



Second Sense
Beyond vision loss

Because of you... Angela is traveling independently, pg 1

Clients attend remote training, pg 3

Andrea finds value in texting, pg 4

Spring 2022

Perspectives

Training Helps Angela Regain Her Confidence



Angela uses her white cane with a roller tip to navigate her way on a sidewalk in Rogers Park.

"I lost my confidence because I lost my daily cane skills during the winter."

~ Angela

Angela is an independent person. She is outgoing and loves to travel — whether it is to far away places or a new craft brewery in one of Chicago's many neighborhoods.

But, the mix of COVID, winter in Chicago and a recent decline in her vision kept her indoors.

"I hadn't been out alone since November," Angela explained. "I've been having anxiety about just leaving the house. I have lost more vision — just seeing light and shadows now."

So Angela called Second Sense. She has received training from us in the past — technology training with our tech tutor, brushing up on mobility skills and learning 1Touch self-defense techniques.

Siobhan, one of our Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists, went out to Angela's home to talk to her about her goals.

Together, Angela and Siobhan developed a training plan. They focused on four specific routes that Angela wants to travel.

While traveling these routes, Angela brushes up on her cane skills. This includes learning the terrain, obstacles, landmarks, street crossings and other elements of each route.

"One of the first places I wanted to get to was Culture of Safety, a small organization that teaches self-defense and karate. They focus on high-risk populations, especially

continued on page 2>>

Walking out their door. Jotting down a phone number. Sending an email.

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Angela Regains Confidence continued from page 1

with their self-defense and de-escalation classes.

“Another route was to drum lessons. It is almost impossible to walk because there are just too many obstacles. So, even though it is only about one mile away, the route we selected requires taking two buses.”

Angela isn't going to let vision loss determine how she lives her life. She and her husband spent some of the past year crossing things off their bucket list. Including jumping out of a plane.

So she was surprised how quickly she lost her confidence.

“Siobhan is teaching me all the tools I need to acclimate to lesser vision. Each lesson I learn something new. She provides so

many different tips that improve my skills.”

Angela and Siobhan are also planning to incorporate echolocation — using sound to determine your place in the environment — into lessons. They will also cover GPS apps, like Soundscape and BlindSquare.

Angela is happy to be out and about again. She is looking forward to the upcoming sailing season. She is taking lessons at Judd Goldman Adaptive Sailing Foundation.

“It took me 20 years to get in a sailboat. I don't care if it is a little cold on the water. I can wear a jacket and gloves. It is just amazing out there!” ●

You are Changing Lives, Even During the Pandemic

Our clients

received individual training using:
phone calls



outdoor lessons

FaceTime video calls



Remote access to clients' devices



101 adults received in-person orientation and mobility training

100% clients who completed training use their mobility skills daily



84 clients received 344 hours of daily living skills training in-person or remotely

We met in their homes, garages, backyards and nearby parks to teach them to cook, clean, organize, track appointments and other tasks



74 clients received 308 hours of individual tech training in-person or remotely

Clients use tech in their daily lives for shopping, banking, sending emails, reading, scheduling appointments and so much more

Clients served during 2021

Finding a job. Living an active, independent life. Because of you.

Different Formats for Different Audiences

During the pandemic, we increased the number of workshops we offer to ease the isolation our clients were experiencing.

Rather than in-person sessions, we switched to remote workshops. We used a conference line to make the workshops accessible to anyone and everyone.

We received such a great response, we are planning to continue to offer these remote workshops as part of our ongoing training options. ●

"My favorite workshop is the Apple Exchange. All of my devices are Apple products. While I may feel confident on one of my devices, I always learn something new. The questions and answers are so beneficial. I am especially happy to receive information when there is an iOS update."

~ Marilyn



"I took the Creative Nonfiction Writing class with Cory. I always like to keep my creative juices flowing and this was a good workshop, which inspired me to do something different."

~ Stella

Passionate Focus 2022

Our annual Passionate Focus art exhibit is in-person once again!

All the artwork in this exhibit is created by artists with vision loss.

Some have been artists all their lives. Others did not pick up a brush until they lost their vision. All have a drive to express themselves creatively.

The opening reception for the exhibit will be on April 28, 2022 at the Fairmont Hotel in Chicago. You can purchase tickets at bidpal.net/pf2022. You can also see all the amazing artwork at that site or on our website, second-sense.org/help/passionate-focus/. ●



Marshy Landscape by Alison Fortney



Tree of Life by Barbara Oswald



Fishing on Montrose Harbor by Stella De Genova



Growing Gold Teapot by Passle Helminski

A Smart Phone Becomes a Necessity for Andrea



“Second Sense has been the best resource for me forever.”

~ Andrea

“I am a little late coming to the game,” Andrea shared.

“During the pandemic I needed a tetanus shot. But, I couldn’t do anything without a smart phone. I had to rely on a friend to schedule the shot, take me to the pharmacy to get my shot, and wait with me in the car until she got a text to let me know it was okay to go in.”

Andrea has used a Jitterbug phone for years. But now she is switching over to an iPhone. So, she contacted Second Sense.

“Siobhan has been great. As we switched back and forth between in-person, outdoor and remote lessons, she made sure I kept learning. She met me outside when my senior residence wasn’t

allowing visitors. She sent me links to tutorials when the pandemic number spiked.

“And she is always available for calls in between lessons. Like when my phone started speaking to me in Polish!”

As we do with all our clients, Siobhan made sure she addressed any immediate needs right away.

Andrea had moved to a new senior residence. The management slips lots of paper notices under the residents’ doors. Printed notices that Andrea can’t read.

So, Siobhan downloaded the Seeing AI app onto Andrea’s phone and taught her how to use it. Simply take a photo of the document — the app helps the user line up the document for the camera — and the app will read all the text to you.

“This was the biggest help to me, right off the bat!”

“We have just starting lessons on texting. While I don’t have much interest in texting friends and family — I prefer phone calls — it seems to have become a necessity for daily living tasks.

“For instance, I use Go Go Grandparent for rides. I have been using this for a while. But, while I can schedule rides with a phone call, the drivers use texts to confirm a scheduled ride. They also use texts to alert you when they arrive.

“Since I wasn’t getting the texts, I was missing my ride.

“So texting will increase my independence with transportation, grocery shopping, doctor’s appointments and so much more.” ●