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Paul Berger & Stephanie Mensh's Stroke Survivor
NEWS & ATTITUDE FOR YOU - SPRING 2016
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### Catch up on last year's newsletter! Now posted at:  
<http://strokesurvivor.com/newsletter.html> ###

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Please FORWARD this newsletter to your friends and  
colleagues who would benefit from these tips. Click it  
forward to people in your stroke club, volunteer groups,  
place of worship, community services and neighbors, too!  
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- 1. NEWS: RESEARCH on Stroke Recovery & Rehabilitation:  
How Stroke Affects Spelling Words

Problems with spelling words after a stroke seem to be caused by multiple unrelated areas of the brain that had not previously been recognized as jointly causing language issues. Researchers at Johns Hopkins University studied 33 stroke survivors with spelling impairments, for example, who were asked to spell "lion," and wrote "lonp," or "lint," or "tiger."

Some spelling problems are caused by long-term memory impairment, and some by working memory impairment. Using computer imaging to map the subjects' brains, the researchers found different locations affected for long-term and working memory.

Brenda Rapp, one of the lead researchers noted that, while science knows quite a bit about how the brain handles reading, these findings offer some of the first clear evidence of how it spells, an understanding that could lead to improved behavioral treatments after brain damage and more effective ways to teach spelling.

To read the news report from Johns Hopkins University: <http://tinyurl.com/JHU-PR-Spelling>

To read their study details & results published in the journal, Brain, A Journal of Neurology: <http://tinyurl.com/Abst-Spell>

For additional resources to help you find information on medical, health, rehabilitation, recovery, self-empowerment, and more, we have collected our favorite links at: [http://www.strokesurvivor.com/resource\\_links.html](http://www.strokesurvivor.com/resource_links.html).

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Do you wonder how I look & sound? Meet me at my video page: <http://strokesurvivor.com/video.html>

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\*\*\* SPECIAL: Paul & Stephanie Help Researchers Envision Who Benefits from Their Work \*\*\*

In early February, we were invited to present during a stroke symposium held for the researchers at Dart NeuroScience, a private medical research company in San Diego, CA. <http://www.dartneuroscience.com/index.php>

Dart is developing pharmaceutical approaches to treating neurological conditions like stroke, as well as ways to boost or recover memory. Much of their work is at the cellular and molecular levels, and they have a very high tech facility with robots that fill and measure the test tubes. To study how learned behavior is imprinted in our brains, they have a lab where monkeys play video games all day to win little treats. They train fruit flies to see if memory is imbedded in their DNA by associating certain smells with food or electric shock.

Dart's management team wanted to inspire their researchers by having them meet the ultimate beneficiaries of their work - stroke survivors - Paul, and a caregiver - Stephanie. They also invited a former Miss America from the 1960's who had suffered a stroke when she was 28, and a neurologist from the University of Southern California who is developing stroke treatment to regain use of paralyzed arms using a Wii video game with a gun where you practice shooting ducks and other objects.

It's not easy sharing a stage with a former Miss America, even one who is now a grandmother. She brought one of her gowns to display and let the audience line up for a photo wearing her crown, including many of the men! Paul's stories about his recovery, struggles to find a job, returning to school to train in computer drafting, and writing a book, may not have been as glamorous as Miss America, but he gave an excellent presentation. And caregivers, like Stephanie, don't have crowns to share, only tales of advocating for Paul and dealing with insurance. All-in-all, the Dart management team seemed pleased with the symposium.

They have an online memory challenge that they encourage everyone to try: <http://www.extremememorychallenge.com/>.

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2. PAUL'S TIPS FOR SURVIVORS:

Walking Hills With Foot drop

I have foot drop on my right side from my stroke, and some added weakness in my hip and knee, possibly from back trouble that I had a few years ago. So, I wear a leg and foot brace--orthotic--to keep my knee and ankle lined up. This way, I don't trip and fall.

Also, I have trouble walking up and especially down a sloping sidewalk or driveway. Now that it's Spring, I want to walk outside more and so asked my physical therapist to show me a safe way to navigate slopes and hills.

First, she explained her plan. Then, we went outside her building, and used the parking lot that sloped down the side. She walked first, showing me how to weave down the hill making tight s-curves like a skier. Then she walked with me.

You turn sideways to the slope and walk a few steps, then turn the other way and walk a few steps. You zig zag down the slope. It takes a little longer than going straight down, but it works. I can do this with or without my cane.

If I can do it, you can do it, too!

Resources:

Move Forward for Patients from the American Physical Therapy Association  
<http://www.moveforwardpt.com/Default.aspx>

Do you have a tip to share with others? Send it to me at Paul@strokesurvivor.com and we may include it in next month's newsletter.

Other insights and tips for coping with life and taking control of your recovery after stroke are available on my website at <http://www.strokesurvivor.com>.

\*\*\* Looking for even more inspiration & solutions for survivors? Read, "Conquering Aphasia & Stroke TODAY! Vol. 1: Paul Berger's Guide for Stroke Survivors"  
<http://tinyurl.com/ConqAphasia-Stroke-Vol-1>

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I'm a stroke survivor working hard to give you tips, solutions & motivation for a better life. If you like what you see, buy me a cup of coffee (or 2 or 3) and I'll send you a special thank you!
* 1 cup: <http://tinyurl.com/1-coffee-for-Paul>
* 2 cups: <http://tinyurl.com/2-coffees-for-Paul>
* 3 cups: <http://tinyurl.com/3-coffees-for-Paul>
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3. STEPHANIE'S TIPS FOR CAREGIVERS:

Legal Questions

The sudden nature of stroke can raise all kinds of legal questions, including access to health information, health and personal care decision-making, access to bank accounts, financial responsibilities, employment and disability

benefits, bill collections, and other issues that seem to strike out of nowhere, just like a stroke.

When Paul had his stroke, we refinanced our mortgage to lower the monthly payments, since we didn't know when he would return to work. This required a legal document giving me "power of attorney" specifically for this real estate transaction. Fortunately, a lawyer friend of ours drafted the document and came to the hospital. I was able to complete the refinancing without Paul being present.

Since then, we periodically review and update all our legal documents, including Wills, healthcare and financial powers of attorney, and living wills with our end-of-life directives.

For more complex legal issues, you should get advice from a lawyer, particularly one that specializes in your problem, whether its medical malpractice, violations of your rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act, applying for benefits or appealing benefit denials, or family crises.

Most cities and counties have local Bar Associations that give referrals. Also, there are state and local organizations that protect the rights of people with disabilities, and seniors.

Resources:

National Disability Rights Network  
<http://www.ndrn.org/about/paacap-network.html>

National Elder Law Foundation  
<http://www.nelf.org/>

American Bar Association Public Resources:  
<http://tinyurl.com/ABA-legal-refer>

Family Legal & Financial Issues: Washington Post Article, Michelle Singletary, 3/3/16:  
<http://tinyurl.com/WP-Legl-Fin-Article>

For more tips & inspiration for caregivers, please visit:  
[http://strokesurvivor.com/stroke\\_caregivers.html](http://strokesurvivor.com/stroke_caregivers.html)

\*\*\* Looking for even more inspiration & solutions for spouses and families? Read, "Conquering Aphasia & Stroke for Caregivers, Vol. 2: Stephanie Mensh's Guide for Caregivers"  
<http://tinyurl.com/Stroke-Caregiver-E-book>

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4. PAUL'S FAVORITES:  
Smile Therapy

Recently, I had dental surgery that required some gentle flossing. While I have a one-handed flosser that I use every night, I couldn't use it around those teeth. My dentist suggested a Waterpik Ultra Water Flosser, set at a lower level.

It is easy to use with one hand, and the water tank is easy to fill with one hand. Now I use it in the morning and in the evening, I've recovered nicely from the surgery, and my teeth and smile feel clean and fresh.

To see one like mine:  
<http://tinyurl.com/Floss-WPik-1-hand>

For details on other Paul-tested helpful books and products, visit:  
[http://www.strokesurvivor.com/reading\\_list.html](http://www.strokesurvivor.com/reading_list.html) and  
[http://www.strokesurvivor.com/lifestyle\\_products.html](http://www.strokesurvivor.com/lifestyle_products.html)

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** Aphasia & Speech Therapy in the Comfort of Your Home **

If your goal is to aggressively continue your speech-language recovery, you must try tele-rehabilitation.

Aphasia experts can conduct your treatment sessions over the Internet and it is easier than you can imagine.

<http://www.aphasiatoolbox.com> is providing a 45 minute aphasia consultation with treatment recommendations at no charge as a SPECIAL OFFER to subscribers of this "Stroke Survivor" newsletter.

Contact Bill Connors at bill@aphasiatoolbox.com or phone: 724.494.2534.

Currently, these consultation are offered in 6 different languages to people with aphasia all over the world.

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5. EATING FOR STROKE HEALTH  
Develop Health Eating Habits

The number one way to eat for stroke and heart health is to develop a routine and habits that support a healthy eating lifestyle. A recent government report listed these key recommendations as part of their dietary guidelines for the next 5 years:

1. Follow a healthy eating pattern across the life span. All food and beverage choices matter. Choose a healthy eating pattern at an appropriate calorie level to help achieve and maintain a healthy body weight, support nutrient adequacy, and reduce the risk of chronic disease.
2. Focus on variety, nutrient density, and amount.
3. Limit calories from added sugars and saturated fats and reduce sodium intake.
3. Shift to healthier food and beverage choices.
4. Consider cultural and personal preferences to make these shifts easier to accomplish and maintain. Everyone has a role in helping to create and support healthy eating patterns.

A healthy eating pattern includes:

- \* A variety of vegetables from all of the subgroups: dark green, red and orange, legumes (beans and peas), starchy, and other

- \* Fruits, especially whole fruits
- \* Grains, at least half of which are whole grains
- \* Fat-free or low-fat dairy, including milk, yogurt, cheese, and/or fortified soy beverages
- \* A variety of protein foods, including seafood, lean meats and poultry, eggs, legumes (beans and peas), and nuts, seeds, and soy products
- \* Oils

A healthy eating pattern limits:

- \* Saturated fats and trans fats, added sugars, and sodium

Resources:

"2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans" full report and interactive website:  
<http://tinyurl.com/Hlthy-Diet-Rpt>

For details on other Paul-tested helpful kitchen, shopping, and eating tips, visit:  
[http://www.com/lifestyle\\_products.html](http://www.com/lifestyle_products.html)

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6. WHAT'S NEW on the Stroke Survivor.com web site.

We're adding helpful new things to our web site all the time:

- \* National Stroke Foundation (Australia)

We have many useful links for survivors, families and professionals on rehabilitation, motivation, and to regain fulfillment posted to our Resource Links pages. Visit:  
[http://www.strokesurvivor.com/resource\\_links.html](http://www.strokesurvivor.com/resource_links.html) and  
<http://www.strokesurvivor.com>

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\*\*\* PERFECT GIFTS FOR STROKE SURVIVORS & CAREGIVERS Paul's best selling books \*\*\*

Follow Paul's adventures and his creative, positive approach to living a full life after stroke...way beyond rehab!!

A WORLD-WIDE FAVORITE for SURVIVORS, SUPPORT GROUPS & BOOK CLUBS:

[1] "How to Conquer the World With One Hand...And an Attitude"  
[http://strokesurvivor.com/conquer\\_the\\_world.html](http://strokesurvivor.com/conquer_the_world.html)  
<http://tinyurl.com/HowToConquerWorld-Kindle>

BE CREATIVE...AN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY MUST-READ:  
 [2] "How to Conquer Hobbies With One Hand: Stroke Survivor Paul Berger's 50 Tips & Tools to Make Things"  
<http://strokesurvivor.com/hobbies.html>  
<http://tinyurl.com/HowToConquerHobbies-Kindle>

SET NEW GOALS: IF PAUL CAN DO IT...

[3] "You Can Do It! 105 Thoughts, Feelings, & Solutions to Inspire You"  
[http://strokesurvivor.com/you\\_book.html](http://strokesurvivor.com/you_book.html)  
<http://tinyurl.com/YouCanDoIt-Kindle>

E-BOOKS - BEST SURVIVOR & CAREGIVER TIPS..any time, any where!

"Conquering Aphasia & Stroke" - 3 VOLUME SERIES

\* Vol. 1: Paul's Guide for Stroke Survivors

<http://tinyurl.com/E-Book-Vol-1>

<http://tinyurl.com/ConqAphasia-Stroke-Vol-1>

\* Vol. 2: Stephanie's Guide for Caregivers

<http://tinyurl.com/E-Book-Vol-2>

<http://tinyurl.com/ConqAphas-Strk-CaregVol-2>

\* Vol. 3: More Guidance for Survivors &

Caregivers

<http://tinyurl.com/E-Book-Vol-3>

<http://tinyurl.com/MoreConqAphas-Strk-Vol-3>

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Contact us at [Paul@strokesurvivor.com](mailto:Paul@strokesurvivor.com) or 703-241-2375.  
Special rates for newsletter & web: [www.strokesurvivor.com](http://www.strokesurvivor.com)!

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Would you like to view a previous month's newsletter? Visit our newsletter archive at:  
<http://www.strokesurvivor.com/newsletter.html>

Lots more stuff at: <http://www.strokesurvivor.com>

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### 7. Stroke/Aphasia Reading problems?

After a stroke, many people have reading and other language problems, known as "aphasia." Hearing a sentence read aloud helps to understand it. You can hear this newsletter read aloud while each word is highlighted on the computer screen with the FREE text reader software described at:  
[http://www.strokesurvivor.com/disability\\_access.html](http://www.strokesurvivor.com/disability_access.html)  
or <http://www.naturalreaders.com>

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