

## Mentally Preparing for Intensive Aphasia Therapy

For some people the decision to pursue intensive aphasia therapy has been a long time coming. For others, as was the case in my experience, it happens quickly as an act of desperation and defiance. Whether it was a spur of the moment decision or not, packing up and getting ready for intensive aphasia therapy at The Aphasia Center requires a bit of mental preparation that cannot be ignored. Some things to think about include:

- In what specific ways am I looking to improve my family members quality of life?
- Am I expecting a full recovery, or a strong foundation in which to continue improving?
- What do I hope to learn from this so that I can make communication easier?

But just as important as the above questions are, there are also some things that you should leave behind at home. **Certain attitudes, preconceived notions, and expectations can limit you and your loved one's ability to make the most of this exciting experience.** Thoughts like:

- “I don't know what we are going to do if we don't make a full recovery!”
- “I'm sure the therapists are great, but I've been researching myself and ...”
- “The therapists at home said he/she has ‘plateaued’, so there's nothing else that can be done.”

Other psychosocial concerns (ie... financial concerns, returning to work, etc.) are important, but they can also present an avoidable hurdle while in therapy. Doing your best to not focus on matters outside of your immediate control will make for a better mental space. The best thing one can do is to approach intensive aphasia therapy with as much of a clear mind as possible, being open to all the new strategies and information you'll be receiving, all the while staying focused on the reason you decided to come in the first place. Intensive therapy is a cooperative process, so make the most of it!