

## The “Wall Question”

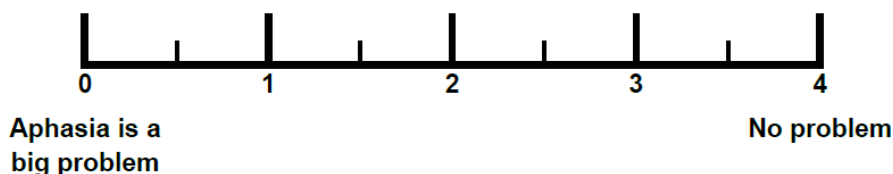
*A single-item quality of life measure for aphasia*

### Overview

The Wall Question is a self-report rating on quality of life (QoL) for people with aphasia. This is a rating designed to gain insight into the perspective of the person with aphasia regarding the degree to which aphasia creates a barrier to participating in life. It is designed for use at a stage where the person with aphasia has some experience in living with aphasia – in other words, beyond the acute care phase of the healthcare continuum.

The speech-language pathologist asks the patient/client to rate their life with aphasia using a pictograph referred to as the “Wall Question”, excerpted from the [Assessment for Living with Aphasia \(ALA\)](#) (Kagan et al., 2011, 2013; Simmons-Mackie et al., 2014). The participant self-rates the *impact* of aphasia on their life using a 9-point rating scale ranging from 0 to 4 (with 0.5 intervals).

The rating scale for the “Wall Question” is represented as:



A recent study on the Wall Question that included 103 participants with aphasia provides evidence indicating that the measure is reliable and valid (Kim, Azios et al., 2025). A report on the study is currently in preparation.

Attachments here include:

- (1) Clinician script to support administration with a person with aphasia;
- (2) Introductory image for the rating scale;
- (3) Pictographic support for the Wall Question.

Clinicians should be trained in the evidence-based method *Supported Conversation for Adults with Aphasia* (SCA™) (Kagan, Black et al., 2001). The free [Introduction to SCA™ eLearning module](#) as well as in-depth [SCA™ training for healthcare professionals](#) are available from the Aphasia Institute.

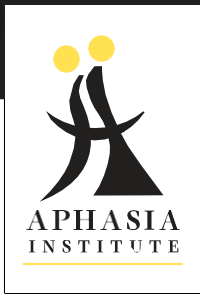
## References

Kagan, A., Black, S., Duchan, J. F., Simmons Mackie, N., & Square, P. (2001). Training volunteers as conversation partners using “Supported Conversation for Adults with Aphasia” (SCA): A controlled trial. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*, 44(3), 624-638. doi:[10.1044/1092-4388\(2001/051\)](https://doi.org/10.1044/1092-4388(2001/051))

Kagan, A., Simmons-Mackie, N., Victor, J. C., Carling-Rowland, A., Hoch, J., Huijbregts, M., Streiner, D., & Mok, A. (2013). *Assessment for Living with Aphasia (ALA)* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Aphasia Institute.

Kim, E. S., Azios, J. H., Love, S., Chan, M. T., Strong, K. A., Shumway, E., Simmons-Mackie, N. & Kagan, A. (2025, May 29). *Examining Reliability, Concurrent and Face Validity of “The Wall Question” as a Standalone Measure of Quality of Life* [Paper presentation]. Clinical Aphasiology Conference, Albuquerque, NM. Designated as an “Audrey Holland Memorial Platform Presentation”. [https://clinicalaphasiologyconference.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/cac\\_2025\\_abstracts.pdf](https://clinicalaphasiologyconference.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/cac_2025_abstracts.pdf)

Simmons-Mackie, N, Kagan, A., Victor, J. C., Carling-Rowland, A., Mok, A., Hoch, J. S., Huijbregts, M., & Streiner, D. L. (2014). The Assessment for Living with Aphasia: Reliability and construct validity. *International Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 16(1), 82-94. doi:[10.3109/17549507.2013.831484](https://doi.org/10.3109/17549507.2013.831484)



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*A single-item quality of life measure for aphasia*

### Script

#### (A). Introductory Script

\* *Note: Administration may need to be adjusted for virtual facilitation.*

*(Show introductory image to rating scale, page 1.)*

**We sometimes use pictures, and this rating scale here, to help you show how you’re feeling.**



**At this end of the scale** *(point to right end of scale), it means things are great (thumbs-up gesture).*

**At this end of the scale** *(point to left end of scale), it means things are not so great (thumbs-down gesture).*

**Or, if it’s somewhere in the middle** *(point to discrete lines near middle of scale), things might feel so-so (show gesture).*

**Let’s try this with a practice question first.**

*(Show introductory image to rating scale, page 2.)*

**How are you feeling today?**

**Point to a line on the scale for how you’re feeling.**

*(If client seems to point to a place where it is not clear if they mean one line or another, verify with follow-up questions, as each line represents a fixed score.)*

*For example:*

**“Just checking: Do you feel like you’re on this line, or on this line?  
Pick one.”**

**OK, let’s move on.**

*(Show the pictographs of the wall images with the rating scale below.)*



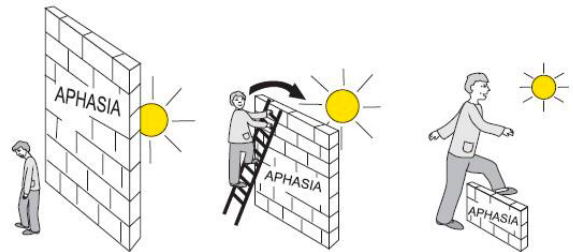
## (B). The Wall Question – Script

I'd like to know how you are feeling about the aphasia – your communication problem – what is it like for you these days.

Let's start with this picture.

*Point to each relevant part as you speak.  
Use questioning body language and intonation. Make sure to point to each marker on the scale.*

Here you see that for some people, aphasia can be like a wall. It can stop you from doing things, from joining in your life.



Here, in the middle, there is a ladder helping you to climb over the wall. Things are getting better – maybe you are better at communicating or other people know how to talk to you.



Finally, on this side, the wall of aphasia is still there but it is small and you are stepping over it to live your life. The aphasia is still there, but it does not stop you from doing what you want to do.

Which one is you?

*{RECORD client's response}*





# How are you feeling today?





# Which one is you?

