.

- ▶ I was required to attend an orientation day before the semester started. One thing I remember is that they talked some about the fraternities and sororities. The idea of it was really attractive to me. Unfortunately, by the time I got to that school I had no confidence left. I had spent many years accumulating innumerable social failures. I saw no reason why that time would be different.

- ▶ I couldn't bear any more disappointment. I think at the time I just gave up trying to make friends. I often felt like I was being tortured in a way. I looked around and saw everyone laughing, talking, forming relationships, but I was locked out. I wanted to have relationships. It was right there within arm's reach. And it was a cruel torture to know that I couldn't have it.

- ▶ There are some events that stand out in my memory, and it might seem surprising that I remember them. One day I was in a practice room in the music department. Someone opened the door. There was a skinny Asian guy who came in. He walked over and shook my hand. He told me his name was Paul.

- ▶ I think I told him my name, but I don't know if he understood me. He asked what I was working on. I think I just showed him the music. It was a Bach piece. He tried to engage me in conversation. I really wanted to talk to him.

- ▶ I wanted to tell him how much I loved Bach. I wanted to talk to him about the part that was giving me trouble. I would have loved to have maybe arranged a time and place to meet and chat or maybe practice together. He might have understood half of what little I said.

- ▶ At some point I just stopped making the effort. I was exhausted, humiliated, and I looked away from him. I wanted him to leave, and at the same time I wanted him to stay so badly. He probably got uncomfortable and excused himself. I remember feeling like such a jerk. I was so angry at myself. It felt like a door had been slammed in my face, an opportunity lost forever.

- ▶ Maybe we could have gone on to be good friends. Maybe we would still be friends now. I will never know. Similar experiences were to be repeated over and over again.

- ▶ Another experience that I remember vividly occurred when I was living in a dorm my last semester. They looked like old apartment buildings. The building next to mine was fraternity housing. Often at night they would congregate outside talking and laughing loudly. I would peep out the blinds in my dark bedroom and stare as long as they remained outside.

- ▶ I could have had that. Maybe I could have been one of them. Maybe I could have belonged somewhere. Instead I was hiding behind a brick wall, a pathetic coward. I remember that when they would gather outside I would feel a momentary excitement. I would imagine what it would be like to be one of them.

- ▶ My excitement quickly vanished when I remembered that they were over there, I was behind my wall, and that's just the way it was. Looking at them I felt the same way I felt when I was a six year old child on the playground. I lived on the periphery then, and I still did.

- ▶ I felt a crushing despair that I cannot convey with words, but yet I could not cry. I was disconnected from the outside and also from within. Sometimes I felt like I was collapsing from the inside out, and I was falling into a black hole. I was afraid that I would fall in and never return. If anyone could have seen inside my head, it would have terrified them.

- ▶ I tried to imagine my future. All I could see was endless separation. I could see being alone the rest of my life and dying alone. I'm not exactly sure how I managed to get through it. Maybe there was some small part of me that wanted to believe that it could be better.

Introduction to AAC

- ▶ I think in 2009 something important happened. One day I went into my university disability support office. I was about to leave, and one of the women working there asked if I could talk for a minute in her office. I was very nervous because I had no idea what she wanted. She expressed concern about me not having a way to communicate. She mentioned the possibility of me using AAC.

- ▶ She suggested that I contact the local chapter of UCP. I first contacted a woman there named Laura. She was the assistive technology specialist. I was so nervous about getting help. I was afraid that they wouldn't be able or willing to help. I thought I might be ignored. I emailed her, and one day she drove over to the university.

- ▶ I met her in a private room, and she showed me some AAC devices. The one that stands out the most in my mind was a Dynawrite, which was basically a talking keyboard. The other one was a device that I don't even think was made at the time. At that point I started thinking that maybe it could be something that could help.

- ▶ She came a few more times showing me other devices. I requested to try the Lightwriter. Eventually I decided on a device called an Allora. That was a talking keyboard with word prediction. Then the process began for me to get my own. During the process of being evaluated, it was determined that I had apraxia. I remember it arrived at my place on September 9th 2010.

- ▶ Initially I was very optimistic. I thought all my trouble was over, but I slowly realized that was not the case. I had this new device, but I felt lost. I wasn't quite sure what to do next. In retrospect I think I would have benefitted from some kind of continuing support. I wasn't sure how I was supposed to use it to connect to someone.

- ▶ I had trouble connecting with people when my speech was normal. I still had trouble connecting, but then I also had to somehow connect using a talking box. It made it easier to interact with my professors, but I hardly used it to interact with my peers. I felt so awkward using it. It made me feel self-conscious. My extensive history of social failure played a big role as well.

- ▶ Around this time the disability support office started a support group for people on the autism spectrum. It was the first time I had ever met other people on the autism spectrum. We got together to play cards once a week. I think these card games were pretty much the only time I used my device for social interaction. All of them were science geeks, and I was an art student. I couldn't relate much to what they were studying, but it was nice to be around people who had a similar diagnosis.

- ▶ It was nice to be able to actually talk to other people, not just simple answers and requesting. I don't think I can really say that I made friends with any of them. They were as terrible at making friends as I was. It was disappointing to me, because I thought that surely if I had any chance of making friends it would be with one of these weird geeky people.

- ▶ There was a young adult autism support group in Huntsville. They organized a Halloween party one year. I went with a few people from U.A.H. It was held at one of the group members' apartment. We were greeted by a strange man wearing a Buzz Lightyear costume and singing Michael Jackson's Thriller. I'm sure I laughed when I saw him.

- ▶ It was the strangest party I've ever been to. About half the people, myself included, sat like silent statues. The other half talked incessantly about video games, science fiction, and any other stereotypically geeky subject you could think of. I was the only one who used a communication device. I wanted to connect, but I didn't know how. I didn't know how to use that talking keyboard to connect with anyone. Communication is a little more complicated than simply having a voice. You have to know how to use it. I left early because I felt alone and awkward.

Post College

- ▶ In the spring of 2012 I graduated. For the next couple of years nothing remarkable happened. I was in the same position many college graduates were in: I have this degree, so what do I do now? My life was stagnant. I felt like I was stuck and didn't know where to go. During these few years my isolation was almost complete. I rarely had a reason to use my device, because there was no one to talk to.

- ▶ In December 2015 I started doing research to see what AAC devices were out there. Mine was old and the battery was dead. I was most interested in trying a PRC device. I went to their website and I found the consultant for my state at the time, Sandy Baldwin. We exchanged some emails. I later learned that she was quite intrigued by the exchange. From her perspective I just popped up out of nowhere. She offered to come to my house and show me some devices.

- ▶ In early January 2016 she drove up. I was nervous when she pulled up in the driveway. I felt uncomfortable inviting this strange person into my house when I couldn't even say hi or tell her who I was. We sat down at the kitchen table. I think I had my old device there. I could use it if it was plugged up. She took an Accent 1000 out of her bag. She started showing me how it worked, but I was way ahead of her.

- ▶ About a month before she came, I had downloaded the PASS software, which is an emulation program. I already knew the menu system, and I had played with a couple of the language systems. In particular, I played with Word Power and Unity. Without any help, I switched over to Word Power and started talking to her using it. She was very surprised.

- ▶ She mentioned the possibility of me going with her to some university presentations. I think she also mentioned attending conferences later. My friendship with Sandy has proven to be especially important both professionally and personally. It has led to more doors being opened to me than I ever could have imagined. Over the next two years I went to several presentations and conferences with her. It helped me to finally be able to practice communicating with strangers.

- ▶ I never thought I would be able to speak in front of large crowds, but I have done it many times. Now it is mostly not a big issue. My relationship with Sandy was the first of many that I would gain because of my new voice. I came very close to never contacting her at all. However, before I had written her, I had quietly made a life decision.

- ▶ I had not been happy with my life for a long time. Too many times I had allowed fear to control me and spoil opportunities. I decided that from then on I would say yes to everything. That decision has had a major positive impact on me.

Introduction to LAMP

Words for Life

- ▶ Sandy very kindly allowed me to have a loaner device. I used Word Power happily. It was a big improvement over what I had used before. In the spring of 2016 I got an email from PRC. They were advertising a LAMP workshop in Birmingham which was about an hour and a half away. I asked Sandy about it, but she didn't think it would be of any interest to me.

- ▶ She talked to John Halloran about me. He must have been intrigued, because he paid for me to stay in a hotel for the workshop. This was in July 2016. I attended the workshop, and I had time to talk to him privately. He explained to me the advantages of LAMP Words for Life. He claimed that I would be faster than I was at the time. He then told me that he would pay me \$500 if I became fluent with it.

- ▶ I left, and for the next two months I worked at it. I took home a spiral bound LAMP manual that is given out at the workshops. In the back is a word list. I went through that list again and again learning where everything was. I would often talk to myself, and that seemed to help. Two months later in September there was another LAMP workshop close to where I live. I rode with Sandy. She told me that she had not told John much about the progress I had made.

- ▶ We met John in the lobby of the hotel, so we could go off to dinner. Sandy and John talked for a bit, and then he asked me something. By this time I was using Words for Life exclusively. I answered him quickly and fluently with my device. He was in shock. Over the next couple of hours he was almost dumbfounded. It was pretty funny. He explained to me that it was very unusual for someone to become fluent in such a short time.

- ▶ There was quite a lot of chatter over dinner. There was talk about traveling, conferences, workshops, etc. I had developed another important relationship, and my ability to communicate was instrumental. In December 2016 I finally got my own Accent 1000. Up until then I had been using loaners.

- ▶ In November 2017 I flew for the first time to Talking AAC in Michigan at MSU. I went there with some colorful women, Meredith Hankins and Melissa Pouncey. They made the whole trip so fun. I quite enjoyed the conference. I co-presented with Melissa. I got the opportunity to meet Chris Klein. He was a great person to chat with, although I don't understand his obsession with Star Wars.

- ▶ I think what I enjoyed the most was the dinners after the day was over. A bunch of us would pile into a restaurant and talk and enjoy great food. Robin Pegg and I sat next to each other. We both realized we really liked eating. It was nice to meet someone who wasn't afraid to eat. I got to know Rachael Langley and Kate Ahern. All of them were hilarious. Toward the end of the conference either Robin or Rachael asked if I would be interested in doing the keynote the next year.

- ▶ I was surprised. I had never thought that I would do something like that. When I had presented anywhere up to that point it was more of a supporting role. I remembered my earlier decision that I would say yes to everything, and I said yes to their offer.

- ▶ My first major conference was at ATIA 2018. I went with Cindy Halloran. We sat in the lobby for a while after checking in. I had several people come up and say hi. I think poor Cindy felt a little left out. Robin and Rachael were there. I got to meet several PRC consultants. Chris Klein and his wife Dawn were also there.

- ▶ I had so many wonderful social interactions. It is difficult to articulate all of them. I sat with Cindy in the Center for AAC and Autism booth. I had plenty of time to walk around. I was especially interested in the Eschenbach booth; it's a company that makes magnifiers for people with low vision. There was a man named Tim who was running the booth. I spent plenty of time asking him questions and bothering him. As usual, my favorite part was the food and conversation after the day was over.

- ▶ My life had certainly changed a lot since I was that quiet depressed college student. I had met so many people. I actually had a community. I realized that being connected made such a huge difference to me, and it would have been impossible without communication. I believe all human beings desire a connection with other people, even those of us on the autism spectrum.

- ▶ The lack of connection is by far the most difficult part of having a communication disability. After finally having communication and being able to start connecting with other people, I felt like a part of me had been awakened. The sun could finally start shining through the dark clouds that had hung over me for so long.

- ▶ I think people have some false beliefs about me. I think a lot of people assume that I wake up every day very depressed about the fact that verbal communication is so difficult.

- ▶ And they assume that it's something that's ever present in my conscious mind. It's not like that at all. It doesn't bother me to use a communication device. To me, it is normal, and I don't really think about it. It's the lack of connection that really bothers me. That is the cause of the real suffering.

- ▶ I taught myself a new and strange language system, and I practiced and practiced. I have worked to get faster for the last five years. I did it so that I could better connect with other people. That was always the goal. Maybe by talking about my experiences with AAC, and specifically the problems I had with it, other people could avoid some of the things I had to deal with.

Problems and Solutions: Access

- ▶ One problem is actually getting access to AAC in the first place. My impression is that, in at least some cases, the circle of people around a speech impaired person are resistant to AAC. It reminds me of a man I knew. He had a type of progressive cerebellar ataxia. Over a period of several years I saw him go from walking with a slightly unsteady gait to using a power wheelchair. I remember that his daughter gave him grief about him using a wheelchair.

- ▶ She thought it meant he was giving up. I was a child, and it was obvious to me that walking was difficult and sometimes dangerous for him. She was terrified of the wheelchair, because to her, it was a tangible sign of the progression of his disease. It was a sign of defeat. It triggered in her a deep visceral fear that I think everyone has: the fear of the loss of control over one's own body. She was wrong.

- ▶ The wheelchair was a tool to allow him to be more independent, to be able to enjoy his life as much as he could. My attitude toward AAC is something along this line. I'm sure some people look at me using this talking box and feel sorry for me. In reality, my communication device is not a ball and chain; it has liberated me.

- ▶ If you are going to feel sorry for anyone, then feel sorry for the old me. Feel sorry for the person I was before I had a way to meaningfully communicate. He is the one who deserves pity, not me. Using an AAC device does not mean that you are giving up on speech. The research clearly indicates that AAC does not hinder the development of speech. If you withhold AAC intervention, it's possible that a child will start speaking eventually on their own.

- ▶ Even if they do, what are they missing out on? Can you imagine the anger and frustration? Of course, there are many people who will never be able to fully rely on verbal expression. There are many people, children and adults, walking around without a way to communicate. I think some of that can be blamed on people's reluctance to try AAC in the first place.

- ▶ I am going to speak in strong and perhaps harsh terms. People need to just get over the fear. You don't have the right to be afraid if that fear is causing someone to be deprived of the ability to communicate. You don't have the right to keep someone silenced and powerless. I know that verbal speech is desirable, but if that can't happen, isn't it better to use a talking box than to have nothing?

- ▶ As I found out from my own experience, implementation is another problem with AAC. After I got my device the first time, I didn't know what to do with it. Maybe it was assumed that because I was a grown man with normal intelligence and no significant physical disability, that I could just jump right in to communicating. It was kind of like being thrown into the deep end of the pool when I didn't know how to swim.

- ▶ Getting the communication device is the easier part, although I'm sure if you've had to fill out a funding packet, you might disagree. I think I would have greatly benefitted from some kind of ongoing support, although saying exactly what that should have been is difficult. When I first started using my Accent, I had a lot of conversations with Sandy.

- ▶ Until I met her, I rarely had a non-family member sit down and talk to me. We spent lots of time chatting when we were in the car going to conferences, presentations, and sitting in restaurants. When I think about it, she was kind of my conversational wingman.

- ▶ She would talk to other people and bring me into the conversation. If I had been left to my own devices, I would have never had the courage to engage. Back in college, I think it would have helped if I could have had a way to practice more. It would have helped me build up confidence that I severely lacked. I have heard that some universities have a program that matches an autistic college student with a neurotypical student.

- ▶ The neurotypical student helps the autistic student with all aspects of college life: academic, social, etc. I think something like that could have helped me a lot with communication. Maybe it would have given me the confidence to branch out and talk to other people. I think something like this could be adapted for all levels of education from elementary to university.

- ▶ I'm sure something similar could be created for adult AAC users in the community. It's probably correct to say that most AAC users struggle with social inclusion to some degree or another. Having a ready-made patient understanding communication partner could be so helpful. I believe mentorship is the most powerful tool to help AAC users really use their system to the fullest.

- ▶ Not long ago I was visiting an elementary school close to where I live. I went to a LAMP training to help out. The staff were learning about a little girl's AAC system. Afterwards I went with her mother to visit her class. All the children were coloring. The mother invited the children to come over and look at her device.

- ▶ It was so nice to see them crowded around her and playing with her device. It was wonderful to see them interacting with her and accepting her. It's the sort of thing I want to see more often. It's a sign of progress.

Contact Information

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