

Workshop for people who use AAC

- Keeping up with conversations: Is it OK to stop the conversation while I construct my message?

This is something I have pondered over the years. Personally, given the fact that everyone is so busy I do not like hold up the conversation and I feel additional pressure to type faster when people are waiting on me, I tend to type and listen at the same time. However, I can see that this may appear that I am not listening to the other person.

I would be interested to hear what everybody else thinks?

- Ideas for manufacturers: How can my communication device be improved

There are always things about our communication devices that annoy us or that we wish they could do. We do not have as ready access to the manufacturers like people living in the United States or the United Kingdom do. There are many things that annoy me with the Accent.

- Providing opportunities for younger people who use AAC to see more experienced people who use communication devices: Find me a mentor

I think it is crucial for younger people who use AAC to see more experienced people who use communication devices. It is important to see communication devices being modelled in a real life context and for you younger people to see what can be achieved through AAC.

I would like to hear directly from the younger people to see what they think about this. Would you benefit from having a mentor? A more experienced person who uses AAC show you the ropes. Perhaps more frequent forums such as this in your own state or town?

- Expressing emotions using AAC: I don't need a communication device to express emotion

People can tell if we are happy, excited, sad or angry without us needing to use AAC. However, naturally people want to know what is upsetting us or making us angry. How many times have people said why are you crying? You look angry, what your problem? This is where AAC does have a role. Most of us find it very difficult to use AAC when we are upset or angry. If you think about it, it is unnatural to regain our composure to enable us to generate a message. Additionally, communication devices do not have the ability to alter tones to reflect our emotions. What are your thoughts on this topic? Do you think you need AAC to express emotions? Could your communication device be enhanced to help you to better express your emotions?

- I can talk about anything I want – I just need the words to do it: Do I want a speech chip implanted in my brain?

This is an interesting concept. It would need a strong filter! I don't think I would want all my thoughts verbalised! For example, at work I often think this party is really annoying me. Then I would have to consider would it change my identity? Ultimately I think I would jump at the chance. What do you think? Would you have a speech chip implanted in your brain?