

UCL Communication Clinic

Newsletter March 2019

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Mindfulness

The UCL communication group have recently been working on a project about mindfulness.

What is Mindfulness?

Being in the present is essential because if you're not in the present you can't be mindful

"Mindfulness is the self-regulation of attention with an attitude of curiosity, openness, and acceptance."

Mindfulness is the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on around us.

Something everyone can do, but takes practise to develop the skills.

How can mindfulness help?

Studies have found mindfulness to be helpful with daily stresses as well as more serious stresses experienced by those with a chronic or life-threatening illness.

Participants in a study who practiced mindfulness techniques for five minutes a day over a period of three weeks reported significant reductions in stress along with increases in life satisfaction, positive relations with others and mastery of one's environment

Summary: You can achieve real benefits.

Advice for people with aphasia, and for others

The Communication Group has also come up with advice for people with aphasia about building and maintaining relationships with others. They also gave general advice for communicating with people with aphasia.

Information about the Communication Group

The communication group meets weekly on a Thursday morning. The weekly meeting is a place to receive support for speech, language and communication difficulties for people with aphasia. The guidance and structure of the sessions is provided by two students, and overseen by Carolyn - clinic manager and speech and language therapist. Each week the group members are encouraged to engage in conversation and other language-based tasks. There is a mutual understanding and support from all group members, who all bring interesting and often different points of view for discussion.

Advice for people with aphasia

- **Go out more: feel confident.**
- **You can't feel confident until you're comfortable in a situation. Put yourself in a situation regularly.**
- **Attend an aphasia group: you will appreciate that you are not the only one. People will be willing to slow down.**
- **Create as many opportunities as possible to communicate, relate and socialise.**
- **Reach out to your friends. Try to stay in touch with them. Let them know what has changed.**

Advice for others

- **Be slow: give the person with aphasia a chance to speak.**
- **Speak slowly without being patronizing.**
- **Some people will tell you that they have aphasia, but others may not.**
- **Stay in touch, visit your friends with aphasia, going out can be difficult for them.**
- **Noisy places make it difficult for people with aphasia to understand when people speak.**

Three weeks, Three Kids – A Review by Brian Coyle

At the clinic, Brian has been developing his writing skills. Firstly, he was working on sentences, then paragraphs, now he has moved on to writing articles with introductions, main bodies and conclusions.

Recently he has been writing film reviews and sending them via text message.

This is his most recent review:

Three weeks, Three Kids

True Story

Granddad broke his foot so Grandma look after him but the foot not really broken. So mum and Dad not going away now because no one to look after the 3 kids, only the teenage daughter. She was not trust but Dad was going anyway, so they went to Paris.

The daughter's boyfriend was not good so she drop him. Mum was off the rocker. In school, a big boy stole the lunch from the son but the daughter took back to him. The other man was nice.

The second daughter was in the football match but she was not good and was upset. The third child was teenage but she was party and the man was drinking and she was drunk, she was partying so the oldest daughter took her home.

The mum and dad was fine now. The grandma and grandpa was fine. The dad and mother was home now. The third kid, she told her dad and mum. The nice man then dated the daughter, she was employed in school now.

So the story was 'growing up'.

By Brian Coyle

The Aphasia Opera *by Sam*



Writer Finn Beames and composer Santa Buš are developing a new opera about living with aphasia. The aim has been to create an opera that people with and without aphasia can enjoy and to involve people with aphasia to perform alongside professional singers.

Sam gave us an insight into what the opera is about:

The Opera show is about Aphasia

This opera show is about a lady living in America who has stroke and aphasia.

The lady was sexually assaulted by a carer. She reported to the manager and the manager then reported to the police. The woman police officer knows aphasia so she understands it's difficult to speak.



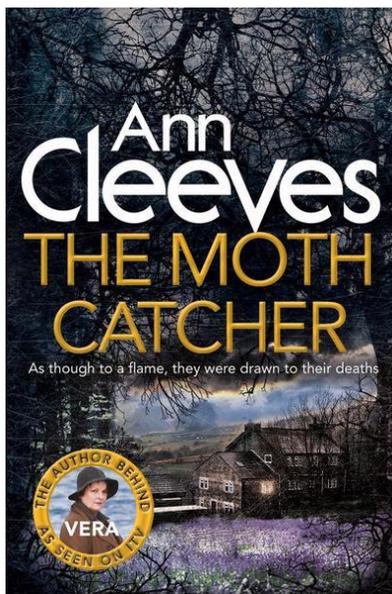
The case was taken to the court where the judge was on the side of carer not the aphasia lady.

We are trying to prepare the show through singing and acting because of the aphasia.

There are going to be more workshops before the show will be ready.



Ann Cleeves – The Moth Catcher – *First impressions*



At the clinic, Carol has been developing her reading ability. She has always been an active reader and especially enjoys Crime fiction. When she started at the clinic at the end of last year she had not picked up a book since before her injury. Now she is reading every day and has started reading a new and exciting crime thriller.

Carol has read the first few chapters of this book and has shared her views here:

What is the book about?

This book is currently also a television series. It's about a character who volunteers. Two people get killed at the beginning and they start looking for what has happened.

The main character lives out in the middle of nowhere, where he father lives. He used to take animals and sew them, he stuffed the animals. In her youth, she had to work for him. She wasn't very happy. I was quite surprised actually, she was still in charge of the manor out in the country. It was set in Northumberland.

Is this book in a series of books?

Yes, there's been some since then. There's one that's just come out, they are set in the present day. I've seen most of them and some of them are set in Newcastle.

Where are you up to in the book, what has just happened?

Well one of the characters, he had a crisis and had been murdered while staying with the guy who had been looking after the area. He has a particular interest in moths. He was killed and found in the village, when they had gone there to find out where he had been staying, they found the other character that had been murdered.

There are lots of things going on, they meet up with older people who have retired there. One of the interesting things about it is that there is a couple who owned their own restaurant. That is because their daughter had been involved in a terrible crime and ended up in prison. She has just come out of prison and has been involved with somebody...

Thank you Carol, the book does sound exciting; it leaves you wondering what will happen next.