

HAAA-LA  
NOVEMBER 21, 2015

>> PAT: GOOD MORNING, EVERYBODY.

GOOD MORNING. GOOD MORNING, EVERYONE. IT ALWAYS TAKES A WHILE FOR EVERYONE TO COME AND SETTLE IN. ALWAYS SAY IT'S LIKE HERDING CATS, PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS, YOU CAN'T TELL. IF YOU HAVE A TELECOIL FOR YOUR INSTRUMENT, TURN IT ON. THE ROOM IS LOOPED. YOU CAN HEAR ME THROUGH YOUR T-COIL, RAISE YOUR HAND.

GOOD, IT'S WORKING.

WELCOME TO OUR ANNUAL -- 11<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL THANKSGIVING FOOD COMA MEETING AND "HOLIDAYS WITH HEARING LOSS."

MY NAME IS PAT WIDMAN. I AM THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOS ANGELES CHAPTER OF THE HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA. AND IF IT'S YOUR FIRST TIME HERE OR YOUR HUNDREDTH, WE ARE VERY GLAD TO SEE YOU.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING FAMILIAR FACES AND NEW FACES. AND IF IT'S YOUR FIRST TIME, I SINCERELY HOPE IT WON'T BE YOUR LAST.

WE ARE GOING TO BE KIND OF DOING THIS MEETING BY THE SEAT OF OUR PANTS BECAUSE IT'S ONE OF THOSE MEETINGS WHERE YOU ARE THE PROGRAM. WE ARE GOING TO BE TALKING ABOUT YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES AND YOUR EXPECTATIONS AND YOUR GRIPES AND YOUR SUCCESSES AND YOUR HINTS AND YOUR -- JUST WHAT IT MEANS TO HAVE A HEARING LOSS AT THIS TIME OF THE YEAR.

IF IT'S MORE DIFFICULT FOR YOU THAN ANOTHER TIME OF THE YEAR, WE WILL BE SHARING ALL AROUND. IN ADDITION WE WILL BE SHARING FOOD. WE HAVE A LOT TO GET THROUGH IN THE NEXT COUPLE HOURS, AND I WANT TO START IT OFF BY -- EVENTUALLY WE WILL GO AROUND THE WHOLE ROOM. IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE WE'VE BEEN ABLE TO GO AROUND AND INTRODUCE OURSELVES. WE HAVE NEW FACES AND PEOPLE WE HAVEN'T HEARD FROM IN A LONG TIME. WE WOULD LIKE YOU TO TELL US YOUR NAME, A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR HEARING LOSS AND HOW YOU CAME TO FIND OUR CHAPTER.

I WILL START OFF TODAY. WE HAVE TWO GUESTS HERE THAT I WOULD LIKE TO ASK THEM TO COME UP AND INTRODUCE THEMSELVES AND TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT WHO THEY ARE.

THE FIRST ONE I WILL BRING UP IS OUR NEW G.L.A.D. HEARING LOSS SPECIALIST.

AND I KNOW I PROBABLY HAVE YOUR TITLE WRONG, KATE.

KATE THOMPSON WHO IS FROM G.L.A.D.

>> KATE THOMPSON: I AM KATE THOMPSON. MY OFFICIAL TITLE IS HARD-OF-HEARING SPECIALIST, BUT REALLY I RUN THE HARD-OF-HEARING AND LATE-DEAFENED PROGRAM AT THE GREATER LOS ANGELES AGENCY ON DEAFNESS.

SO WHAT I AM IS I AM BASICALLY AN ADVOCATE. IF YOU COME IN AND YOU SAY "THANKSGIVING IS COMING AND MY FAMILY IS TELLING ME TO WEAR MY HEARING AIDS. I CAN'T HEAR ANYBODY AT THE TABLE. HOW DO I COMMUNICATE WITH THEM?" I HAVE DIFFERENT STRATEGIES TO HELP YOU.

IF AT YOUR DOCTOR'S OFFICE THEY ARE NOT MEETING YOUR COMMUNICATIONS NEEDS.

WE PRETTY MUCH DO ANYTHING YOU MAY NEED ADVOCACY FOR OR INFORMATION ABOUT.

THAT'S PRETTY MUCH WHAT I DO.

>> PAT: CAN YOU TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT YOUR PERSONAL BACKGROUND?

>> KATE T: I GREW UP HEARING. ABOUT FOUR YEARS AGO I STARTED HAVING HEARING LOSS AMONG OTHER MEDICAL PROBLEMS. BECAUSE I WAS ADOPTED AT BIRTH, WE DON'T KNOW IF MY HEARING LOSS WAS GENETIC OR RELATED TO ONE OF MY CONDITIONS. I HAVE BILATERAL 50% MIXED HEARING LOSS. I HAVE HEARING AIDS AND I NEVER WEAR THEM. I PREFER TO SIGN, AND NOW I WORK IN A DEAF OFFICE WHERE I DON'T NEED TO TALK, KIND OF WORKS OUT. CHANGED MY PROFESSION. I HAVE A BACHELOR OF ARTS IN BIOLOGY. FIRST COUPLE YEARS OUT OF COLLEGE I TRAINED ANIMALS FOR TELEVISION AND COMMERCIALS, FROM BUTTERFLIES TO INSECTS.

>> DID YOU LEARN TO SIGN BEFORE YOU LOST YOUR HEARING OR AFTER?

>> KATE T: DID I LEARN BEFORE OR AFTER MY HEARING LOSS? FOR ME, I STARTED TO LEARN SIGN IN THE SPRING OF 2015, SO BEEN SIGNING FOR SIX MONTHS, MAYBE A LITTLE BIT MORE. I FINISHED ASL 2. I INTERVIEWED AT G.L.A.D. THEY HIRED ME. AND I THINK IN THE SPRING AGAIN, I WILL TAKE ASL 3. SO I SIGN EVERY DAY AT WORK, SO GOT FASTER.

>> PAT: GOOD WAY TO LEARN IT.

>> KATE T: IT IS.

>> THIS MAYBE – DID YOU CHOOSE NOT TO WEAR YOUR HEARING AIDS?

>> KATE T: WHY I CHOSE NOT TO WEAR MY HEARING AIDS. HONESTLY, I HATE THEM. I GREW UP HEARING, USED TO HEARING SOUNDS A VERY SPECIFIC WAY. AND NOW LISTENING TO MY FAVORITE MUSIC DOESN'T SOUND THE SAME. THE HEARING AIDS ABSOLUTELY EXHAUST ME. IT IS SO MUCH WORK. WHEN YOU ADD IT TO MY CONDITION, CALLED CHRONIC (NOT CLEAR) MIGRAINES.

TOO MUCH FOR MY BRAIN TO HANDLE. THEY BROKE FOR ONE. THE OTHER THING IS I STOPPED USING THEM. NOW WORKING AT G.L.A.D. I DON'T NEED THEM. SOMETIMES IF I HAVE A HARD OF HEARING PERSON COME IN, IT CAN BE A LITTLE DIFFICULT COMMUNICATION WITH THE TALKING. MOST OF THE TIME I FIGURE IT OUT. STILL FRUSTRATES MY FAMILY.

>> PAT: WHO ELSE HAD A HAND UP?

>> ALICIA: WHO IS YOUR ASSISTANCE DOG, AND HOW LONG HAVE YOU HAD HIM OR HER?

KATE T: I HAVE HAD A NUMBER OF SERVICE ANIMALS IN MY LIFE. THIS IS PHOENIX. SHE WAS A RESCUE. THE OWNERS TURNED HER IN BECAUSE SHE COULDN'T BE TRAINED APPARENTLY. AND SHE WAS IN RESCUE FOR SIX MONTHS BEFORE I CONVINCED MY HUSBAND I HAD TO HAVE HER. SHE WAS BIRTHDAY PRESENT THIS AUGUST.

SHE'S ONLY HAD ABOUT A HUNDRED HOURS OF TRAINING UNDER HER BELT. SHE DOES HEARING ALERTS WITH 90% ACCURACY. SHE DOES MOBILITY, AND HOPEFULLY PICK UP ON THE MIGRAINE ALERTS AND HOPEFULLY HEART.

I CAN'T TAKE HEARING TESTS WITH MY SERVICE ANIMALS. I CHEAT. I CANNOT TAKE – AND I LOOK MORE HEARING THAN I ACTUALLY AM.

>> KEN: I HAVE A – FIRST I WANT TO THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR COMING AND INTRODUCING YOURSELF. WE WORKED WITH G.L.A.D. FOR MANY YEARS AND LOOK FORWARD TO ESTABLISHING A STRONG RELATIONSHIP AND WORKING TOGETHER WITH YOU GUYS.

ONE QUESTION I HAVE IS REGARDING COMMUNICATION OF WHEN SOMEONE IS HARD-OF-HEARING COMES IN AND IS LOOKING FOR ADVICE AND GUIDANCE, HOW DO YOU COMMUNICATE WITH THEM WITHOUT YOUR HEARING AID?

>> KATE T: MY DESK IS PRETTY SMALL. IT'S KIND OF CLOSED IN. I DO HAVE AN – I HAVE AN – CALLED AN EGG. CAN CHANGE THE DIRECTION OF SOUND IN MY OFFICE IF I NEED IT. BUT MOSTLY BECAUSE I AM WITHIN FIVE FEET OF PEOPLE AND CAN SEE THEIR LIPS, NOT HAVING HEARING AIDS DOESN'T REALLY STOP ME FROM COMMUNICATION. AS LONG AS I CAN SEE YOUR LIPS AND WE ARE CLOSE ENOUGH, NOT HAVING HEARING AIDS IS NOT HARD FOR ME. MY FRIEND TAUGHT ME TO LIP READ EARLY ON WHEN I WAS HAVING HEARING ISSUES AND ENCOURAGED THAT A LOT.

>> AT SOME POINT IN EVERYBODY'S HEARING LOSS, THEY HAVE HATED THEIR HEARING AIDS. SOMEONE COMES TO YOU AND TELLS YOU THEY HATE THEIR HEARING AIDS. HOW WOULD YOU RESPOND?

>> KATE T: I WOULD TELL THEM THERE ARE ABSOLUTELY OTHER OPTIONS. PERSONALLY I PROBABLY WOULDN'T TELL THEM BECAUSE I RARELY GIVE MY PERSONAL OPINION. BUT I LOVE PERSONAL ASSISTIVE LISTENING DEVICES.

THERE ARE NEW HEARING AID OPTIONS THAT ARE COMING OUT, AND I'VE BEEN TALKING TO SOME OF THE DEVELOPERS OF THOSE, AND THOSE MIGHT BE AN OPTION. BUT I DO THINK THAT HEARING AIDS CAN'T FIX EVERYTHING, JUST LIKE COCHLEAR CAN'T FIX EVERYTHING. IT'S REALLY GOING TO DEPEND ON THE PERSON.

WHY I AM EXCITED ABOUT THE TECH WORKSHOP I AM HAVING IN TWO WEEKS, WE WILL HAVE VENDORS COME IN WITH THE TECHNOLOGY YOU CAN

TRY YOURSELF. MOST IMPORTANT THING I TELL PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS, IF YOU DON'T TRY IT BEFORE YOU BUY IT, YOU CAN'T TELL HOW IT WILL WORK. EACH DEVICE WILL FEEL DIFFERENT ON EACH PERSON DEPENDING ON YOUR SPECIFIC HEARING LOSS.

>> PAT: I HATE TO CUT YOU OFF AT THIS POINT. WE WILL DEFINITELY INVITE KATE TO COME BACK AND GIVE US MORE INFORMATION ABOUT G.L.A.D.'S SERVICES AND LET HER HEAR MORE FROM US AND OUR QUESTIONS SPECIFICALLY.

I JUST WANT TO WELCOME YOU. AS KEN SAID, WE HAVE HAD A GOOD LONGSTANDING RELATIONSHIP WITH G.L.A.D. WE – YOU SEEM LIKE YOU REALLY ARE SOMEBODY THAT GETS US. YOU ARE ONE OF US. SO I HOPE YOU WILL ALSO COME TO SOME OF OUR MEETINGS JUST AS ONE OF US. DEFINITELY.

THANK YOU, KATE.

>> KATE T: ONE MORE BEFORE I GO. AND YOU HAVE MORE QUESTIONS AND YOU WANT TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT WITH ME TO SIT DOWN AT THE G.L.A.D. OFFICES, OR BY PHONE, VIDEOPHONE, CAPTION PHONE -- DOESN'T MATTER I DO ALL THE COMMUNICATIONS. LEFT MY BUSINESS CARDS. YOU CAN CALL AND MAKE AN APPOINTMENT...

>> PAT: THANK YOU AGAIN, KATE.

LEFT THE INFORMATION HERE ON THE SIDE TABLE. DURING THE BREAK HELP YOURSELF TO LOOKING THROUGH AND PICK UP WHAT YOU NEED.

THE SECOND PERSON I WOULD LIKE TO INTRODUCE YOU TO IS MAGGIE MAHONEY. MAGGIE IS WITH THE LOOP CALIFORNIA INITIATIVE. HAVE I GOT THAT RIGHT?

MAGGIE: THANK YOU FOR HAVING ME HERE. MY NAME IS MAGGIE, AND I AM A NEW ADVOCATE WITH LOOP CALIFORNIA.

LOOP CALIFORNIA IS A NOT-FOR-PROFIT TO SPREAD AWARENESS ABOUT LOOPING TECHNOLOGY THAT YOU HAVE HERE. WE OF THE – WE STARTED A CAMPAIGN IN SANTA BARBARA. IN SANTA BARBARA AND VENTURA, THERE ARE OVER 50 CENTERS LOOPED. WE ARE WORKING WITH AUDIOLOGISTS AND HEARING PROFESSIONALS THERE TO PARTNER WITH THEM TO SHARE AWARENESS ABOUT THE LOOPING TECHNOLOGY.

I AM LOCATED HERE IN LOS ANGELES, SO STARTING A NEW CAMPAIGN HERE, TO WORK TOGETHER WITH COMMUNITIES, CLIENTS OF – VENDORS TO SPREAD AWARENESS.

A LITTLE BACKGROUND ON MYSELF. I AM NOT HEARING-IMPAIRED. I AM A BIOMEDICAL ENGINEER IN MY TRADE AND WORKED IN THE FIELD OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY. PRIMARILY WORK WITH CLIENTS WITH PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENTS, AND COMMUNICATION IMPAIRMENTS, SPECIFICALLY WORKING WITH SPEECH-GENERATING DEVICES. I AM NEW TO THIS FIELD AND WORKING WITH YOU IN THESE TYPE OF SETTINGS.

IF THERE'S ANYTHING I CAN DO, LET ME KNOW. IF I CAN TAKE ANY QUICK QUESTIONS, I WILL BE FREE TO CHAT AT THE BREAK. WE WILL HAVE INFORMATION AS WELL.

>> MIKE: IS THERE A WEBSITE?

>> MAGGIE: THERE IS A WEBSITE. IT'S LOOPCALIFORNIA.ORG. AND I WILL LEAVE MY INFORMATION AND FLIERS.

>> PAT: THANK YOU, MAGGIE. I BELIEVE YOU ARE WORKING WITH AUDRA JOY AND THOMAS KAUFMANN, WHO HAS BEEN HERE DOING A PRESENTATION AT OUR MEETINGS. LOVELY VIDEO ON YouTube ABOUT THE SANTA BARBARA INITIATIVE OF LOOPING, AND AN EXAMPLE ABOUT HAVING THE CHURCH SANCTUARIES LOOPED. WHAT A DIFFERENCE IT MADE IN LIVES OF PEOPLE ATTENDING.

I TOLD MAGGIE WE HAVE A STRONG ADVOCACY COMMITTEE WHO IS VERY PRO-LOOPING AND GETTING THE COMMUNITY. SO WE WANT YOU TO DEFINITELY STAY IN CONTACT WITH US AND COME BACK AND DO MORE IN-DEPTH PRESENTATION.

SPEAKING THROUGH TWO DIFFERENT – AS IF IT COULD HELP ME. NO BILATERAL HEARING FOR ME.

NOW I WOULD LIKE TO GO AROUND THE ROOM AND ASK YOU TO BRIEFLY INTRODUCE YOURSELF. WE DON'T NEED YOUR WHOLE RESUME, BUT JUST TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOURSELF AND HOW YOU ENDED UP HERE THIS MORNING.

I WILL START IT OFF AND THEN WE WILL CIRCLE AROUND THE ROOM.

MY NAME, AGAIN, IS PAT. AND I HAD A SLIGHT LOSS AS A CHILD AND THEN ENDED UP IN MY LATE 20s HAVING – GETTING DIAGNOSED WITH MENIERE'S SYNDROME. I HAD A FAILED STAPEDECTOMY. TWELVE YEARS AGO I WAS AT THE LOWEST POINT OF MY LIFE. I LOST MY JOB, MY FRIENDS, CONTACT WITH THE WORLD BECAUSE OF GOING DEAF. AND THANKFULLY, I MET A FEW OF THE PEOPLE THAT ARE HERE TODAY, AND TOGETHER WE STARTED THIS CHAPTER. AND IT HAS BEEN – THE TURNING POINT IN MY LIFE. AND I THINK I CAN SPEAK FOR A LOT OF YOU THE SAME WAY.

FINDING OUT THAT YOU ARE NOT ALONE, FINDING OUT THAT YOU SHARE SOME OF THE SAME CHALLENGES WITH OTHER PEOPLE, LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER, LAUGHING TOGETHER AND HAVING SOCIAL TIME, SO THAT'S WHY WE ARE HERE. I WILL PASS THE MIC THAT WAY AROUND.

>> MIKE: I AM MIKE. I AM HEARING. I AM ONE OF THE PEOPLE WHO HELPED START THIS GROUP 11 YEARS AGO, HERE TO SUPPORT MY WIFE, LATE-DEAFENED.

>> ALICIA: I AM ALICIA. I AM VICE-PRESIDENT, ONE OF THE FOUNDING MEMBERS OF THIS GROUP. STARTED LOSING MY HEARING AGE 30, TOLD I WOULD GO DEAF. HAVE BILATERAL IMPLANTS.

>> MARION: MY NAME IS MARION (PHONETIC) I HAVE A COCHLEAR IMPLANT. THE OTHER QUESTION YOU WANT ANSWERED IS HOW DID I HEAR ABOUT THIS CHAPTER? I GOT A HOLD OF TONY BARRIENT, PAST PRESIDENT

OF THE ORANGE COUNTY CHAPTER. I HEARD THERE WAS A HEARING AWARENESS MONTH. STARTED TO RESEARCH AND HOW I GOT HOLD OF TONY, AND I'VE BEEN INVOLVED EVER SINCE.

>> JOHN: I AM JOHN RENSHAW. I DON'T HAVE HEARING IMPAIRMENT MYSELF. IT'S ADEQUATE SO FAR, BUT I VISIT HOSPITALS AND NURSING CARE FACILITIES, AND FREQUENTLY I ENCOUNTER PEOPLE WITH HEARING PROBLEMS AS WELL AS OTHER KINDS OF INFIRMITIES --VISION IMPAIRMENT, OTHER THINGS. WHAT I AM HERE FOR IS TO LEARN WHAT KIND OF QUESTIONS I NEED TO ASK WHEN I APPROACH NEW SITUATIONS. AND WHAT I AM CONCLUDING NOW IS YOU SHOULD NEVER ASSUME ANYTHING. IF YOU WALK UP TO A PERSON AND COMMUNICATION DOESN'T SEEM TO BE OPTIMAL, COULD BE A HEARING PROBLEM, VISION PROBLEM, COMBINATION OF THINGS. AND I WANT TO KNOW AT LEAST THE THINGS I SHOULD BE ASKING SO I CAN GIVE MORE EFFECTIVE HELP AND INTERVENTION EVEN IF MY PRIMARY PURPOSE FOR VISITING THE PERSON IS SOMETHING ELSE, UNRELATED TO HEARING. I WILL TRY TO MAKE EVERY MEETING HERE, BECAUSE PEOPLE WITH HEARING PROBLEMS, THESE PROBLEMS ARE SO COMPLEX, MORE COMPLEX THAN I EVER IMAGINED. SO WITH EACH MEETING I LEARN SOMETHING NEW.

>> PAT: WONDERFUL. THANK YOU. HOW GIVING. AND WE REALLY APPRECIATE HAVING PEOPLE LIKE YOU IN THE WORLD. THANK YOU.

>> JENNA: I AM JENNA. I HAVE HEARING LOSS FOR ABOUT 10 YEARS NOW. I WEAR HEARING AIDS, AND I AM TRYING TO FIND SOLUTIONS TO GET BETTER HEARING. BUT IT'S A DAILY STRUGGLE. BUT I FOUND HLA. I THINK THAT -- EXACTLY WHAT YOU SAID, PEOPLE. I WAS FRUSTRATED. I DIDN'T HAVE ANYBODY WHO WOULD UNDERSTAND WHAT I WAS GOING THROUGH, EXCEPT MY FAMILY. MY SISTER IS ALSO HEARING-IMPAIRED. SHE WENT COMPLETELY DEAF. AND SHE DOES HAVE A COCHLEAR IMPLANT. AND MY MOM PROBABLY IS A COCHLEAR IMPLANT CANDIDATE, BUT SHE WILL NEVER GET ONE. SHE'S ALMOST 80 AND JUST HAPPIER WITH TRYING TO GET BY WITH HER HEARING AIDS. SO...

>> MICHAEL: MY NAME IS MICHAEL THOLE (PHONETIC), AND I STARTED LOSING MY HEARING ABOUT 22 YEARS AGO. I WOKE UP -- I HAD NORMAL HEARING -- AND ONE MORNING I WOKE UP DEAFENED. THE DOCTOR SAID IT WAS A SUDDEN HEARING LOSS. I WAS A SIXTH GRADE TEACHER, AND AFTER STRUGGLING FOR SIX YEARS AND HAVING A SECOND HEARING LOSS, WENT COMPLETELY DEAF. I LEFT TEACHING AND I BECAME A WRITER. I WRITE FULL TIME.

>> JEAN: I AM JEAN SYLVESTER, AND I CAME HERE BECAUSE MY FRIEND ARLENE INTRODUCED ME TO THIS PROGRAM. I HAVE LOW -- MEDIUM-LOW, I GUESS, HEARING LOSS. I AM JUST TIRED OF NOT BEING ABLE TO HEAR PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY AROUND A DINNER TABLE SITUATION. CAN'T HEAR THE PEOPLE ACROSS FROM ME SOMETIMES. CAN'T HEAR PEOPLE

NEXT TO ME SOMETIMES. SOMETIMES THEY HAVE VERY SMALL SPEAKING VOICE. I AM WEARING HEARING AIDS.

>> PAT: WE WILL ADDRESS SOME OF THESE ISSUES IN OUR DEALING WITH HEARING LOSS ON THE HOLIDAYS, STAY TUNED.

>> LAST MEETING I FOUND OUT HOW NICE TO HAVE THE LOOP SITUATION, SOUND RIGHT IN MY EAR. TERRIFIC.

>> ARLENE: I HAD A HIGH-FREQUENCY LOSS AS A CHILD WHICH TURNED INTO A MAJOR PROBLEM WHEN I WAS 30. I WEAR TWO HEARING AIDS. I AM A COCHLEAR IMPLANT CANDIDATE, HOWEVER, I WILL PROBABLY NEVER GET ONE BECAUSE I HAVE MAJOR BALANCE PROBLEMS AND THE COCHLEAR IMPLANT WOULD CAUSE ME NO END OF DIFFICULTIES IN THAT AREA.

I WAS A SCHOOLTEACHER FOR 40 YEARS. NOT A GOOD PROFESSION TO BE IN WHEN YOU HAVE A HEARING LOSS. BUT I HUNG IN THERE.

I WOULD LIKE TO SAY –

TO YOU BECAUSE I'VE BEEN IN THE HOSPITAL SEVERAL TIMES, IT IS A COMPLEX PROBLEM TO BE HEARING-IMPAIRED, BUT IT'S WORSE WHEN YOU ARE IN THE HOSPITAL; BECAUSE YOU DON'T FEEL GOOD, AND YOU ARE BEING GIVEN ALL OF THIS STUFF AND YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS.

I HAD A KNEE REPLACEMENT TWO YEARS AGO. I NORMALLY TAKE THREE MEDS A DAY. SUDDENLY ABOUT THE FIFTH DAY I REALIZED, "GOSH, I AM GETTING ABOUT 30 PILLS A DAY. WHY?" AND WHEN I ASKED THE DIRECTOR OF NURSING, SHE SAID "THE DOCTOR PRESCRIBED IT." AND I SAID "BUT WHY?" AND SHE SAID "WELL, I DON'T KNOW." AND I SAID, "WELL, MY NIECE IS AN RN. GIVE ME A PRINTOUT AND SHE WILL LOOK AT IT TOMORROW." "NO, WE CAN'T DO THAT." AND I SAID, "YES, YOU CAN. I WANT A PRINTOUT TOMORROW MORNING." AND MY GRANDDAUGHTER THEN WORKED WITH THE DIRECTOR OF (INAUDIBLE).

BUT YOUR KIND OF JOB IS REALLY HELPFUL. MANY PEOPLE IN THIS ROOM ARE VERY YOUNG, AND I DOUBT IF THEY'VE STRUGGLED WITH HOSPITALS YET. BUT BELIEVE ME, IT'S REALLY, REALLY HARD. THANK YOU FOR WHAT YOU DO.

GRACE AND I HAD A HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION GROUP -- WHAT? 20 YEARS AGO? -- THAT WE RAN HERE, AND SO I AM DELIGHTED FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO BEGAN THIS AGAIN 11 YEARS AGO.

>> PAT: WE ARE THE PHOENIX.

>> GRACE: I AM GRACE, AND I FOUND THIS ORGANIZATION IN 1938 [SIC]. I MISSED THE FIRST CONVENTION, BUT WENT TO MOST OF THEM AFTER THAT. –

>> PAT: 1938 -- 83. I DON'T THINK WE'VE BEEN AROUND.

>> GRACE: WHEN DID THIS THING START?

>> PAT: 36 YEARS AGO.

>> GRACE: I'VE BEEN ACTIVE FOR 34. I HAVE HAD A MILD HEARING LOSS ALL MY LIFE, BUT IT GOT WORSE AND WORSE AND WORSE. AND NOW I WEAR TWO COCHLEAR IMPLANTS.

I DO THE STATE NEWSLETTER, WHICH IS FREE, AND I AM 96 YEARS OLD. I AM LOOKING FOR AN EDITOR. I'M GOING TO QUIT WHEN I'M A HUNDRED!

[APPLAUSE]

>> PAT: THANK YOU, GRACE. YOU INSPIRE ALL OF US.

>> KATE J: I WAS BORN WITH A NERVE DEAFNESS, AND BEEN PRETTY MUCH HEARING-IMPAIRED WITH HEARING AIDS. ABOUT 15 YEARS AGO MY HEARING WENT DOWN TO PROFOUNDLY DEAF, AND I ONLY HAVE 10% HEARING LEFT IN ONE EAR, SO HEARING AIDS DON'T HELP. AND I AM NOT INTERESTED IN A COCHLEAR IMPLANT RIGHT NOW. I AM TOO CHICKEN. SO PRETTY COMFORTABLE LIP READING. I WORK WITH THE WONDERFUL PEOPLE WHO WANT TO BE PATIENT WITH ME AT BANK OF AMERICA. SO IT'S GREAT TO MEET YOU ALL. I'VE BEEN HERE FOR THE LAST – A YEAR. SO IT'S NICE MEETING PEOPLE. I HOPE GOING FORWARD WITH YOU MORE.

>> GARY: YES, THE OTHER HALF OF HER.

I WAS BORN HARD-OF-HEARING, AND I WAS FITTED WITH HEARING AIDS WHEN I WAS THREE YEARS OLD THROUGH THE JOHN TRACY CLINIC. AND BY THE TIME I WAS 14 OR 15, I WAS CONSIDERED PROFOUNDLY DEAF, AND I WAS ONLY ABLE TO WEAR A HEARING AID ON MY LEFT EAR. THAT'S IT. AND ABOUT 2½ YEARS AGO, I WAS FITTED WITH A COCHLEAR IMPLANT, MAINLY BECAUSE I DEAL WITH A LOT OF PEOPLE FROM OTHER COUNTRIES. TRYING TO READ THEIR LIPS, YOU CAN'T UNDERSTAND THESE PEOPLE SO YOU NEED THE COCHLEAR IMPLANT. AND I CAME HERE TO LA FROM THE VENTURA COUNTY CHAPTER BECAUSE I WAS INVOLVED WITH VENTURA COUNTY FOR A FEW YEARS AND CAME OVER HERE. AND I WORK WITH A LOT OF DEAF AND HARD-OF-HEARING PEOPLE. SO THAT'S MAINLY THE REASON WHY I AM HERE, SO I CAN HELP OTHER PEOPLE.

>> PAT: THANK YOU, GARY.

>> MITZI: MY NAME IS MITZI, AND I FOUND THIS GROUP THROUGH GRACE'S NEWSLETTER IN MY AUDIOLOGIST'S OFFICE THAT MENTIONED A PARTY. AND INTRODUCED THROUGH A PARTY AND A PARTY EVER SINCE. I HAVE BILATERAL, GENETIC AUTOSOMAL REVERSE SLOPE, PRETTY SEVERE HEARING LOSS. TWO HEARING AIDS. EVERYBODY HERE WHO MENTIONED A BALANCE PROBLEM, GO BACK AND FIND ON LINE OF GRACE'S NEWSLETTER OF 2015, THE ARTICLE ON MENIERE'S ABOUT CHIROPRACTIC TREATMENT AND BALANCE. I FOUND A CHIROPRACTOR WHO PRACTICES THIS METHOD. FIRST TREATMENT, I COULD WALK STRAIGHT. OTHERWISE I WAS WALKING LIKE A DRUNK. IT WAS GETTING VERY BAD, AND I HAD A SITUATION WHERE I COULDN'T STABILIZE MY EYES AT ALL. THIS STUFF WORKS. AND IT ALSO AFFECTS YOUR HEARING. IF YOU ARE – THE TOP TWO CERVICAL VERTEBRAE ARE OUT OF ALIGNMENT IT CRUSHES YOUR BRAIN STEM, AND THAT'S WHERE



THE AUDITORY NERVES ARE. IT ALSO HAS TO DO WITH EUSTACHIAN TUBES AND THE DRAINAGE, AND IF YOU HAVE THAT FULL FEELING IN YOUR EARS A LOT, IT CAN AFFECT THAT. IT'S PRETTY AMAZING.

AND IT TURNS OUT, IF YOU GET THE HISTORY OF CHIROPRACTIC, THE FIRST TREATMENT WAS ACTUALLY RIGHT HERE IN PASADENA. IT WAS ON A DEAF MAN, AND HE GOT HIS HEARING BACK. WHAT THE HECK?

ALL I CAN SAY IS MY HEARING HAS IMPROVED. I'VE BEEN SEEING THIS GUY FOR TWO OR THREE WEEKS NOW, AND IT'S BEEN AMAZING.

EVEN IF IT'S JUST THE BALANCE, IT'S WORTH THAT. YOU KNOW HOW BAD THAT CAN BE.

>> PAT: I WANT TO CAUTION THERE IS NO ONE MAGIC PILL. I MEAN, IF YOU ARE SUFFERING FROM (INAUDIBLE) LIKE I AM. NOT ALWAYS GOING TO HELP. BUT DON'T JUST IGNORE IT. LOOK INTO IT. DO YOUR RESEARCH, TALK TO PEOPLE. WHETHER IT'S BALANCE ISSUES OR OTHER ISSUES, DEFINITELY FIND OUT, BECAUSE WHAT HAVE YOU GOT TO LOSE? AND WE START –

JOE HERE.

>> JOE: MY WIFE LISA BETH. SHE'S AT WORK RIGHT NOW. SHE WAS SUPPOSED TO BE HERE TODAY, BUT THEY CHANGED HER SCHEDULE. AND LATELY SEEMS LIKE I'M THE ONLY ONE ABLE TO MAKE THESE MEETINGS AND I DON'T HAVE ANY TYPE HEARING IMPAIRMENT AT ALL.

SO BRIEFLY. MY WIFE – MITZI IS HER AUNT.

AND I GUESS IN YOUR FAMILY THERE IS SOME SORT OF GENETIC HEARING LOSS, AND ALL THAT. AND IN THE MILITARY, LISA BETH KNEW THAT HER HEARING WAS STEADILY GOING WORSE AND WORSE TO THE POINT SHE NEEDED HEARING AIDS.

SHE RECEIVED HER HEARING AIDS – THEY RECEIVED THEIR HEARING AIDS IN THE MILITARY, AND I NEVER SAID ANYTHING ABOUT IT. I DIDN'T MENTION IT BECAUSE I DIDN'T KNOW PSYCHOLOGICALLY WHAT SHE WAS GOING THROUGH. BOOM, SHE GOT HER HEARING AIDS, WENT ON FROM THERE.

AND FAST-FORWARD AFTER THE MILITARY, HER HEARING AIDS WENT BAD, AND WE HAD TO PAY OUT-OF-THE-POCKET IF SHE WANTED NEW HEARING AIDS. THANKS TO ONE OF YOUR GUEST SPEAKERS A FEW YEARS AGO. DION, CAN'T REMEMBER HIS LAST NAME. DR. DION – CAN'T REMEMBER HIS LAST NAME -- I'M SORRY. THERE IS A PROGRAM THROUGH THE VETERAN'S ADMINISTRATION WHERE HER HEARING AIDS ARE TAKEN CARE OF AND WE DIDN'T HAVE TO PAY OUT-OF-POCKET.

SHE'S GOT A NEW SET OF HEARING AIDS THAT – TO MAKE A LONG STORY SHORT, WE HAD TO TURN THE TV UP AND DOWN AND COULDN'T HEAR EACH OTHER TALK, ET CETERA, AND SO ON, AND I HAVE LEARNED TO ADJUST TO THAT BECAUSE I HAVE TO FACE HER NOW TO TALK AND EVERYTHING LIKE THAT. BUT NOW I GET MORE "HUH?" "HUH?" "WHAT DID YOU SAY?" "TURN

DOWN THE TV, I CAN'T HEAR YOU" BECAUSE IT'S GOING DIRECTLY INTO HER EAR. I WANT TO GO BACK TO THE OLD WAY.

>> PAT: SORRY, JOE. IT'S NOT YOUR CHOICE.

>> JOE: A YEAR AGO I WAS IN THE HOSPITAL WITH BLOOD POISONING, AND THE MEDICATION CAUSED ME TO HAVE SOME HEARING LOSS, BUT THANK GOD, I GOT IT BACK. BUT I THINK LISA BETH WAS MORE NERVOUS ABOUT IT THAN I WAS, BECAUSE AT LEAST I HAVE A PLACE TO COME TO NOW. I KNEW WHAT TO DO BECAUSE SHE'S BEEN DOWN THAT PARK ALREADY, AND THIS GROUP'S BEEN VERY HELPFUL TO HER.

AND THE LAST THING I AM GOING TO MENTION, WE WENT TO A MOVIE NOT LONG AGO AT THE THEATER, AND SHE REQUESTED HEARING ASSISTIVE DEVICES. THE GUY WALKS OUT WITH TWO DEVICES, AND I SAID TO HIM, "I DON'T NEED ONE." HE SHOT ME THE LOOK -- HOW DARE YOU INCONVENIENCE ME? -- I'M SORRY. ONLY -- SHE ENDED UP USING THE ONES THAT GO IN HER EARS. THEY GAVE HER THE ONES WHERE SHE HAS TO READ, AND SHE CAN'T READ IT THAT FAST.

I SEE IN THE PAST COUPLE YEARS, MORE AND MORE DEVICES ARE BEING AVAILABLE TO THE FOLKS THAT HAVE HEARING IMPAIRMENT. AND HOPEFULLY -- I BECAME MORE SENSITIVE TOWARD PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS, AND I AM GLAD THAT WE FOUND THIS GROUP TOO. I SPOKE TOO LONG, I'M SORRY.

>> PAT: WE ARE GLAD YOU DID TOO.

>> JOHNNYE: I DIDN'T REALIZE I HAD HEARING PROBLEMS UNTIL I WAS ABOUT 80 YEARS OF AGE, AND THEY TELL ME THAT COMES WITH AGING. BUT I HAVE HAD SEVERAL INCIDENTS THAT HAPPENED TO ME. I AM LUCKY TO BE HERE.

>> PAT: ARE YOU RELATED TO WENDI?

>> JOHNNYE: I HEAR YOU, BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU ARE SAYING. I HAVE PROBLEMS WITH CLARITY.

>> PAT: HOW ARE YOU RELATED TO WENDI?

>> JOHNNYE: WENDI IS MY DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AND INVITED ME TO COME. AND I WOULD LIKE TO GET ALL THE INFORMATION.

>> WENDI: I AM WENDI. AND I USED TO COME TO THESE MEETINGS FOR THE FOOD AND, OF COURSE THE FELLOWSHIP AND CAMARADERIE, AND I HAVE SEVERE HEARING LOSS. IT STARTED AS MILD AND KIND OF PROGRESSIVELY GOT WORSE. WENT TO MODERATE. AND I HAVE BEHIND-THE-EAR HEARING AIDS. I SEE AN AUDIOLOGIST IN HOLLYWOOD AND ABOUT DUE FOR NEW HEARING AIDS. THAT'S ALWAYS AN ADVENTURE, TRYING OUT NEW THINGS AND HOPING THAT THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY WILL BE THAT MIRACLE. TYPICALLY THAT'S NOT WHAT HAPPENS. BUT I AM GRATEFUL TO BE ABLE TO HAVE THE HEARING AIDS. I'VE WORN THEM FOR A VERY LONG TIME. I'VE BEEN TO AUDIOLOGISTS ON THE EAST COAST AND THE WEST COAST. AND I THINK THAT'S ONE OF THE CRITICAL THINGS OF HAVING HEARING AIDS IS HAVING A GOOD AUDIOLOGIST.

I CAME TO THIS GROUP INITIALLY THROUGH GRACE'S NEWSLETTER PROMOTING THE WALK4HEARING SEVERAL YEARS AGO. I DECIDED TO GO DOWN THERE AND SEE WHAT IT WAS ALL ABOUT. I MET SOME OF THE NICEST PEOPLE AND BECAME INSPIRED TO COME TO THE LOCAL CHAPTER ONCE I KNEW WHO THEY WERE. I LOVE COMING HERE EVER SINCE. IT'S BEEN VERY, VERY SUPPORTIVE.

>> PAT: WE WILL DO KATE AND MAGGIE AND GET OVER TO TIM.

>> TIM: I WAS BORN WITH HEARING LOSS. PRETTY ABOUT MODERATE-TO-SEVERE. THEY DIDN'T RECOGNIZE IT UNTIL I WAS ABOUT FOUR YEARS OLD. MY MOTHER JUST THOUGHT I WAS A VERY QUIET BABY. I WAS FITTED WITH A RIGHT AID. THE CHALLENGE WAS I LEARNED THROUGH – I HAD NOTHING ON MY LEFT SIDE. I HAVE A HEARING AID ON MY LEFT SIDE NOW AND CAN HEAR, BUT TRANSLATING THE SOUND FROM THE EAR TO THE BRAIN IS A CHALLENGE I HAVE ON THE LEFT SIDE, WHICH I DIDN'T REALLY UNDERSTAND UNTIL A MEETING A FEW MONTHS AGO, I LEARNED, HOW TO TRANSLATE THAT TO YOUR BRAIN; WHAT I AM WORKING WITH RIGHT NOW.

I FOUND THIS GROUP BASICALLY THROUGH THE WEB. I FOUND IT ON YAHOO GROUP. FOUND A GREAT BIG PICTURE OF EVERYONE SITTING IN A ROOM JUST LIKE THIS ONE, AND SOUNDED LIKE A PARTY GROUP. SO I THOUGHT WHY NOT JOIN THE PARTY GROUP? MY MOTIVATION WAS REALLY, BECAUSE FOR ALL THESE YEARS PRIOR TO THAT I HAVE DONE THIS ALONE, DEALT WITH STIGMA OF HEARING LOSS AND GOT KIND OF TIRED OF IT AND SO FORTH. AND WANTED TO MEET PEOPLE SUCH AS YOURSELF AND BACKGROUNDS. I UNDERSTAND WHAT I AM DEALING WITH. BEEN HERE A LITTLE OVER A YEAR. AND FIND MYSELF IN SITUATIONS, GOING TO WORK, HOLIDAYS, FEELING MUCH MORE EMPOWERED AND MUCH MORE COMFORTABLE WITH MY SITUATION NOW.

SO I WISH I FOUND THESE GUYS WITH THE FOUNDING MEMBERS 11 YEARS AGO, BUT GLAD TO BE HERE AND TO HAVE MET ALL OF YOU AND NEW PEOPLE.

>> PAT: BETTER LATE THAN NEVER, TIM.

>> RUVILLE: I TOO WAS BORN WITH A HEARING LOSS. MY MOTHER HAD GERMAN MEASLES IN HER THIRD MONTH OF PREGNANCY WHICH CAN CAUSE HEARING LOSS. AND I THEY DID NOT DISCOVER – MY MOTHER DIDN'T EVEN KNOW I HAD I HEARING LOSS UNTIL I WAS SEVEN YEARS OLD. IT WAS THE TEACHER WHO TOLD HER. AND SO THEY PLACED ME IN A SCHOOL FOR DEAF AND HEARING-IMPAIRED. AND I STAYED THERE FOR ABOUT TWO YEARS. AND THEN FOR SOME REASON THEY DECIDED FOR ME TO GO BACK TO REGULAR SCHOOL AND JUST SIT UP FRONT. I TELL YOU THE TRUTH, I WOULD HAVE BEEN HAPPIER STAYING WHERE I WAS. BUT IT CAN BE DIFFICULT SOMETIMES EVEN IF YOU ARE SITTING UP FRONT. YOU STILL HAVE THAT SEVERE HEARING LOSS. BUT I MADE IT THROUGH.

AND I RETIRED SIX YEARS AGO FROM THE CENSUS BUREAU.

I AM VERY GLAD TO BE HERE, THANKS TO WENDI. I WAS THINKING ABOUT, WOULD REALLY BE NICE TO KNOW PEOPLE THAT DEALT WITH OUR PROBLEM THAT WE HAVE. AND I HAVE BEEN THINKING ABOUT THAT FOR MONTHS. AND LO AND BEHOLD, ONE DAY I WAS IN A STORE – I THINK IT WAS TRADER JOE'S, AND I BELIEVE WENDI NOTICED. SHE WAS STANDING BEHIND ME.

I THINK THIS WAS DIVINE INTERVENTION THAT I MET YOU.

SHE WAS STANDING BEHIND ME, AND SHE NOTICED I HAD A HEARING AID ON. AND WHAT I FIND INTERESTING, WHEN I WAS COMING UP HERE IN LOS ANGELES, I LOST CONTACT WITH PEOPLE THAT HAD THIS PROBLEM BY GOING BACK INTO REGULAR SCHOOL. BECAUSE THEY REALLY DIDN'T CATER TO MY NEEDS, WHAT WAS BEST FOR ME AS FAR AS COMMUNICATION WITH THE TEACHER, BECAUSE MOST TEACHERS WOULD TURN THEIR BACK ON YOU BECAUSE THEY ARE DOING WORK ON THE – AT THAT TIME WE CALLED THEM BLACKBOARDS -- AND THEY WOULD BE STILL TALKING. AND I WOULD EYE – MY HEAD TO THE LEFT, TO THE RIGHT. I WAS TRYING TO SEE IF I COULD READ HIS LIPS BECAUSE I DO LIP READ. AND THAT WAS REALLY A FRUSTRATION FOR ME.

BUT LIKE I SAID, I MADE IT THROUGH. SO I'M GLAD I'M HERE. IT'S NICE MEETING ALL OF YOU.

>> PAT: WE ARE GLAD YOU ARE HERE TOO.

>> RITA: MY NAME IS RITA. I STARTED OFF WITH MILD LOSS, HAD GONE AS A TEENAGER. I THINK BY THE TIME I WAS 30 I LOST 50% OF HEARING IN BOTH EARS. I STARTED WEARING HEARING AIDS, AND I'VE BEEN THINKING I'M DOING OKAY. MY HEARING LOSS SEEMS TO BE HEREDITARY. ALL THE FEMALES IN MY FAMILY HAVE HEARING LOSS. I AM THE FIRST ONE TO DECIDE TO GET HEARING AIDS. I WANTED TO HEAR WHAT WAS GOING ON.

I THOUGHT I WAS DOING OKAY. I HAVE PROBLEMS IN LARGE SITUATIONS. I MET JUDY AT WORK, AND SHE TOLD ME ABOUT THIS GROUP AND INVITED ME. TELLING ME ABOUT ALL THESE NEW WAYS TO HEAR. I JUST TRIED TO DO BEST I COULD WITH WHAT I HAVE. I WANT TO LEARN MORE.

>> KATIE: I AM KATIE. I LIVE DOWN IN ORANGE COUNTY. I TRY TO MAKE A COUPLE MEETINGS UP HERE. IT'S A GREAT GROUP. I LOST MY HEARING 10 YEARS AGO TO A SEVERE ILLNESS. WOKE UP FROM A COMA IN THE HOSPITAL AND COULDN'T HEAR ANYTHING. GOT A LITTLE BIT OF HEARING BACK IN MY RIGHT EAR. I LEARNED YOU HAVE TO BE YOUR OWN ADVOCATE.

HOW I FOUND OUT ABOUT HLA. NO ONE KNOCKS ON YOUR DOOR, "HERE'S INFORMATION." YOU HAVE TO BE YOUR OWN ADVOCATE. GO ON LINE, GET A LOT OF INFORMATION AND SUPPORT. I WANT TO GIVE A -- CHLOE IS NOT HERE, BUT SENT AN EMAIL TO THE GROUP. MY COMPANY'S

CLIENT NEEDS A HEARING AID, REALLY – ON HER WAY TO HELPING HIM OUT. THANK YOU.

>> KEN: MY NAME IS KEN, AND I AM THE CURRENT TREASURER OF THE CHAPTER. SO I WOULD BE NEGLECTING MY DUTIES IF I DIDN'T THROW IN A LITTLE ADVERTISEMENT.

SITTING OUT ON THE TABLE, THE MONEY JUST GOES TO HELPING PAY FOR SOME OF THE SUPPLIES FOR EACH OF THESE MEETINGS. SO PLEASE FEEL FREE TO DONATE.

MY STORY. I WAS IN A CAR ACCIDENT WHEN I WAS FOUR (PHONETIC), AND I HAD NERVE DAMAGE. BUT IT'S PROGRESSIVE. THEY BASICALLY SAID LATER ON, WHEN THEY ACTUALLY FOUND I HAD THIS NERVE DAMAGE THAT YOU WOULD EVENTUALLY LOSE YOUR HEARING. AND SO I GOT MY FIRST SET OF HEARING AIDS WHEN I WAS 26. HEARING LOSS WAS NOTICEABLE AT AROUND 22. AND THEN I WAS DOING OKAY. IN THE WORK SETTING. THE REASON I REALLY GOT MY HEARING AID. I WAS DOING OKAY IN THE WORK SPACE. PRETTY MUCH OPERATING AT SOMEBODY WITH NORMAL HEARING. BUT THEN ABOUT EIGHT YEARS AGO, MY HEARING TOOK A TREMENDOUS DROP. AND THAT'S WHEN I BECAME ACTUALLY PRETTY SHOCKED WHERE I WAS IN THE WORKPLACE IN DOING A JOB THAT WAS VERY COMMUNICATION INTENSIVE, TALKING ON THE PHONE, MEETINGS ALL THE TIME. AND I BASICALLY HAD TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO JUST CHANGE MY WHOLE LIFESTYLE AND HOW TO OPERATE IN A WORLD THAT WAS HEARING WITH SIGNIFICANT HEARING LOSS.

WENT TO THE AUDIOLOGISTS. THEY WERE NO HELP WHATSOEVER. BUT THEY SOLD ME A LOT OF HEARING AIDS. AND I STUMBLED THROUGH TRYING TO FIGURE OUT, AND SOMEBODY FINALLY SAID, KEN, THERE IS A BIG LIST OF QUESTIONS. THERE IS THIS GROUP CALLED HLAA SOMETHING OR OTHER. THEY HAVE THIS CONVENTION. WHY DON'T YOU JUST GO THERE? I WENT TO THE CONVENTION, AND AT THE TIME HEARING AID COMPANIES ACTUALLY SUPPORTED HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA. SO THEY WERE ALL THERE IN THE ROOM, ALL THE TABLES SET UP.

AS YOU KNOW, AUDIOLOGISTS, THEY ARE THE GATEWAY, YOU CANNOT TALK TO THE HEARING AID COMPANIES. BUT THEY ARE ALL SITTING RIGHT THERE. I HAD MY 10 QUESTIONS. AND I GOT ALL OF MY QUESTIONS ANSWERED IN TWO HOURS. I WAS ELATED AND VERY EXCITED MEETING ALL THE PEOPLE THERE. LEARNING FROM THEM. SO I CAME BACK. WENT BACK TO CHICAGO, AND I DECIDED I AM GOING TO GET INVOLVED. I GOT A GROUP OF PEOPLE TOGETHER, AND WE STARTED THE CHAPTER, AND IT WAS A GREAT EXPERIENCE. AND THAT IS WHERE I LEARNED THE MOST IS FROM OTHER PEOPLE THAT HAVE HEARING LOSS THAT HAVE ALREADY GONE THROUGH WHAT I WENT THROUGH. SO WE ARE OUR BEST EDUCATORS. AND I AM VERY GRATEFUL FOR THE TIME THAT I'VE SPENT HERE AT HLAA, BOTH IN CHICAGO AND LOS ANGELES BECAUSE EVERYBODY HERE HAS BEEN TREMENDOUSLY HELPFUL AND SUPPORTING ALL OF US.

SO I AM EXCITED BECAUSE THERE IS A TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF CHANGE THAT COULD TAKE PLACE. WE ARE LIVING IN A TIME WHERE TECHNOLOGY IS ADVANCING, AND (INAUDIBLE) PEOPLE ARE TAKING NOTICE. SO WE HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO SEE THAT CHANGE. I AM EXCITED TO WORK WITH YOU GUYS TO TRY TO MAKE THAT CHANGE.

>> PAT: JANE, HOW ARE YOU DOING?

[CAPTIONER NODDING/SMILING]

IF YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED ALREADY WE ARE NOT A GROUP THAT SHIES FROM TALKING.

YOU SAY "LET'S HAVE AN INTRODUCTION," AND WE ALL TELL OUR LIFE STORY, WHICH IS GREAT BECAUSE THAT'S WHY WE ARE HERE. I AM IN NO WAY SAYING EVERYBODY TALKED TOO MUCH. I HOPE YOU FIND OUT WHEN YOU ARE HERE THAT YOU HAVE MORE IN COMMON THAN YOU HAVE DIFFERENCE. BECAUSE OUR HEARING LOSSES ARE DIFFERENT, OUR LIVES ARE DIFFERENT, BUT WE ALL HAVE A COMMONALITY THAT WE LEARN FROM EACH OTHER.

LET'S KEEP GOING DOWN. AND AFTER WE GET TO LISA, I WILL TAKE A BREAK AND GIVE JANE TIME TO REST HER FINGERS BECAUSE THANK GOD FOR JANE AND CAPTIONING, WE REALLY APPRECIATE IT.

[APPLAUSE]

WE WILL TAKE A VERY QUICK BREAK BECAUSE I DO WANT TO GET BACK TO TALKING ABOUT WHAT THE TOPIC IS TODAY, "HEARING LOSS AND THE HOLIDAYS."

DID YOU HAVE A QUICK COMMENT, KEN? QUICK.

>> KEN: I WAS WONDERING IF WE COULD GET A PICTURE BECAUSE THERE ARE A LOT OF NEW PEOPLE HERE. AND I NOTICED SOME PEOPLE LEAVING AT THE BREAK SO MAYBE GET A QUICK GROUP PHOTO?

>> PAT: MAYBE WE CAN DO THAT AT THE END BEFORE WE EAT.

>> KEN: EVERYBODY'S GOT TO STICK AROUND.

>> PAT: BEFORE WE BREAK TO GET OUR FOOD FOR THE POT LUCK, OKAY?

>> DOUG: I AM DOUG. I DON'T HAVE A HEARING LOSS, BUT I AM HERE TO SUPPORT MY WIFE ALEX.

>> PAT: WE APPRECIATE YOU WHO COME AND SUPPORT US. YOU ARE VERY IMPORTANT TO OUR LIFE.

>> ALEX: MY NAME IS ALEX. FOUND THIS GROUP TWO, THREE YEARS AGO. I HAVE MODERATE-TO-SEVERE HIGH-FREQUENCY HEARING LOSS, DISCOVERED ABOUT 11 YEARS AGO. KIND OF HAVE – WITH HEARING LOSS IT'S DIFFERENT. YOU DON'T NOTICE WHEN SOMETHING IS NOT THERE RIGHT AWAY, SO VERY HARD TO PICK UP WHEN YOU NEED IT UNLESS IT'S SEVERE AND SUDDEN. I STOPPED BEING ABLE TO WAKE UP TO THIS HIGH-FREQUENCY ALARM CLOCK THAT I HAVE.

I AM A SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST BY TRADE. WHEN I WAS AN INTERN, THE SPEECH PATHOLOGIST I WORKED WITH NOTICED I HAD A HARD TIME

KNOWING WHICH PHONE IN THE OFFICE WAS RINGING. SHE SAID HAVE THE SCHOOL NURSE CHECK MY HEARING. SHE WAS VERY GRACIOUS, TOLD ME I FAILED. AT FIRST I BLEW HER OFF – WHATEVER -- I DIDN'T PAY ATTENTION. BUT THEN I WENT TO THE DOCTOR AND WENT THROUGH ALL THE TESTS AND THEY CONFIRMED IT. AND I GOT MY HEARING AIDS IN 2006, AND IT CHANGED MY LIFE.

I HAD NOTICED THAT I WAS BECOMING MORE WITHDRAWN. I DIDN'T WANT TO BE AROUND SITUATIONS BECAUSE IT WAS VERY HARD FOR ME TO COMMUNICATE. IT WAS VERY DEPRESSING TO TRY AND GO OUT WITH FRIENDS BECAUSE YOU ARE THE ONE THAT SITS THERE AND SMILE, AND THEN YOU HEAR COMMENTS PEOPLE MAKE ABOUT "SHE'S KIND OF A SNOB" I AM NOT A SNOB; JUST CAN'T HEAR YOU. AFTER A FEW YEARS I THINK I DECIDED – I THINK ONE THING THAT'S IN COMMON IS YOU HAVE CERTAIN PSYCHOLOGICAL THINGS THAT HAPPENED WHEN YOU HAVE HEARING LOSS, AND ONE I THINK IS WITHDRAWAL AND A LITTLE DEPRESSION. I DIDN'T PUT IT TOGETHER THAT IT WAS A COMMON THING, AND I STARTED DOING RESEARCH, HOW I FOUND THIS GROUP. I WAS TIRED OF BEING THE ONLY ONE I KNEW WHO HAD HEARING LOSS, AND I WANTED TO MEET PEOPLE MORE LIKE ME, AND IT WAS VERY NICE TO DISCOVER THE GROUP.

YOU REALIZE WHAT YOU ARE EXPERIENCING IS NOT UNIQUE TO YOU, AND THAT IT IS SOMETHING WE'VE ALL GONE THROUGH. AND IT MADE ME FEEL BETTER, IT WASN'T JUST ME TRYING TO MAKE A BIG DEAL OUT OF NOTHING. IT WAS AN ACTUAL VALID, EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE IN RESPONSE TO SOMETHING THAT WAS PRETTY SIGNIFICANT. I AM VERY GLAD TO HAVE DISCOVERED THIS GROUP. I LEARN NEW THINGS ALL THE TIME; TECHNOLOGY, ACCESS. LOOKING FORWARD TO JOINING ADVOCACY EFFORTS AND USING ALSO MY OWN EXPERIENCE TO HELP MY STUDENTS. I'VE COME ACROSS A COUPLE STUDENTS WITH HEARING LOSS. I AM REALLY, REALLY LOUD ADVOCATING FOR THEM AS WELL. SO IT'S BEEN A GOOD THING.

>> PAT: I THINK THAT VALIDATION YOU SPOKE OF, FINDING OUT "IT'S NOT ME." YOU FEEL LIKE SO MANY PEOPLE IN YOUR FAMILY, CO-WORKERS AND STUFF, WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU? AND YOU FEEL LIKE YOU'VE DONE SOMETHING WRONG. AND TO FIND A SUPPORT GROUP, ESPECIALLY IF YOU'VE BEEN HEARING MOST OF YOUR LIFE AND THEN GONE THROUGH PROGRESSIVE LOSSES. WHEN YOU FIND THE SUPPORT AND THE COMMON EXPERIENCES OF OTHERS, YOUR FEELINGS GET VALIDATED. AND THEN YOU KNOW YOU ARE ALL RIGHT.

YOU HAVE A HEARING LOSS BUT YOU ARE OKAY. THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH YOU; YOU JUST HAVE A HEARING LOSS.

>> ALEX: I FOUND A GREAT ARTICLE I HAVE TO POST IN THE GROUP. THIS WOMAN DESCRIBED WHAT IT'S LIKE TO HAVE HEARING LOSS. SHE SAID "YOU ARE CONSTANTLY PLAYING WHEEL OF FORTUNE. YOU ARE CONSTANTLY FILLING IN THE BLANKS OF WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING." I FOUND A LOT OF TIMES AT THE END OF MY WORK DAY -- I AM A SCHOOL

PSYCHOLOGIST. I UNDERSTAND COGNITION. I AM A FAST PROCESSOR. WHEN YOU HAVE HEARING LOSS, YOU ARE IN OVERDRIVE, YOUR BRAIN GOING SO FAST TRYING TO FILL IN THE BLANKS. WHEN I COME HOME FROM WORK SOME DAYS, I WANT TO YANK OUT MY HEARING AIDS. TRYING SO HARD TO INTERPRET EVERYTHING, PEOPLE ARE SO TIRED OF WORKING SO HARD, AND AT THE END OF THE DAY YOU ARE EXHAUSTED BECAUSE YOU'VE BEEN BUSY INTERPRETING SO INTENTLY ALL DAY LONG, YOU DON'T WANT ANYTHING TO DO WITH IT FOR A WHILE.

>> PAT: I DIDN'T KNOW THERE WAS A CONNECTION. THE PROCESSES OF DISCOVERY WE GO THROUGH, I DIDN'T GET TOGETHER WITH THE EXHAUSTION WITH THE HEARING LOSS. I JUST THOUGHT I WAS RUN DOWN OR LOSING MY MIND OR SOMETHING, BECAUSE I'VE BEEN – I HAVE HAD A TEMPER THAT I NEVER HAD BEFORE, A QUICKER FLASH POINT BECAUSE YOU ARE EXHAUSTED; YOU ARE TIRED OF TRYING TO MAKE IT THROUGH. SO THANK YOU.

PETE.

>> PETE: 1967, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, GOT ME THERE. MY HEARING WASN'T GOOD ENOUGH TO OPERATE EQUIPMENT. SO I APPEALED IT. GOT HIRED IN APRIL '67. 40 YEARS LATER, I AM PROFOUNDLY DEAF. RETIRED. I WILL LEAVE IT THERE. I ALREADY SAID TOO MUCH.

>> JUDY: MY HEARING LOSS CAME FROM A CAR ACCIDENT AT AGE SIX. IT WAS NERVE LOSS IN THE LEFT EAR, AND RIGHT EAR WAS TOTALLY DEAF. SO FROM AGE SIX ON, IT WAS A STRUGGLE AS HEARING SLOWLY – VERY SLOWLY DIMINISHED AND LOW-FREQUENCY WAS DIFFICULT.

AS I ENTERED THE CAREER OF ARCHITECT, I WAS IN A MALE-DOMINANT WORKPLACE, AND IT WAS A STRUGGLE. MY LOW POINT WAS AFTER A SERIES OF FAILURES OF DIFFERENT HEARING AIDS, I WENT IN TO MEET WITH A HEARING AID DISPENSER, AND I MUST HAVE BEEN PRETTY ANGRY AT THIS POINT BECAUSE A FEW DAYS LATER I GOT A LETTER FROM THAT DISPENSER TELLING ME NOT TO COME BACK.

IT'S FUNNY NOW. BUT IT HURT BAD, REALLY, REALLY BAD. AND THAT WAS MY LOWEST POINT. FORTUNATELY I MET A FRIEND THAT TOLD ME ABOUT AN AUDIOLOGIST AT CAL STATE NORTHRIDGE, CSUN. AND I HAD A DIFFICULT RELATIONSHIP WITH HER. AND SHE WAS SO PATIENT WITH ME FOR THE PAST 12, 13 YEARS, AND SHE INTRODUCED ME TO DIGITAL HEARING AIDS. SHE INTRODUCED ME TO MY ASSISTIVE LISTENING DEVICE. IF IT WERE NOT FOR HER I WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO CONTINUE WORK. I AM SO GLAD I FOUND HLAA THROUGH A HARD-OF-HEARING FRIEND.

>> KAT: I AM ONE OF THE ORIGINAL FOUNDING MEMBERS OF THE LOS ANGELES CHAPTER, 11 YEARS AGO.

I STARTED LOSING MY HEARING IN MY MID-30s. MY EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND IS IN SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY. I HAD ONE HEARING SCIENCE CLASS. I THOUGHT I CAN HANDLE THIS, JUST GET HEARING AID AND BE ABLE TO HEAR NORMALLY AGAIN. BUT OF COURSE I DIDN'T GET TO



HEAR NORMALLY AGAIN. I GOT THESE LITTLE TINY HEARING AIDS. I PROBABLY NEEDED BIGGER ONES -- BUT VANITY, YOU KNOW. I STILL COULDN'T DECIPHER SPEECH VERY WELL. WENT THROUGH KIND OF A DEEP DEPRESSION PERIOD. I WAS GOING THROUGH A DIVORCE. IT WAS AWFUL. BUT I STARTED GOING ON LINE. OF COURSE, MY AUDIOLOGIST DIDN'T TELL ME ABOUT SUPPORT GROUPS OR ANYTHING, SO I DID MY OWN RESEARCH AS OTHER PEOPLE MENTIONED. STARTED GOING ON LINE. FOUND A COUPLE ONLINE CLUBS. THE "SAY WHAT?" CLUB. STARTED GOING TO CONVENTIONS. MET PEOPLE IN VARIOUS GROUPS LIKE HLA. FINALLY ENDED UP GOING TO ALDA -- I FORGET --

>> ASSOCIATION FOR LATE-DEAFENED ADULTS.

>> KAT: ASSOCIATION FOR LATE-DEAFENED ADULTS. THERE I MET PEOPLE LIKE ALICIA AND MIKE AND A COUPLE OTHER PEOPLE, PAT, AND WE DECIDED TO START THIS CHAPTER. WHAT A LIFE SAVER MEETING PEOPLE THAT WERE MY OWN AGE AND WORKING, TRYING TO WORK, GET THROUGH A WORK DAY. AND THAT WAS 11 YEARS AGO.

BUT I STILL STRUGGLE WITH DENIAL AND BLUFFING, AND I JUST -- I JUST STARTED A NEW JOB ABOUT TWO MONTHS AGO, AND I REALIZED WOW, MY HEARING IS REALLY BAD. AND SO I ACTUALLY GOT -- WENT THROUGH THE EVALUATION PROCESS FOR A COCHLEAR IMPLANT, AND I PASSED WITH FLYING COLORS ON ONE TEST. MY SPEECH DISCRIMINATION WAS AT 8%. I WAS SO SHOCKED WHEN I SAW THAT NUMBER BECAUSE IT'S SO LOW. BUT THEY DID THE TEST AT A NORMAL CONVERSATIONAL LEVEL. SO EVEN THOUGH I CAN HEAR PEOPLE HERE, PRETTY WELL, AND IT SEEMS FINE, I REALIZE I AM NOT HEARING PEOPLE AT NORMAL CONVERSATIONAL LEVEL. SO -- AND THAT'S LIKE THE REST OF THE WORLD OUTSIDE OF THIS ROOM.

ANYWAY, IT'S BEEN KIND OF AN UP-AND-DOWN JOURNEY FOR ME. THIS YEAR I GOT LAID OFF A JOB AFTER 30 YEARS, AND MY LITTLE BROTHER HAS BEEN QUITE ILL. HE HAS CANCER. AND IT'S BEEN KIND OF A TUMULTUOUS YEAR, BUT HANGING IN THERE TRYING TO FIND OUT ABOUT COCHLEAR IMPLANTS NOW. I WILL PROBABLY WAIT, GO TO THE CHIROPRACTOR, MAYBE SAVE SOME MONEY THERE.

ANYWAY, THIS GROUP IS A LIFE SAVER FOR ME AMONG PEOPLE.

>> JENNIFER: I AM BRAND-NEW AND HERE THANKS TO KATE THOMPSON OF GLAD. VERY GLAD TO BE HERE, HEAR YOUR STORIES. WHAT I HOPED TO FIND, A GROUP OF PEOPLE TO MAKE YOU FEEL NOT SO ISOLATED. I ALSO FEEL ISOLATED. BECAUSE OF THE HEARING ISSUES BECOMING VERY SIGNIFICANT AND IMPACTING WHAT I DO, HOW I INTERACT, FUNCTION, I HAVE THOUSANDS OF QUESTIONS.

EACH SITUATION IS DIFFERENT. YOU ARE ALL VERY HELPFUL. I LIVE IN PALOS VERDES, ABOUT AN HOUR'S DRIVE AWAY. I WOULD LIKE TO SEE SOMETHING LIKE THIS GOING ON CLOSER TO HOME, SO MAYBE I COULD ASK

YOU ABOUT SEEING WHAT WE COULD DO OR WHAT I COULD DO TO FIND PEOPLE IN THE SOUTH BAY AREA.

I KNOW THERE IS A GROUP IN SANTA MONICA AND LONG BEACH, WHICH IS NOT TOO FAR AWAY. HAVE YOU BEEN – TO MAKE A LONG STORY SHORT.

YOU REALLY WANT ME TO TELL MY HISTORY, BILATERAL HEARING LOSS, GRADUAL, GETTING BAD NOW. AUTOSOMAL DOMINANT GENE.

EVERYONE WITH MY FAMILY MY SPOUSE AND FRIEND, DEAR FRIEND, IT'S NOT EASY. SO I'M HOPING TO LEARN A LOT. THANK YOU.

>> PAT: WELCOME. YOU'VE TAKEN THE FIRST STEP OF A JOURNEY. THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF QUESTIONS, LIKE YOU SAID, AND WE CAN'T ANSWER ALL OF THEM. BUT YOU HAVE FOUND KINDRED SPIRITS HERE. WE HAVE PEOPLE COMING FROM RIVERSIDE, WEST SIDE -- I LIVE IN VALENCIA -- ORANGE COUNTY. WE ARE FROM ALL OVER. WE ARE THE GYPSY CHAPTER. WELCOME.

AND LISA.

>> LISA: I HAD NORMAL HEARING GROWING UP. ALSO GREW UP IN PALOS VERDES. I HAD NORMAL HEARING THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL, MOST OF COLLEGE. MY SENIOR YEAR OF COLLEGE I WENT TO THE DOCTOR BECAUSE I HAD TINNITUS. THEY SUGGESTED I GET A HEARING TEST, AND I WAS SHOCKED WHEN I FOUND OUT I HAD HEARING LOSS AND THEY TOLD ME TO GET HEARING AIDS. IT WAS SOMETHING I NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT. I HAD NO REASON TO THINK ABOUT IT. AND I WAS VERY SHY. I STILL AM SHY, AND HEARING LOSS IS NOT SOMETHING EASY FOR SOMEONE THAT'S SHY. IT'S NOT EASY FOR ANYONE. WHEN YOU ARE SHY AND INTROVERTED, AND I'VE NEVER BEEN ONE TO ADVOCATE FOR MYSELF, I SORT OF WENT THROUGH THE NEXT 15 YEARS NOT DOING ANYTHING.

I LITERALLY FOUND MY FIRST PAIR OF HEARING AIDS THROUGH THE YELLOW PAGES. AND MY HEARING GOT PROGRESSIVELY WORSE. MY TINNITUS IS STILL REALLY BAD. I LITERALLY HIT ROCK BOTTOM. I KNEW I HAD TO FIND OUT IN MY MID-30s, I FOUND G.L.A.D. AND THE PERSON AT G.L.A.D. AT THE TIME REFERRED ME TO THIS GROUP, AND IT WAS JUST LIKE THIS HUGE RELIEF WHEN I CAME TO THE MEETING AND REALIZED THAT THERE WERE OTHER PEOPLE THAT WERE DEALING WITH THIS HEARING LOSS; SOMETHING I THOUGHT NO ONE MY AGE WAS DEALING WITH AND NO ONE UNDERSTOOD.

I DO WANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE YOU ALSO. IF I MET MORE PEOPLE THAT WERE TRYING TO UNDERSTAND, BECAUSE IT COMES BACK TO WE CAN HEAR BUT WE CAN'T UNDERSTAND -- SOMETIMES NOISES ARE REALLY LOUD SO WE CAN'T UNDERSTAND SPEECH. IT'S VERY COMPLEX. IF I MET MORE PEOPLE THAT WERE TRYING TO UNDERSTAND, IT WOULD HELP A LOT. I WANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE YOU FOR COMING TO THESE MEETINGS AND TRYING TO LEARN.

SO ANYWAY, THIS GROUP HAS BEEN A LIFE SAVER. I'VE BECOME INCREASINGLY INVOLVED. I'VE BEEN ON THE STEERING COMMITTEE FOR MEMBERSHIP YEARS, DO THE NEWSLETTER. I AM THE SECOND CHAIR RIGHT NOW AND VERY HAPPY TO SEE NEW FACES.

[APPLAUSE]

>> PAT: THANK YOU.

EVERYBODY, AS I SAID, IT'S SO HEARTWARMING TO HEAR EVERYBODY SHARING THEIR STORY AND GIVING STRENGTH TO EACH OTHER.

AND SPEAKING OF STRENGTH, POOR JANE'S FINGERS GOT AN EXTRA LONG WORKOUT TODAY, SO I WILL PUT US ON A BREAK RIGHT NOW.

LET'S GO AHEAD AND START LUNCH NOW.

WE WILL EAT AND TALK. WE WILL PRACTICE WHAT IT'S GOING TO BE LIKE AT THANKSGIVING DINNER -- ALL THE VOICES. WE WILL TAKE A -- WE WILL DO A PICTURE IN A LITTLE BIT. I THINK I WANT TO GET PEOPLE OUT AND GIVE JANE A BREAK.

IF YOU BROUGHT SOMETHING TO SHARE AND NEEDS A LITTLE FIXING, GO AHEAD AND DO IT. THEN WE WILL MEET BACK HERE, 10 MINUTES.

[BREAK]

>> PAT: READY FOR THE NEXT PART OF OUR SESSION?

WE START FINDING OUR PLACES.

THANK YOU, MICHAEL. START MOVING PEOPLE IN.

FEEL FREE TO KEEP EATING. IF YOU WANT TO GET UP DURING THE MEETING, DURING THE DISCUSSION, FEEL FREE TO GO GET YOURSELF SOMETHING ELSE TO EAT OR DRINK, BUT LET'S GET STARTED ON OUR TOPIC WHICH IS "HEARING LOSS AND THE HOLIDAYS."

SLOWLY BUT SURELY. HARD TO LEAVE ALL THAT GOOD FOOD OUT THERE.

I WANT TO MAKE SURE THAT PEOPLE ARE PLUGGED IN, TURNED ON.

MITZI: AS YOU KNOW, I'VE GOT HOTEERZ.COM. WHEN MEMBERS OF THIS GROUP BUY FROM ME, 10% OF IT COMES BACK TO THE GROUP. I WANT TO PRESENT A CHECK AS A DONATION FROM HOTEERZ.COM.

>> PAT: THAT LEADS ME TO ONE OF THE THINGS I WANTED TO MENTION. THIS IS THE GIVING TIME OF YEAR. DECEMBER 8 I THINK IS GIVING TUESDAY OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT, MAYBE IT'S THURSDAY. ANYWAY, IF YOU'RE FEELING PARTICULARLY INSPIRED AND WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A GIFT TO HLAA-LA THIS HOLIDAY SEASON, YOU CAN GIVE KEN A CHECK OR MAIL IT IN OR GIVE ANY OF US IT. AND THERE IS HIS ADDRESS ON THE NEWSLETTER, WHERE YOU CAN SEND IT.

WE DO A LOT OF FUNDRAISING, BUT IF YOU FEEL LIKE YOU WOULD LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE TO OUR PROGRAM AND WHAT WE DO HERE AND HOW WE RUN AND PAY FOR CAPTIONING AND EVERYTHING ELSE, WE APPRECIATE IT.

SPEAKING OF THE HOLIDAYS, TOO, WE HAVE OUR HEARING LOSS HOLIDAY PARTY COMING UP ON THE 12<sup>TH</sup> OF DECEMBER. MANY PEOPLE MENTIONED THIS IS "THE PARTY CHAPTER." WE EARNED OUR TITLE WELL. WE PARTY. WE END UP HAVING TWO OR THREE PARTIES DURING THE YEAR, AND THE HOLIDAY PARTY IS OUR BIGGEST. THIS YEAR IT'S AT THE HOUSE IN MOORPARK OF NANCY GRAY, ONE OF OUR MEMBERS. I HOPE YOU CAN MAKE IT. DANNY WILL BE OUR SANTA CLAUS FOR THE WHITE ELEPHANT EXCHANGE. WE EXCHANGE EVERYTHING FROM A BOTTLE OF WINE TO A 12-PACK -- OR I THINK IT WAS A 24-PACK OF TOILET TISSUE WE WERE FIGHTING OVER IN OUR GIFT EXCHANGE LAST YEAR. IT'S ALWAYS FUN.

WE HAVE A POT LUCK. THE CHAPTER PROVIDES MAIN COURSE AND SOME NON-ALCOHOLIC DRINKS, AND WE ASK YOU TO BRING A SIDE DISH OR APPETIZER OR DESSERT. YOU CAN COME EARLY TO NANCY'S PLACE AND HELP SET UP.

IF YOU HAVE A SENSE YOU ARE GOING TO COME -- CAN I SEE A QUICK SHOW OF HANDS? GREAT. GOT ABOUT HALF OF US IN THE ROOM BEING ABLE TO COME. WE CAN ALWAYS USE HELP WITH SETUP AND CLEANUP, SO IF YOU CAN, WOULD YOU JUST SEND ME A NOTE OR SIGN UP ON ONE OF THE SIGNUP SHEETS OVER HERE.

ALL SORTS OF WAYS TO HELP, FROM BEING HERE EARLY, HELP MAKE THE COFFEE AND SET UP THE FOOD, TO CLEANING UP AFTER THE MEETING. THERE ARE SIGNUPS OVER THERE.

I HAVE ONE OTHER THING I WANTED TO MENTION. THE ROSE PARADE. GARY MENTIONED TO ME AGAIN, IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO ATTEND THE ROSE PARADE AND SIT IN THE SPECIAL SEATING THAT IS FOR DEAF AND HARD-OF-HEARING PEOPLE, HE JUST NEEDS YOUR MAILING ADDRESS, AND HE WILL SEND YOU WRISTBANDS FOR HOWEVER MANY PEOPLE YOU NEED. IT'S FREE. IT'S PREFERRED SEATING. YOU ARE RIGHT ON THE PARADE ROUTE RIGHT THERE, AND YOU CAN'T BEAT IT. SO IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO ATTEND THE ROSE PARADE AND GET SOME OF THOSE SEATS, TALK TO GARY AFTER THE MEETING, AND HE WILL SET YOU UP ON THAT.

ONE THING, MOVING ON TO HEARING LOSS AND THE HOLIDAYS -- ONE THING I HEARD SEVERAL TIMES AS WE WENT AROUND THE ROOM WAS THE EMOTIONAL IMPACT AND ISOLATION OF HEARING LOSS AND OUR SOCIAL LIVES OR WORK LIVES. AND I THINK FOR MANY OF US, ONE OF THE HARDEST THINGS TO DEAL WITH WAS WHEN THE HOLIDAYS CAME UP AND CAN'T REALLY HEAR WHAT ANYBODY IS SAYING NEXT TO YOU AT THE DINNER TABLE OR JOINING IN THE CONVERSATION. PEOPLE ARE LAUGHING AND JOKING. THE MUSIC'S PLAYING. THE FOOTBALL GAME'S ON. THE KIDS ARE RUNNING AROUND, THE NOISE IS BOUNCING OFF THE WALLS.

SOMETIMES WE SAY, "YOU KNOW WHAT? I DON'T NEED THAT. I AM GOING TO SIT HERE BY MYSELF IN MY HOUSE AND NOT DEAL WITH IT." NOW, IF YOU DECIDE THAT YOU WANT TO DO THAT BECAUSE YOU ARE COMFORTABLE WITH IT AND IT'S JUST NOT -- IF YOU JUST SAY THAT EVENT,

THAT LADIES' LUNCHEON OR THE CHURCH GROUP OR EVEN MY FAMILY'S DINNER PARTY ISN'T WORTH THE EFFORT, AND YOU GIVE YOURSELF PERMISSION TO DO IT, THAT'S FINE. BUT IF YOU ARE DOING IT BECAUSE YOU JUST CAN'T COPE OR DON'T KNOW HOW TO COPE WITH IT AND IT MAKES YOU SAD, MAKES YOU FEEL LIKE "I AM JUST NOT THE PERSON I USED TO BE," WE WANT TO TALK ABOUT SOME OF THE WAYS MAYBE YOU CAN MAKE IT EASIER ON YOURSELF AND EASIER ON THE PEOPLE YOU ARE WITH.

SO I WANT TO OPEN UP TO THE FLOOR TO ASK YOU IF THERE IS A SITUATION THAT YOU DEAL WITH THAT YOU WOULD LIKE SOME HELP WITH. OR IS THERE A SITUATION THAT YOU HAVE HAD SUCCESS WITH, YOU KNOW, USED TO BE THIS WAY, AND THEN I LEARNED TO DO A, B, C.

SO LET'S SHARE WITH EACH OTHER OUR HIGHS AND LOWS OF THE HEARING LOSS AND THE HOLIDAYS.

ANYBODY LIKE TO START US OFF?

LET YOU CHEW FOR A WHILE.

>> JENNIFER: I WANT TO -- JUST WANTED TO SAY I'VE BEEN COUNSELED AND VERY GRATEFUL FOR THAT. I'VE BEEN TRYING TO USE THAT INFORMATION THAT I LEARNED TO TELL PEOPLE THAT I --

I HAVE A BOOK GROUP MEETING AT MY HOUSE WITH DEAR FRIENDS. I WOULD SAY, "I'M HARD-OF-HEARING, AND I NEED YOU TO FACE ME, AND I NEED TO SEE YOUR FACE, YOUR FULL FACE, AND YOU WANT TO COMMUNICATE WITH ME." AND I TOLD THEM THESE THINGS. AND THEY DO TRY. I THINK THEY DO. HOWEVER, IT'S STILL VERY DIFFICULT.

SO I DO TRY TO KEEP UP MY END SOCIALLY, BUT I AM FINDING IT EXHAUSTING. AND I'M WONDERING -- I REALLY DON'T TO BE TOTALLY ISOLATED, BUT UNDERSTAND, IT'S JUST DIFFICULT. SO I'M DISCOURAGED AND ALMOST SKEPTICAL THAT IT'S NOT GOING TO BE THE SAME.

HOW DO YOU DEAL WITH EMOTIONAL DISAPPOINTMENT, AND SOME PEOPLE, THEY JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND EVEN IF YOU TELL THEM.

>> PAT: WHO WANTS TO DO THAT? YEAH. KATIE HAS A COMMENT ON THAT.

>> KATIE: I AM JUST ASKING, DO YOU EVER ASK FRIENDS TO MEET ONE-ON-ONE?

>> JENNIFER: THAT'S WHAT I PREFER.

>> KATIE: OR KEEP IT IN A SMALLER GROUP OF THREE OR FOUR.

>> JENNIFER: YEAH, KEEP IT SMALLER. THE BOOK GROUP IS 12 PEOPLE. SO 12 PEOPLE SITTING AROUND THE TABLE. IT'S INEVITABLE I AM NOT GOING TO HEAR WHAT THEY ARE SAYING DOWN THERE.

>> KATIE: YOU CAN'T AVOID IT ALL THE TIME. I PREFER TO KEEP IT SMALLER. BUT IF I CAN CONTROL PART OF MY SOCIAL -- TO A SMALLER GROUP OR ONE-ON-ONE, MUCH BETTER.

>> PAT: I THINK WHAT YOU ARE SAYING, KATIE, AND WHAT YOU ARE ASKING ABOUT IS PICKING AND CHOOSING, TAKING CONTROL.

TAKE CONTROL. PICK YOUR LOCATION. PICK THE EVENT THAT MEANS THE MOST TO YOU. TAKE A BREAK DURING THE TIME THAT YOU ARE THERE. THERE IS NO REASON YOU HAVE TO SIT THERE THE WHOLE TIME AND TRY TO STRUGGLE.

YOU SAID IT'S EXHAUSTING. TAKE A BREAK, GO OUT, TAKE A DEEP BREATH ON THE PATIO.

PEOPLE THOUGHT I HAD A KIDNEY PROBLEM BECAUSE I WAS IN THE BATHROOM SO MUCH. WHEN I COULDN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE, I COULD EXCUSE MYSELF TO GO TO THE BATHROOM, THE ONLY PLACE I COULD KIND OF CATCH MY BREATH AND GET BACK TO IT.

>> WENDI: JENNIFER. I AM IN A BOOK CLUB AS WELL, AND SOME OF OUR MEETINGS GET UP TO ABOUT 12 PEOPLE. AND ONE OF THE THINGS I FIND WHETHER I AM HOSTING OR – TRY TO HAVE INPUT INTO THE SEATING ARRANGEMENT. OBVIOUSLY, ROUND-TABLE STYLE WORKS BEST. OBVIOUSLY, WHEN YOU HOST IT YOU WILL DO THAT. BUT MAYBE IF YOU CAN TALK TO THEM ABOUT THE ROUND TABLE LOOK, ARRANGING THE FURNITURE SO EVERYBODY CAN SEE EVERYBODY.

I STRUGGLE WITH THAT TOO. JUST THE WAY THAT SOME PEOPLE, THEIR VOICES ARE LOWER. BUT I DO TRY TO GET EVERYBODY FACING EACH OTHER, AND I TRY TO NOT HAVE – TO TRY TO HAVE EVERYBODY KIND OF TALK ONE AT A TIME. THAT GETS TO BE DIFFICULT. BUT SINCE IT'S KIND OF A BOOK CLUB, YOU HAVE A LITTLE MORE REASON FOR MAKING EVERYBODY KIND OF LISTEN BECAUSE IT'S KIND OF THAT OPPOSED TO SOMEBODY JUST TALKING.

I UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU ARE SAYING BECAUSE I GO THROUGH THAT AS WELL. BUT I LOVE MY BOOK CLUB.

>> PAT: I REMEMBER BEFORE I GOT MY COCHLEAR IMPLANT I FELT LIKE I WAS MISSING ALL THAT GIVE-AND-TAKE ACROSS THE TABLE. EVEN IF I COULD SEE PEOPLE, EVEN IF I COULD READ THEIR LIPS, THAT JUST EASY BACK-AND-FORTH YOU HAVE WITH FAMILY OR FRIENDS.

AND IT MADE ME SO UPSET. I WAS ALWAYS TRYING TO REMIND PEOPLE TO USE ASSISTIVE DEVICES. AND FINALLY ONE TIME I FINALLY SAID, "YOU KNOW WHAT? THERE IS NOTHING REALLY EARTHSHATTERING BEING TALKED ABOUT HERE." JUST SIT BACK AND RELAX. TALK TO THE PERSON DIRECTLY NEXT TO ME, GET MYSELF A PARTNER.

MY DAUGHTER AND SON WERE REALLY GOOD ABOUT "OH, SO AND SO IS TALKING," OR "ASKED YOU A QUESTION." MOST OF THE TIMES WE STRESS OURSELVES OUT TRYING TO STAY IN THE LOOP, AND WE CAN'T. AND WE HAVE TO LET OURSELVES KNOW IT'S OKAY. I DON'T HAVE THE ABILITY TO DO IT. AND I WILL CATCH UP WITH SO-AND-SO LATER WHEN WE GET AWAY FROM THE TABLE.

MITZI.

>> MITZI: A LOT OF WHAT I WANTED TO SAY WAS REMEMBER WHEN YOU DID HAVE HEARING, YOU DIDN'T HEAR EVERYTHING. WE ARE SO

WORRIED ABOUT WHAT WE ARE GOING TO MISS THAT WE ARE HYPER FOCUSED ON GETTING EVERY WORD. WHEN YOU GET HERE, YOU DIDN'T REALLY CARE THAT MUCH ABOUT HEARING EVERYTHING EVERYBODY SAID. AND FRANKLY IF YOU WENT AROUND THE GROUP AND GAVE THEM A QUIZ, YOU WOULD FIND OUT HOW POORLY EVERYBODY ELSE WAS HEARING OR LISTENING. WE BEGIN HYPER LISTENING AND BECOME SO AWARE OF WHAT WE MISSED. REMEMBER, IN A GROUP YOU REALLY NEVER DID HEAR IT ALL, ESPECIALLY WITH BACKGROUND NOISE.

>> PAT: I THINK ASKING OUR HOSTESS BEFOREHAND, HELP US BY ALLOWING US TO SELECT WHERE WE SIT SO MAYBE OUR BACK TO THE SOLID WALL SO WE ARE NOT DEALING WITH BACKGROUND NOISE. TURN DOWN THE TV IF A FOOTBALL GAME IS GOING ON, YOU KNOW, THE MUSIC, WHATEVER. BUT THEN KIND OF RELAX AND LET IT HAPPEN.

ARLENE?

>> ARLENE: I GUESS I WOULD SAY A FEW YEARS -- EVERYBODY'S OLDER. I HAVE BEEN IN A BOOK CLUB FOR 15 YEARS. THERE ARE 12 TO 15 OF US. WE ARE ALL TEACHERS. BASICALLY WE SHOULD REALLY BE GOOD ABOUT FACING ME. WE ARE NOT. BUT NOW THE 15 OF US, THERE ARE 9 OF US WEARING HEARING AIDS. AND MY, MY HAS THE ATMOSPHERE CHANGED. ALL THE BETTER FOR ME.

>> PAT: KARMA.

>> MAGGIE: I WAS GOING TO SAY TWO THINGS THAT HELPED ME. IT'S NOT ALWAYS POSSIBLE. IF IT'S A BIG PARTY I GO OUTSIDE. I HEAR SO MUCH BETTER OUTSIDE. IT'S NOT THAT CACOPHONY. I FOUND THAT OUT FAIRLY RECENTLY. AT ANY FUNCTION, ANY KIND OF PARTY, IF THERE IS THE ABILITY TO STAND OUTSIDE, SIT OUTSIDE, THAT'S WHERE I GO.

I DON'T KNOW IF COCHLEAR IMPLANTS HAVE THIS CAPABILITY. I AM GUESSING YES. WHAT I DIDN'T REALIZE IS THAT YOU OUGHT TO LOOK INTO, IF YOU DON'T HAVE THEM, HEARING AID THAT BLOCKS OUT BACKGROUND NOISE, BECAUSE LAST -- I WORK FOR AN ACCOUNTING FIRM. AND AFTER TAX SEASON WAS OVER WE WENT TO THIS PLACE THAT HAD LIKE KARAOKE. IT WAS SO LOUD IN THERE. I HAD A CRAPPY HEARING AID, ONE SETTING, THAT WAS IT. I COULDN'T DEAL WITH ANYTHING. IT WAS HORRIBLE. AND I LEFT. IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE BIG END-OF-THE-YEAR CELEBRATION -- JUST DEPRESSING FOR ME. I TOLD MYSELF I CAN STAY AND BE FRUSTRATED.

NOW I HAVE THESE HEARING AIDS. AGAIN, IT'S NOT A CURE-ALL, BUT ON THAT SETTING A LOT OF THE BACKGROUND NOISE GOES AWAY. WHEN YOU ARE IN FRONT OF ONE OR TWO PEOPLE YOU CAN SPEAK TO THEM. I DIDN'T KNOW THAT EXISTED. I AM PRETTY TECH-SAVVY AND LOOKING FOR THE NEWEST THING.

I'VE BEEN IN TWO SITUATIONS NOW, ESPECIALLY A DINNER PARTY. IT WAS AT A RESTAURANT. THEY DECIDED TO CRANK THE MUSIC SUDDENLY. ARE WE IN A CLUB NOW? I JUST FLICKED MY HEARING AID DOWN, AND IT

WAS A LIFE SAVER. THOSE ARE THE KIND OF THINGS PEOPLE DON'T KNOW EXISTS, THAT THAT TECHNOLOGY EXISTS.

>> PAT: ABSOLUTELY. MOBILE PHONE DEVICES, COCHLEAR IMPLANT AND DIGITAL HEARING AIDS DO HAVE PROGRAMS THAT ALLOW YOU TO PUT BACKGROUND NOISE IN THE BACKGROUND. ONE OF THE THINGS I SUGGEST, BEFORE YOU ARE OUT THERE GOING TO A PARTY, PRACTICE AT HOME WITH YOUR HEARING DEVICE. IF YOU HAVE AN FM SYSTEM OR AS JUDY SAID, SHE HAS HER DIFFERENT DEVICES. WHATEVER YOU HAVE, PRACTICE BEFORE YOU GO. TRY DIFFERENT SITUATIONS. ASK YOUR FRIENDS OR FAMILY TO HELP YOU PRACTICE. BE READY WITH WHAT YOU NEED.

ONE THING THAT WAS SO OBVIOUS THAT IT NEVER OCCURRED TO ME UNTIL LISA TALKED ABOUT DOING IT AT A HIGH SCHOOL REUNION, SHE TOOK A WHITE BOARD, A 12 x 12 WHITE BOARD. WHEN SHE WAS STRUGGLING WITH SOMEONE WHO SHE COULDN'T UNDERSTAND OR JUST TOO MUCH NOISE, THEY COMMUNICATED BACK AND FORTH ON THE WHITE BOARD. A PIECE OF PAPER, TAKE A PAD AND PAPER WITH YOU. IF YOU ARE THE HOSTESS, PUT PADS AND PAPER OUT ON THE TABLE. I THINK KATE HAS A – COMMENT?

KATE T: KIND OF ON THE WHITE BOARD IDEA, IF YOU GO ON AMAZON THERE IS A THING CALLED A BOOGIE BOARD. A SMALL LCD SCREEN, 20 BUCKS. YOU CAN WRITE ON IT, PUSH A BUTTON AND ERASE IT. YOU DON'T NEED TO CARRY AROUND MARKERS, PAPER AND PEN. YOU CAN WRITE ON IT WITH YOUR FINGER AND THE PEN THEY PROVIDE AND PUSH A BUTTON AND IT WIPES THE SCREEN CLEAR.

IT'S CALLED A BOOGIE BOARD.

>> THEY ARE AT COSTCO TOO.

>> THEY HAVE A BUNCH OF DIFFERENT SIZES. ONES WITH INTERNAL MEMORIES SO YOU CAN SAVE NOTES OR WHATEVER.

>> PAT: SOMETIMES WE THINK WE HAVE TO GO HI-TECH WHEN LOW-TECH WORKS EVEN BETTER. I GIVE CREDIT FOR ADVOCATING AND LETTING PEOPLE KNOW YOU HAVE HEARING LOSS.

THE BUTTON. LIKE KAT'S WEARING, "FACE ME, I HAVE A HEARING LOSS," LOW-TECH, VISUAL REMINDERS. WHEN YOU ARE STRUGGLING AROUND THE TABLE, THIS IS A GOOD REMINDER TO YOUR FAMILY MEMBERS OR THOSE WITH YOU THAT YOU ARE HAVING TROUBLE UNDERSTANDING WHAT THEY ARE SAYING.

BE CREATIVE, THINK OUT OF THE BOX.

>> LISA: I HAVE THE MIC, I HAVE CONTROL.

I WANTED TO ADD TO WITH THE WHITE BOARD, IT WASN'T MY IDEA. WHEN I SHOWED UP AT THE REUNION, THE REUNION COORDINATOR HAD BROUGHT ONE FOR ME BECAUSE SHE WAS THE ONLY ONE I TOLD THAT I HAD A HEARING LOSS. I WAS VERY INTENT ON GOING AND JUST LEAVING IF I COULDN'T HEAR ANYTHING. BUT WHEN SHE HANDED TO IT TO ME I WAS LIKE STUCK. BUT IT TURNED OUT TO BE A GREAT EXPERIENCE BECAUSE IT



FORCED ME TO TELL PEOPLE I HAVE A HEARING LOSS. I USED IT THE ENTIRE NIGHT. IT WAS MY 25-YEAR HIGH SCHOOL REUNION. NOBODY KNEW. IT WAS A CONSTANT REMINDER TO PEOPLE THAT I DO HAVE HEARING LOSS AND THEY HAD TO COMMUNICATE WITH ME USING THE WHITE BOARD. SO THE VISUAL REMINDERS ARE REALLY IMPORTANT. AND PEOPLE REALLY ENJOYED USING THE WHITE BOARD. IT WAS KIND OF A FUN THING TO COMMUNICATE USING THE WHITE BOARD.

I ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO TRY DIFFERENT THINGS. I WAS REALLY AFRAID TO COME OUT AND LET PEOPLE KNOW, AND PEOPLE WERE VERY SUPPORTIVE WITH THAT VISUAL REMINDER.

THE OTHER THING I WANT TO SHARE, WHEN I AM WITH MY FAMILY, I'M KIND OF HAPPY I HAVE A HEARING LOSS. IT'S SOMETHING TO BE GRATEFUL FOR SOMETIMES.

>> KEN: I WANT TO SAY QUICKLY, ECHO SOME OF THE THINGS PEOPLE HAVE SAID THAT WHEN YOU ARE WITH YOUR FAMILY OR IN GROUPS IT'S SO IMPORTANT TO GO IN AND PREPARE YOURSELF BEFOREHAND. IT'S JUST – IT'S A PSYCHOLOGICAL THING. I HAVE TO DO THIS BECAUSE IT'S VERY FRUSTRATING, SOMETIMES NOT SO FRUSTRATING. WHEN YOU ARE IN SITUATIONS LIKE THAT, IT'S OTHER PEOPLE, THEY NEED TO CHANGE THEIR BEHAVIOR, AND IT'S SO DIFFICULT. PLEASE SPEAK, DON'T COVER YOUR MOUTH OR DON'T SPEAK SO FAST, AND YOU TELL THEM AND SOMETIMES BECAUSE THEY'VE BEEN DOING IT – THEY DON'T MEAN TO DO IT INTENTIONALLY. THEY ACT IN A WAY IT'S DIFFICULT. YOU GET FRUSTRATED.

SO WHEN THAT HAPPENS, HOW DO YOU RESPOND? SENSE OF HUMOR. IT'S VERY, VERY HARD, BUT HAVING A SENSE OF HUMOR AND ANTICIPATING THAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN, YOU KNOW. MY BROTHER? OF COURSE IT'S GOING TO HAPPEN. SO ANTICIPATE IT. SMILE, AND KEEP A GOOD POSITIVE ATTITUDE OR GO OUTSIDE, CHANGE YOUR ENVIRONMENT. DO WHAT YOU CAN, BUT PREPARE YOURSELF MENTALLY BECAUSE IT'S GOING TO GET FRUSTRATING. BUT HOW YOU RESPOND CAN MAKE A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE.

>> PAT: ABSOLUTELY. THAT'S THE KEY AS WE GET OURSELVES SO WORKED UP THAT WE ALMOST GO IF LIKE WE ARE GOING TO OUR EXECUTION, AND YOU HAVE TO SORT OF ALLOW YOURSELF TO BE MORE POSITIVE.

>> ALICIA: THE LAST THING THAT PEOPLE NEED TO DO FOR A LOSS, ANY SORT OF DRAMATIC LOSS, IS ACCEPTANCE. AND I THINK THAT'S A THING I FINALLY ACHIEVED AFTER ALL THESE YEARS. I HAVE VERY MUCH ACCEPTED I HAVE HEARING LOSS. FORGET THE HOLIDAYS. RIGHT NOW I AM WORKING IN A STORE AND I AM THE BILINGUAL PERSON. SO WHEN THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO ONLY SPEAK SPANISH, THEY ARE VERY EXCITED. AT THE SAME TIME, SOMEONE OVER HERE SPEAKING ENGLISH IS SAYING, "EXCUSE ME!" I HAVE TO LET EVERYBODY KNOW ABOUT MY HEARING LOSS, I AM

PLEASANT. I SMILE. "I'M SORRY, I HAVE HEARING LOSS. I CAN ONLY WAIT ON ONE PERSON AT A TIME" – ANYWAY. 99% OF THE TIME PEOPLE ARE VERY ACCOMMODATING AND FINE. I HAVE HAD A COUPLE PEOPLE – OLDER LADIES SEEM TO DO THIS.

FOR SOME REASON, IF YOU HAVE HEARING LOSS YOU ARE DEVELOPMENTALLY CHALLENGED. ONE LADY WALKED UP AND SAID "DO YOU KNOW SO-AND-SO?" I SAID NO. "SHE'S A HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER. SHE HELPS PEOPLE LIKE YOU FIND JOBS." I STARTED LAUGHING. IT'S LIKE I COULD HAVE GOTTEN REALLY ANGRY. I REALIZED SHE WAS CLUELESS AND I TOOK IT AS FUNNY. AND THAT'S THE THING COMES WITH ACCEPTANCE. YOU WILL GET CLUELESS PEOPLE, PEOPLE WHO WILL IGNORE WHAT YOU ARE SAYING. IF YOU HAVE A SENSE OF HUMOR – YOU HAVE TO BE COMFORTABLE WITH YOURSELF. ONE DAY JUST LOOK IN THE MIRROR, AND THIS IS IT, THIS IS WHERE I AM. IT'S THE SAME AS AGING, ANY OTHER KIND OF PHYSICAL DIFFICULTY. YOU ARE NOT WHO YOU WERE, YOU ARE JUST AS GOOD. YOU ARE JUST DIFFERENT. JUST REALIZE THAT.

>> PAT: I THINK ONE OF THE THINGS TOO IS THAT WE KIND OF ARE SHY ABOUT ASKING PEOPLE TO REPEAT OR MOVE THEIR HAND, LIKE KEN SAID. ALL THOSE THINGS, I KEEP ASKING AND ASKING. BEING AN IMPOSITION. REVERSE IT. IF IT WERE YOU BEING ASKED TO WHATEVER, STAND CLOSER, SIT DOWN, WHATEVER. IF YOU WERE MEETING SOMEBODY WHO WAS MOBILITY-CHALLENGED AND THEY ASKED YOU TO SIT TO TALK TO THEM, YOU WOULDN'T BE OFFENDED BY THEM ASKING. WHY DO WE FEEL SO RETICENT TO BE CLEAR ABOUT WHAT WE NEED?

THAT'S THE OTHER THING. BE CLEAR ABOUT WHAT YOU CAN DO. REMOVE YOUR HAND, FACE ME WHEN YOU ARE SPEAKING, REPHRASE. ALL THE TIPS WE HAVE IN OUR ARSENAL, USE THEM. DON'T JUST GO "I'M SORRY, CAN'T HEAR YOU" AND LEAVE IT AT THAT. "I'M SORRY, CAN'T HEAR YOU. WOULD YOU STEP HERE WITH ME SO WE CAN HAVE A CONVERSATION?" IT'S ABOUT TAKING CHARGE OF YOUR SITUATION AND NOT BEING AFRAID TO SAY WHAT YOU NEED IN ORDER TO HEAR THEM.

IF PEOPLE DON'T WANT TO TAKE TIME TO ACCOMMODATE WHAT YOU NEED, THEY ARE NOT WORTH TALKING TO, IN MY OPINION. IF THEY WON'T DO WHAT I NEED TO ALLOW ME TO HEAR THEM, WHY AM I STANDING HERE TRYING TO HAVE A CONVERSATION WITH THEM AND JUST FIND SOMEBODY ELSE MORE OPEN TO MAKING IT EASIER FOR ME.

AND YOU HAVE LITTLE KIDS IN THE FAMILY -- LOOK AT MALIK'S SON THERE. I'M SURE IT'S A CHALLENGE SOMETIMES TO KNOW WHAT HE'S SAYING. IF YOU HAVE LITTLE KIDS IN YOUR FAMILY, TAKE TIME TO GO AND TALK TO THEM ONE-ON-ONE AND EXPLAIN, "I DON'T HEAR VERY WELL, BUT IF YOU TALK TO ME SLOWLY, I MIGHT BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND YOU BETTER." KIDS ARE SO ACCOMMODATING.

JUDY HAS THE MIC.

>> JUDY: AFTER WE ALL LEAVE HERE TODAY AND FORGET EVERY SINGLE TIP, JUST GOOGLE HAAA FACEBOOK, AND ON THERE IS A SPOT WHERE IT HAS 10 TIPS FOR TACKLING THANKSGIVING DINNER WITH A HEARING LOSS.

>> PAT: YOU CAN ALSO TAKE HOME ONE OF THESE COMMUNICATING TIPS FOR BOTH AS THE PERSON WHO HAS THE HEARING LOSS AND FOR THOSE TRYING TO COMMUNICATE WITH A PERSON WITH HEARING LOSS.

ONE OF THE THINGS I NOTICE THIS YEAR SO MUCH WAS THERE ARE DOZENS AND DOZENS AND DOZENS OF ARTICLES OUT THERE. AND I THINK IT SPEAKS FOR THE MORE ACCEPTANCE OF HEARING LOSS OUT THERE. I PROBABLY RAN ACROSS 12, 15 ARTICLES ON DEALING WITH HEARING LOSS DURING THE HOLIDAYS, TRAVELING WITH HEARING LOSS, THANKSGIVING DINNER. GO AND FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION ON LINE.

>> KAT: THREE THINGS. THE "FACE-ME" BUTTONS ARE A GREAT REMINDER FOR PEOPLE. I'VE BEEN WEARING THIS EVERY DAY AT MY NEW JOB, EVERY DAY, BECAUSE PEOPLE FORGET. OF COURSE THEY FORGET. WE DON'T "LOOK" DEAF, WHATEVER THAT MEANS. SINCE I'VE WORN IT, I HAVE HAD THREE PEOPLE COME TO ME AND SAY EITHER THEY OR THEIR SPOUSE HAS HEARING LOSS. SO I BRING MATERIALS TO THEM. PLUS ONE PHARMACIST AT CVS, AND SHE TOLD ME SHE COULDN'T HEAR PEOPLE RIGHT, SO I GAVE MINE TO HER. TAKE MORE THAN ONE BEFORE YOU LEAVE.

WITH THE iPhone I PREDATED TO THE 8.0 SQUARE. IT'S SO RESPONSIVE TO HOW YOU DO THE SPEECH RECOGNITION. LITTLE KIDS SO SAVVY WITH PHONES AND TECHNOLOGY. YOU CAN'T HEAR THEM, MAYBE GIVE THEM THE PHONE AND SAY WHAT THEY SAY AND THEN READ IT. MIGHT BE EASIER THAN GETTING THEM TO WRITE SOMETHING.

IF YOU DON'T HAVE THE 8.0 SOFTWARE, INSTALL IT. IT'S SO RESPONSIVE, IT'S INCREDIBLE.

THIRD THING IS, AND I AM NOT ADVOCATING FOR EVERYBODY, I FIND IN A SOCIAL SITUATION I AM VERY NERVOUS JUST THINKING ABOUT WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN. AND I FIND HAVING A DRINK, GLASS OF WINE, ONE COCKTAIL -- AND AGAIN, NOT ADVOCATING THIS. IT'S NOT FOR EVERYONE, OBVIOUSLY -- BUT GIVES ME A LITTLE BIT OF RELAXATION, AND I FIND THAT I HEAR BETTER. I THINK IT'S BECAUSE I AM MORE RELAXED.

>> MITZI: MAKES A DIFFERENCE.

>> KAT: SOMETHING TO KEEP IN MIND.

>> PAT: MAKE SURE YOU DON'T DRINK TOO MUCH, BECAUSE THEN YOU CAN'T HEAR VERY WELL AT ALL -- CAN'T WALK, CAN'T TALK, CAN'T HEAR. KEEP IT IN MODERATION.

>> WENDI: THAT LAST SUGGESTION, RESONATING WITH QUITE A LOT -- I ALSO WANTED TO SAY THAT DURING THE HOLIDAYS, IT SOUNDS LIKE WE ARE SAYING THAT WE HAVE THE OPTION TO KIND OF BOW OUT A LITTLE BIT AND MOVE ON AND TALK TO PEOPLE. SOMETIMES PEOPLE WHO ARE WORKING, THEY DON'T HAVE THOSE OPTIONS TO JUST KIND OF GO TO THE

BATHROOM AND EXCUSE THEMSELVES AND NOT LISTEN. SO THEY ARE REALLY OBLIGATED TO TRY TO FIND OUT WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING.

SO IN THAT CASE, WHETHER THE HOLIDAYS OR OTHERWISE, ONE OF THE THINGS I UNDERSTAND IS SOMETIMES THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HEARING AND DISCERNING. WE DO HEAR SOMETHING, AND SOMETIMES WE DISCERN A BIT. BUT ONE OF THE MISTAKES I THINK WE MAKE, SAY TALKING TO SOMEONE AND NOT GETTING IT. AND SAID "WHAT?" "HUH?" "EXCUSE ME?" "PARDON ME?" THAT IS THE PART I THINK OVERWHELMS PEOPLE. MY SUGGESTION IS ANYTHING YOU THINK YOU HEARD, INSTEAD OF SAYING "WHAT?" I WOULD REPEAT WHAT I THINK I DID HEAR SO THEY DON'T HAVE TO START FROM SCRATCH WITH YOU. AND YOU DID GET SOMETHING, NOT YOU ARE NOT LISTENING, NOT DENSE. LET ME JUST SAY "I DIDN'T HEAR EVERYTHING, BUT I DID HEAR THIS." "TELL ME HOW CLOSE I AM TO WHAT YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT." GIVE THEM BACK AT LEAST SOMETHING SO THEY KNOW YOU WERE PAYING ATTENTION AND NOT COMPLETELY OFF. I THINK THEN THEY ARE MORE WILLING TO CONTINUE WITH THAT. AND IT MAKES THE CONVERSATION EASIER.

>> PAT: ABSOLUTELY. FEEDBACK TO THE OTHER PERSON, NOT BLUFFING. BUT SAY "I THINK I HEARD YOU SAY THAT WE HAVE TO MEET AT 1:30" AND IF THAT 1:30 IS NOT THE RIGHT TIME, THEY WILL TELL YOU "NO. 2:30." LIKE I SAY, YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO THROUGH THE WHOLE THING. AGAIN, IT'S BEING PROACTIVE AND SAYING "I NEED YOU TO GIVE ME THIS INFORMATION."

>> KATE T: I THINK IT'S IMPORTANT TO HAVE HUMOR IN EVERYTHING. KIND OF THE WAY I HANDLE EVERYTHING. MY HUSBAND IS THE SAME WAY. WE HAVE A LIST CALLED "HARD-OF-HEARING PERPS." IT'S KIND OF NOTICES – MY MOTHER-IN-LAW SOMETIMES IS ON THAT LIST. THE CHILD SCREAMING RIGHT NEXT TO ME IS ON THAT LIST. AND THE TEENAGER ON THE BUS TALKING ABOUT HOW HORRIBLE FOURTH PERIOD WAS – "AND OH, MY GOD, CAN YOU BELIEVE THEY ARE DATING?" IS ON THAT LIST.

IN MY OWN FAMILY, I THOUGHT THE SAME WAY THEY DID. I THOUGHT HEARING AIDS, THE SAME AS MY GLASSES, I WOULD BE ABLE TO HEAR NORMALLY, I WOULD BE FINE. MY PARENTS SPENT PRETTY MUCH JUNE TO OCTOBER NAGGING ME TO WEAR MY HEARING AIDS. SUDDENLY MY FATHER NEEDED HEARING AIDS AND LOOKED AT MY MOTHER AND SAID "LEAVE HER THE HELL ALONE. SHE WILL DO WHAT WORKS FOR HER, I WILL DO WHAT WORKS FOR ME, AND YOU GUYS WILL FALL INTO LINE." UNTIL SOMEONE EXPERIENCES IT, HOW CAN YOU EXPLAIN THE EXPERIENCE OF HEARING? SOMETHING I STRUGGLE TO – PEOPLE COME TO ME, "HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN HEARING LOSS TO THOSE AROUND YOU?"

>> KATE J: JUST LAST WEEK I WENT TO A WORK PARTY. WHEN YOU WORK YOU NEED TO GO TO PARTIES TO SOCIALIZE WITH PEOPLE YOU WORK WITH AND WITH UPPER MANAGEMENT. SO MAYBE ONE OR TWO TIMES A YEAR THEY HAVE A REALLY BIG PARTY IN A RESTAURANT OR SOMEONE'S

HOME. LAST ONE WAS AT SOMEONE'S HOME AND THEY HAD IT IN THE BACKYARD IN THE DARK WITH TWINKLE LIGHTS AROUND. AND WE COULD SEE SHADOWS AND THEN HAVE MUSIC IN THE BACKGROUND. HERE I AM SITTING THERE. OKAY, I CAN'T HEAR PEOPLE IN THE DARK. I CAN'T HEAR MUSIC. BUT I CAN CONTROL MY REACTION TO A PARTY BY SITTING WITH SOMEONE AT A TABLE FOR DINNER, PICK TWO PEOPLE I CAN CHAT WITH FACE-TO-FACE BUT SOMETIMES HAVE TO REMIND THEM TO SWALLOW THEIR FOOD. THIS ONE GUY, TRYING –

TRY TO CONTROL THE CONVERSATION IF YOU CAN. SAY "WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO IN THE HOLIDAYS NEXT MONTH?" AND ONE GUY GOT VERY EXCITED, JUST BOUGHT THE TICKETS TO SEE STAR WARS DECEMBER 18<sup>TH</sup> AT 5:00 IN THE MORNING. HE WAS GOING ON AND ON. SOMEONE ELSE JUMPED IN.

OKAY. YOU GET THE CONVERSATION GOING. I GAVE MYSELF TWO HOURS AND THEN I WOULD LEAVE. AT LEAST I MADE MY APPEARANCE. BEFORE THE TWO HOURS WAS UP THEY DRAGGED ME INTO PLAYING THIS GAME CALLED PIN THE TAIL ON THE DONKEY. YOU HAVE A BLINDFOLD AND HEAR THE DIRECTIONS, SOME PEOPLE SAY GO LEFT, GO RIGHT. BUT FOR ME PEOPLE REALIZED I CAN'T HEAR THEIR DIRECTIONS, WHICH IS GOOD, BRING OUT MORE AWARENESS FOR THE CO-WORKERS, EVERYONE. THOUGH I'VE BEEN WORKING THERE 15 YEARS, THERE ARE MORE NEW FACES DIDN'T REALIZE I WAS THAT DEAF. THAT'S GOOD. PUT IT OUT THERE. OKAY.

>> GARY: SHE FINALLY CAME HOME THAT NIGHT.

HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT ABOUT THIS? WHEN YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT HOLIDAYS, THANKSGIVING OR CHRISTMAS, WITH FAMILIES. YOU HAVE A DINNER WITH THE FAMILY. YOU NOTICE THERE IS A BIG DIFFERENCE ABOUT HAVING DINNER WITH THE FAMILY OR HAVING DINNER WITH FRIENDS. THE FAMILY TAKES YOU FOR GRANTED "OH, I'LL TELL YOU LATER." YOU CAN'T CHANGE THEM. WE DECIDED WE WON'T GO TO FAMILY FOR DINNER. WE CAN'T GET ANYTHING OUT OF IT. IT'S FRUSTRATING. THEY LIVE WITH YOU ALL THEIR LIVES. "YOU'RE USED TO IT, DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. I WILL TELL YOU LATER." THEY WILL NEVER TELL YOU. BUT WITH FRIENDS THEY WILL WORK WITH YOU. TALK TO YOU. HAS ANYBODY EVER HAD THIS EXPERIENCE, CONTROLLING THE FAMILY?

>> JENNIFER: MY SPOUSE DOESN'T GET IT. MY SPOUSE IS A LOVELY MAN, GOD BLESS HIM. BUT CONTROLLING THE FAMILY? AS IF WE HAD ANY CONTROL ANYWAY. I AM ALSO AT – I'M JUST WONDERING WHAT I CAN DO ABOUT THE SPOUSE AT THIS POINT. BECAUSE JUST MINOR ANNOYANCES LIKE THE CAPTIONS ON THE TV. I EXPLAINED TO HIM I NEED THE CAPTIONS ON THE TELEVISION. NO?

>> MIKE: NO. THERE SHOULD BE NO QUESTION. TURN THEM ON. IF HE TURNS THEM OFF, HIT HIM WITH A BOOK.

>> JENNIFER: WELL, I AM A LAWYER. I ADVOCATED FOR OTHER PEOPLE PROFESSIONALLY ALL MY LIFE. BUT I AM STILL MARRIED TO THIS

MAN WHO – I WON'T SAY ANYTHING – HE IS DEAF IN A SENSE, TO WHAT I AM SAYING. AND IT'S A STRUGGLE. IT'S LIKE THE BATTLE FOR THE REMOTE CONTROL OF THE REMOTE CONTROL. THERE IS THE JOKE ABOUT THE MEN WHO LIKE TO CONTROL. AND THE CAPTIONS IS PART OF THE REMOTE CONTROL. IT'S A STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL.

IF HE WANTS TO WATCH FOOTBALL, I GET IT. HE WANTS TO SEE WHATEVER IS GOING ON THE SCREEN. FOR MOST FILMS, I CAN SIT AND WATCH A MOVIE WITH THE SOUND OFF AND ENJOY IT IF I CAN SEE THE CAPTIONS. BUT I CANNOT ENJOY A MOVIE WITHOUT.

YOU ALL KNOW THIS. SOME FAMILY MEMBERS ARE PARTICULARLY, THEY JUST TAKE YOU FOR GRANTED AND THEY REALLY DON'T CARE. THEY MAY LOVE YOU, BUT THEY DON'T CARE.

>> PAT: SOMETIMES, TOO, IT'S JUST A MIND THING THAT – MY KIDS HAVE GROWN UP WITH ME HAVING HEARING LOSS, AND WHEN I WENT DEAF THEY TRIED REALLY HARD TO ACCOMMODATE ME. WHEN WE WENT CAMPING THEY WOULD HOLD A FLASHLIGHT UNDER THEIR FACE AND I WOULD READ THEIR LIPS. BUT NOW I HAVE A COCHLEAR IMPLANT, THEY FORGET. IT'S NOT BECAUSE THEY DON'T CARE. I THINK THEY ARE JUST IN THEIR OWN BUBBLE, THEIR OWN WORLD, AND THEY DON'T THINK ABOUT IT. AND I WOULD GET REALLY UPSET. "IF THEY LOVED ME THEY WOULD DO THIS." WHY DO I HAVE TO ASK EVERY TIME I GO TO MY SON'S HOUSE TO TURN ON THE CAPTIONS? "IF THEY LOVED ME." BULLPUCKY. HAVE TO REMIND THEM. THEY DO LOVE US. WE HAVE TO KEEP SAYING IT OVER AND OVER AND OVER AND IT GETS TO BE TOO MUCH, THEN YOU SAY "I AM NOT GOING THIS TIME." KEEP DOING IT, EVENTUALLY WILL SOAK THROUGH. NOW KIDS ARE BETTER.

WE HAVE TO BE PATIENT WITH THE OTHER SIDE. WE WANT THEM TO BE PATIENT WITH US, WE HAVE TO BE PATIENT WITH THEM.

>> ALICIA: BRING HIM TO THIS MEETING. WE WILL TALK TO HIM.

>> MALIK: I WAS GOING TO SAY WHAT ALICIA SAID IN A LITTLE MORE THREATENING WAY. I THINK IT CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE, ONE, FOR HIM TO HEAR FROM SOMEONE OTHER THAN YOU. THIS CRAZY PHENOMENA WHERE OUR PARTNER SAYS SOMETHING AND WE HAVE TO CHECK SEVEN OTHER SOURCES; SOMEONE ELSE SAYS THE SAME THING, THEN WE BELIEVE IT." SO HEARING FROM ANOTHER SOURCE CAN BE USEFUL. BUT ALSO THIS GROUP HAS LOTS OF PARTNERS WHERE ONE HAS HEARING LOSS AND THE OTHER DOESN'T CAN SHOW A MODEL IN A WAY HOW IT COULD BE AND SHOULD BE.

YOU THINK YOU CAN GET HIM IN THE DOOR?

>> JENNIFER: THAT WOULD BE TOUGH. I WILL TRY.

>> PAT: ALL WE CAN DO IS TRY. AND SPEAKING OF WHICH, OUR FEBRUARY MEETING WILL BE A MIXED-COUPLES MEETING. WE DO A PANEL DISCUSSION, PEOPLE TALKING FROM BOTH SIDES. WE HAVE LEARNED SOME GREAT THINGS FROM OUR HEARING PARTNERS WHO TOLD US THEIR

FRUSTRATIONS WITH US -- AND GET THAT COMMUNICATION GOING. WATCH FOR THE MIXED-COUPLES COMING UP IN FEBRUARY.

>> JOE: LET YOUR HUSBAND KNOW, AT THE CHRISTMAS PARTY MY WIFE AND I WILL BE GIVING UNIQUE GIFTS, LOTTERY TICKETS. AND WE UPPED THE ANTE. TELL HIM TO COME THIS YEAR. NOT ONLY CAN HE POSSIBLY BE A MILLIONAIRE, BUT I WILL TALK TO HIM ON YOUR BEHALF. THANK YOU.

>> PAT: HAND THIS BACK TO KEN AND BACK TO GARY. AND WE HAVE ABOUT 10 MINUTES.

>> KEN: WE ALL HAVE HEARING LOSS AND IT CAN BE VERY FRUSTRATING AT TIMES, AND I KNOW THAT FEELING VERY WELL. BUT I AM THANKFUL IN MANY WAYS FOR MY HEARING LOSS BECAUSE IT HAS GIVEN ME TREMENDOUS OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN MORE ABOUT MYSELF. I GOT A JOB. I WENT THROUGH THAT DIFFICULT TIME WITH MY WORK AND COULD NOT DO MY PREVIOUS JOB. I GOT ANOTHER JOB THAT WAS BECAUSE OF MY HEARING LOSS WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. AND GRANTED, IT WAS A HUGE PAY CUT AND A CAREER CHANGE, BUT I AM VERY THANKFUL FOR IT. AND LISA ACTUALLY GOT A JOB THERE TOO. SO –

>> PAT: YOU MET LISA THROUGH HEARING LOSS.

>> KEN: I WOULDN'T HAVE MET LISA. I WOULDN'T HAVE EXPERIENCED A LOT OF DIFFERENT THINGS, BEEN ABLE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT MYSELF AND GROW AS A PERSON. PART OF OUR JOB IS WORKING WITH PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES. WE WORK FOR SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION THE OFFICE OF DISABILITIES. A FEW PEOPLE FILE FOR DISABILITY GET TURNED DOWN AND COME TO US. SO WE DEAL WITH AND WORK WITH PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ALL DAY. AND THERE ARE SOME – I AM THANKFUL THAT AT THIS POINT IN MY LIFE THAT HEARING LOSS IS THE ONLY THING THAT'S WRONG, BECAUSE THERE ARE A LOT OF – IT COULD BE WORSE, I GUESS. SO WE ARE AT A TIME OF THANKSGIVING, SO I AM VERY THANKFUL FOR BEING HERE TODAY.

AND I WISH YOU ALL A HAPPY THANKSGIVING.

>> PAT: GARY, YOU WANT TO ADD SOMETHING?

>> GARY: DON'T GO AWAY. – I WAS TELLING HIM WHEN HE GIVES OUT THE GIFT, WHATEVER. DON'T THROW IT AWAY BECAUSE LAST YEAR I THREW IT AWAY AND WE DIDN'T REALIZE THERE WERE LOTTERY TICKETS IN THERE.

>> PAT: ONE THING BEFORE WE START WRAPPING UP. ONE THING WE DIDN'T TOUCH AND I DON'T KNOW IF ANY OF YOU ARE GOING TO BE DOING ANY AIR TRAVEL THIS HOLIDAY SEASON, BUT ONE OF THE THINGS I WANT TO REMIND YOU, IF YOU ARE NOW OR IN THE FUTURE, ASK FOR PRE-BOARDING. WHEN YOU CHECK IN WITH YOUR AIRLINES, GO TO THE DESK AND TELL THEM YOU WANT TO PRE-BOARD BECAUSE YOU CAN'T HEAR ANNOUNCEMENTS. YOU WANT TO BE AWARE. YOU ARE GOING TO GET ON WITH PEOPLE WHO HAVE MOBILITY BE ISSUES, BUT YOU ARE ALLOWED TO

PRE-BOARD WITH HEARING ISSUES. AND IT MAKES A TREMENDOUS DIFFERENCE. AND THE STAFF BECOMES AWARE THAT YOU NEED SPECIAL CONSIDERATION IN AN EMERGENCY. IF YOUR AIRLINE HAS THE ABILITY TO SEND YOU TEXTS FOR GATE CHANGES AND THINGS LIKE THAT OR THAT YOU CAN IDENTIFY YOURSELF WHEN YOU MAKE A RESERVATION AS A PERSON WITH HEARING LOSS, DO IT.

AND SAME THING WITH TSA. WHEN YOU GO THROUGH TSA, MAKE SURE THEY KNOW YOU HAVE A HEARING LOSS – I AM CUTTING IN AND OUT HERE – DEFINITELY MAKES YOUR LIFE A WHOLE LOT LESS STRESSFUL.

>> MITZI: BACK TO WHAT YOU SAID. I MADE RESERVATIONS. MORE AND MORE OF THE AIRLINE WEBSITES ASK IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE. CHECK THAT BOX.

>> PAT: SOMETIMES THEY WILL SEND A WHEELCHAIR FOR YOU.

>> WENDI: TO KIND OF GO BACK TO JENNIFER, VISITORS, MEMBERS. I KIND OF FEEL YOUR CONCERN. I AM WONDERING TOO IF THE CAPTIONS DON'T GO ON THE TELEVISION IF YOU TURNED IT UP AS LOUD AS YOU NEED IT TO HEAR; WOULD THAT GET YOUR HUSBAND'S ATTENTION? YOU MAY NEED TO ACTUALLY GIVE HIM A STRONGER SENSE OF WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOU. TURN THE TV UP AS LOUD AS – UNTIL YOU – JUST SO HE CAN SEE THAT -- WHAT YOU NEED. THESE VISUAL THINGS, LIKE KAT SAYS, PLEASE TAKE A COUPLE BUTTONS.

SOMETIMES WE DO STRUGGLE. SOMETIMES – I REMEMBER BEING HERE AT A MEETING, SOMEONE SAID SOMEBODY ELSE THAT LIVED IN THE HOUSE KEPT TALKING TO THEM FROM THE OTHER ROOM AND THEY NEVER UNDERSTOOD WHAT THE PERSON WAS SAYING. "I CAN'T TALK TO YOU FROM ANOTHER ROOM." AT THAT POINT, MAYBE IT'S TIME WE TOOK A STAND, DON'T RESPOND UNTIL THEY FINALLY COME TO YOU. IF IT'S THAT IMPORTANT -- DON'T RESPOND AT ALL. WE THINK BECAUSE WE CAN HEAR SOMETHING WE HAVE TO RESPOND. YOU CAN ACT AS IF YOU ARE COMPLETELY DEAF BECAUSE YOU DON'T KNOW. ALL YOU ARE HEARING IS BLAH, BLAH, BLAH.

EVERYBODY IS A LITTLE DIFFERENT. YOU HAVE JOE AND MIKE HERE, AND MALIK WOULD BE HAPPY TO TALK TO HIM. BUT IN THE INTERIM, MAYBE JUST IF YOU DIDN'T HEAR WHAT HE SAID, DON'T RESPOND AT ALL UNTIL HE FINALLY GETS "MAYBE SHE REALLY DOESN'T HEAR ME," OR TURN THE TV UP LOUD OR WEAR LOTS OF BUTTONS AND THINGS LIKE THAT. SOMETHING'S HAPPENING HERE.

>> PAT: POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT. GIVE HIM A COOKIE WHEN HE COMES.

IT'S VERY TRUE. ALL SAID AND DONE, THE HOLIDAYS ARE LIKE SOME HAVE MENTIONED, ABOUT FAMILY AND FRIENDS AND FUN. TAKE TIME TO ENJOY THE PARTS YOU CAN. LET THE PARTS YOU ARE HAVING TROUBLE WITH ROLL OFF YOUR BACK AND SMILE AND ENJOY IT AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. AND I WISH YOU ALL A VERY HAPPY HOLIDAY.



DON'T FORGET THE PARTY ON THE 12<sup>TH</sup>. AND I AM GOING TO ASK EVERYBODY TO COME UP AND TAKE A PICTURE. MIKE WILL TAKE A PICTURE. AFTER THE PICTURE IS TAKEN, DON'T LEAVE THE ROOM IMMEDIATELY BECAUSE KEN HAS AN ANNOUNCEMENT HE WANTS TO MAKE ABOUT OUR JANUARY PROGRAM.

EVERYBODY COME UP SO WE CAN GET A GROUP PICTURE.

>> PAT: I WANT KEN TO BE ABLE TO TELL YOU...

>> KEN: OUR JANUARY MEETING, WE WILL BE TALKING ABOUT A BIG REPORT THAT JUST CAME OUT, THE PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL OF ADVISORS ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY MADE RECOMMENDATIONS ON HOW TO CHANGE THE HEARING AID INDUSTRY TO MAKE IT MORE COMPETITIVE, TO DROP THE PRICES OF HEARING TECHNOLOGY, HEARING AIDS, AND MAKE US MORE CONNECTED WITH THE WORLD AND MORE ACCESSIBLE.

WE ARE GOING TO TRY REALLY HARD NOT TO MAKE IT A GRIPE SESSION ABOUT HOW BAD OUR AUDIOLOGISTS ARE. BUT WE WILL TALK ABOUT WHAT WE CAN DO TO TRY TO FACILITATE, TO TURN THOSE RECOMMENDATIONS INTO ACTUAL ACTION AND MAKE SOME REAL CHANGE.

SO SEE YOU IN JANUARY – NO, AT THE HOLIDAY PARTY. SORRY.  
HAVE A GOOD DAY.

>> PAT: DON'T FORGET YOUR TIP CARDS.

>> AND DESSERT.

[OVERLAPPING SPEAKERS]

(12:18)