

How to keep going in a world that thinks you've plateaued

Almost everyone with aphasia has heard the words “**You are going to be discharged because you’ve hit a plateau**”. For some people, it comes after only a few weeks of therapy. For others, you may have a few months of therapy. Sooner or later, your therapist or your insurance (or both) are going to stop your therapy.

Many people get angry that they are left to ‘figure it out’ themselves. They’ve been cut adrift in the sea of recovery without a compass. Aphasia isn’t a common vocabulary word for the majority of people you meet. You don’t know about it until someone you know has it. You have to do your own research and rely on your medical professionals to guide you.

One client said the first words his speech therapist told him were “you’re going to have to quit your work and adjust to this life now”. If your neurologist, your speech therapist, and your doctor all tell you ‘this is it’ after such a short period of time, **what do you do?**

1. Don’t Quit. If you make the decision to push on, be committed. Motivation doesn’t last, but habits and discipline do. Don’t listen to naysayers, pace yourself, make your plan.

2. Set Goals. Decide what’s most important to you. Everything, right? Choose 1-2 smaller tasks, such as learning to use your iPad or to dial a phone. It can even be to order your drink when you go out to eat. Make it attainable. Step-by-step.

3. Smash those goals. Now go out and do it. The most successful clients we have are those who just go out and do it without worrying about looking stupid. The most important part of your recovery is your attitude. Celebrate those victories, no matter how small.

4. Make new goals. Where there is a will, there's a way. The nature of recovery is that there are always minor setbacks, but you keep moving forward overall. Everyone has goals in life, but not everyone acts to make them happen.

The therapy plateau is a myth, but you’ll need to seek other avenues to keep working.

There are intensive aphasia programs, intensive physical therapy programs, private therapists, personal trainers, and other people to help you keep making progress towards your goals.

“Plateaus” are a constraint of your health insurance, but can also be because your therapist

doesn't know what else to do. **You'll need to think outside the box, commit to improvement and take action to make a difference.**