



More Vision Choices

Just when you thought I was done with vision and assistive technology, I have even more! This newsletter has a variety of things related to vision that aren't magnification.

High Contrast Keyboard

So, let's say you love to email others on your computer, but your vision is getting worse and the letters on the keyboard are just too small. Sometimes it is the color contrast on your keyboard that is the culprit. My keyboard has medium sized white print on a gray background. Not a bad contrast but it could be better. You can replace your original keyboard with a replacement very easily. Just be sure if you get a wireless keyboard that it will connect to your computer. Almost all computers will accept a wireless keyboard but check before buying. The



high contrast keyboard with very large print is a great example of a high contrast keyboard that is easy on the eyes.

Just Google for yellow keyboard, there are several companies and some corded and others wireless.

To see the computer screen, you can turn on the accessibility features in your computer operating system. It could be magnification, all over larger print or a basic talking feature. Another method on a Windows computer is to hold down the Ctrl key and then touch the] key to make the print bigger. Don't panic if it doesn't work, not all computers work this way. Another

fix that is a wee bit more money but works well is to replace your monitor with a much bigger one (must be a monitor or combo tv/monitor). Go check out local computer stores and ask them to show you print on the screen as well as what a website would look like. Be sure the image is crystal clear – check several – compare the quality of those screens. Remember not to get a HUGE one (like a 50"). Here's why, if the screen is showing the full width of a piece of paper magnified, you don't want to move your desk chair to the far left to start the line of text and then have to move your chair to far right to finish reading that same line of text. That would get old very fast – and give you neck strain.



Let's say that didn't work for you. If you have a Windows computer, then you should check out ZoomText software that will enlarge print but also read the full text to you. Very fancy but oh so useful for those with

vision issues. Two different products: ZoomText Magnifier and ZoomText Reader. They have been around for many years, check them out at www.zoomtext.com



Voice Labeling System

And now for something very cool: **PenFriend**

This small device – like a very fat pen –

will record a person's voice to identify a household item later and is linked to a specific self-adhesive label. See the orange and yellow circles/squares in the picture. Look at pill bottle with yellow dot. The newest version, number 3, will now play MP3 music files and up to 250 hours of recording time.

Let me tell you how a friend of mine uses this handy dandy device. She is blind so after her husband and she finish grocery shopping, they return home to label each can and jar they bought. It isn't as long a process as it sounds. They have taken 3x5 cards and cut them into about 6 squares. Not precise, just eyeball and cut. Then they took a paper punch and punched a hole in an upper corner. The next step is to thread a rubber band through the hole and back through the original loop; you now have a hanging loop. Now if you have followed me, place a small yellow dot on one side of the index card (they are individually numbered) and then with a fine magic marker, write on the other side what the item is. Sample: Tomato soup, ketchup, canned green beans, etc. The first time they make this tag with rubber band attached, her husband will voice record into the fat end of the PenFriend: "tomato soup with the tip touching the yellow/orange circle what the item is: Now when my friend is home during the day, she grabs a can and her PenFriend. She finds the self-adhesive circle; she touches the small end of the PenFriend to the circle and her husband's voice comes through. Now she can independently find the soup, etc. of her choice.



After she finds her soup, she takes



the rubberband and the tag off the can and places it in a bowl on her counter so it can be used again without having to record a new voice tag. It saves the circles and time recording.

If you don't feel crafty, here is a product called Rubber Bandits, they are classified as write-on flexible labels from Amazon. Only 12 per pack for around \$5.

PenFriend can be found at Maxi-Aids online and another model produced by Reizen can be found on Amazon. Be sure to comparison shop!

Have questions? Please contact us by phone or email (see below).

Good luck!

[For those of you reading this outside the Lower Shore of Maryland – please contact your local Area Agency on Aging for assistance.]

Till next week... I'm researching accessible swimsuits – have any resources I should check?

Be well.

Take care of you!

If you have suggestions for upcoming newsletter topics, problems you are experiencing, please call or send me an email. I love challenges!

Give us a call or email and we will be glad to answer questions about the resources we have. **Please call** and ask at 410-742-0505, ext. 118 – Cindy Robinson **Or, email** Janet Parke at jparke@macinc.org

Let us know if you would like to receive this weekly Information Newsletter in your email. We will be glad to send it to you. Send an email to llewis@macinc.org



Janet Parke

With over 25 years of Technology Experience for people with limitations

Disclaimer: The content in this handout is not intended as a substitute for medical advice. Talk to your doctor or healthcare provider before undertaking any type of therapy or treatment. We are not endorsing companies that we mention.