HLAA-LA
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>> LISA: IS IT ON? IS IT WORKING?
CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?

>> GRACE: YEAH.

>> LISA: IS THIS ONE BETTER?

>> MITZI: GOT YOUR T-COILS ON?

>> LISA: SORRY. MY SENSE OF HUMOR. GOOD MORNING. EVERYONE HAS A TELECOIL? IS IT WORKING? KU HEAR ME?

THANK YOU, DANNY, FOR THE THUMBS UP.

WELCOME, EVERYONE TO OUR FEBRUARY MEETING. MY NAME IS LISA, AND I AM THE PRESIDENT OF THIS CHAPTER, AND THIS IS THE LOS ANGELES CHAPTER OF THE HLAA, THE HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA.

THANK YOU FOR BEING HERE TODAY.

TODAY WE WILL HAVE A RAP SESSION. TALKING ABOUT THE STIGMA OF HEARING LOSS. I AM GOING TO START THE DISCUSSION UP WITH A PRESENTATION

BEFORE WE GET TO THAT, WE HAVE A BIT OF CHAPTER BUSINESS TO COVER.

I WANT TO INTRODUCE OUR STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS, AND I'VE BEEN WAITING TO DO THIS WHEN EVERYONE IS HERE, AND DOESN'T SEEM TO BE HAPPENING.

ALL THE STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS THAT ARE HERE, IF YOU CAN STAND UP.

PAT IS OUR MEMBERSHIP CHAIR, KATHERINE IS THE SECRETARY. KEN IS THE TREASURER. DANNY IS OUR FUNDRAISING CHAIR. RAM IS OUR PUBLICITY AND OUTREACH CHAIR. STEPHANIE AND RAM ARE ACTUALLY DOING OUTREACH. AND STEPHANIE IS NOT HERE TODAY. GEORGIA NOT HERE, OUR ADVOCACY CHAIR. AND ALICIA IS NOT HERE TODAY.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, YOU CAN ASK ANY ONE OF US ABOUT THE CHAPTER. AND THEY REALLY ARE THE HEART AND SOUL OF THIS CHAPTER. EVERYTHING THAT KEEPS THE CHAPTER GOING AND GROWING IS REALLY DRIVEN BY OUR STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS. THANK YOU ALL.

SO THE FIRST THING I WANTED TO SHARE WITH IS JUST AN UPDATE ON WHAT WE, THE STEERING COMMITTEE DECIDED TO DO REGARDING THE CONVENTION THIS YEAR. NATIONAL HAS A CONVENTION EVERY YEAR, AND THIS CAREER THEY DECIDED TO DO SOMETHING A LITTLE DIFFERENT. THEY OFFERED EACH CHAPTER FIVE CHAPTER DELEGATE REGISTRATIONS.

THE CHAPTER DELEGATE REGISTRATIONS ARE HIGHLY DISCOUNTED, LESS THAN HALF THE PRICE OF REGULAR REGISTRATIONS. THE RULE IS FOUR OF THE FIVE DELEGATES HAVE TO BE THE FOUR OFFICERS OF THE CHAPTERS. THAT WOULD BE PRESIDENT, VICE-PRESIDENT, TREASURER AND SECRETARY. AND THE FIFTH IS THE MEMBER.

CHAPTER DECIDED TO PURCHASE THE CHAPTER DELEGATE REGISTRATIONS FOR OUR OFFICERS AND CHOSE AS OUR FIFTH DELEGATE GEORGIA FLEISCHER. SHE'S OUR ADVOCACY CHAIR. SHE'S DONE A LOT FOR THE HEARING LOSS COMMUNITY.

THAT'S HOW WE MADE OUR SELECTION. WE HAVEN'T DECIDED IF THIS IS SOMETHING WE WILL DO EVERY YEAR. AND WE WILL SEE HOW IT WORKS OUT THIS YEAR.

WE WANT TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO RUN FOR THE STEERING COMMITTEE AND OFFICER POSITIONS. IF YOU SEE THERE IS A LITTLE BIT OF AN AWARD TO BE AN OFFICER, YOU GET YOUR REGISTRATION FUNDED BY THE CHAPTER AND, ALSO A WAY TO GIVE BACK TO PEOPLE WHO PUT TIME AND EFFORT INTO THE CHAPTER. THAT'S OUR STEERING COMMITTEE AND OFFICERS.

ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THAT?

WE DON'T HAVE A NEWSLETTER. MICHAEL GOT HURT SO ALICIA HAD TO TAKE MICHAEL TO THE HOSPITAL –

>> EMERGENCY.

>> LISA: NEXT ANNOUNCEMENT IS OUR APRIL CHAPTER MEETING. WE WILL BE CELEBRATING THE A.D.A., AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT. IT'S THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE A.D.A. THIS YEAR. THE APRIL CHAPTER MEETING WILL BE A SPECIAL EVENT. WE ARE HAVING A SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER, RICHARD RAY. HE IS THE – THIS IS ON THE NEWSLETTER. AND I DON'T REMEMBER HIS LONG TITLE. BUT IT'S THE A.D.A. TECHNOLOGY COORDINATOR FOR LOS ANGELES CITY ON DISABILITY AND SOMETHING ELSE.

HE'S GOING TO BE HERE. HE'S REALLY KNOWLEDGEABLE. HE'S DEAF. A VERY INTERESTING MAN AND HAS A LOT OF INFORMATION. SO HE WILL BE TALKING TO US ABOUT THE A.D.A. AND ALSO THE NEW TEXT TO 911 SERVICES. ON TOP OF THAT, WE ARE GOING TO PUT OUR OWN HLAA-LA STYLE ON THE EVENT AND HOPE TO HAVE A LOT OF FOOD.

WE ARE GOING TO ASK PEOPLE TO BRING FOOD. WE WILL HAVE A POT LUCK, WE WILL HAVE CAKE AND HOPE YOU CAN STAY AFTER THE MEETING FOR LUNCH.

SHOULD BE AN INTERESTING AND EDUCATIONAL AND FUN EVENT.

WE ARE GOING TO HAVE SOME FLYERS MADE UP. AND ASK PEOPLE TO DISTRIBUTE THE FLYERS TO PEOPLE YOU MIGHT THINK WILL BE INTERESTED IN COMING TO THE EVENT. KEEP YOUR EYE OUT ON OUR YAHOO GROUP IF YOU ARE ON OUR LIST, WE WILL BE POSTING DETAILS IN THE NEXT MONTH.

DANNY, WHO IS OUR FUNDRAISING CHAIR. I WILL CALL HIM UP BECAUSE WE HAVE ANNOUNCEMENTS TO MAKE REGARDING FUNDRAISING.

>> DANNY: THANK YOU T LISA.

TO TALK ABOUT A FEW FUNDRAISING IDEAS. SINCE WE STARTED THE CHAPTER WE'VE HAD A GARAGE SALE EVERY YEAR. WE HAVE HAD IT EVERY YEAR EXCEPT FOR ONE YEAR, TWO YEARS AGO. AND WE HOSTED THEM ALL.

THIS YEAR WE CAN'T HOST THE GARAGE SALE BUT WOULD STILL LIKE TO HAVE ONE. SO IF YOU HAVE A YARD IN A GREAT AREA WITH ROOM WE CAN STORE SOME ELEMENTS. I THINK KENNY SAID WE CAN GET A STORE POD DELIVERED TO THE ADDRESS AND PEOPLE CAN DROP OFF.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN HAVING IT, LET ME KNOW, WE WOULD LOVE TO HAVE ONE THIS YEAR.

WE SET A DATE FOR APRIL 10, BUT ONCE WE LOCK IT IN, WE ASK VOLUNTEERS TO BRING STUFF AND WORK PART OF THE DAY.

KEEP THAT IN MIND.

>> PAT: DOESN'T HAVE TO BE A PRIVATE HOUSE EITHER. IF YOU KNOW A LOCATION.

>> DANNY: I DON'T KNOW IF THERE IS INSURANCE PROBLEMS WITH THAT.

>> PAT: SOME CHURCHES WOULD LET YOU DO IT. SOMETHING TO CHECK INTO.

>> DANNY: IF YOU KNOW OF A PLACE TO HOLD T. THEN WE HAVE TO DEAL WITH WHERE TO PUT STUFF.

SANDY'S HERE. HI, SANDY.

SANDY IS MY NEIGHBOR. WE KEEP RUNNING INTO HER AT TRADER JOE'S.

GOOD TO SEE YOU, SANDY.

NEXT THING IS WALK4HEARING THIS YEAR. THEY HAVE IT EVERY YEAR. FIRST SATURDAY OF – USED TO BE SUNDAY?

>> LISA: USUALLY SUNDAY.

>> DANNY: I'M THE FUNDRAISING CHAIR AND JUST FINDING THESE THINGS OUT. SO APPARENTLY SATURDAY. FIRST SATURDAY IN JUNE. AND PAT WILL START UP THE OLD L.A. STARS TEAM AGAIN ON THE WALK4HEARING WEBSITE. SO IF YOU WANT TO JOIN THE TEAM AND RAISE FUNDS. ALSO GREAT WAY TO RAISE MONEY FOR THE NATIONAL AND WE GET TO KEEP AROUND 40%. KEEP THAT IN MIND TOO. WE WILL START TO TEAM UP THIS WEEK.

I THINK KEN CAN ATTEST TO THIS, THE TREASURER. I THINK WE ARE PRETTY HEALTHY RIGHT NOW IN OUR BANK ACCOUNT. BUT ALWAYS THINKING OF IDEAS FOR FUNDRAISING. WE HAD THE IDEA OF A WINE TASTING EVENT. WE DID ONE ABOUT 7 YEARS AGO. PROBABLY RAISED $8-9,000.

ONE TIME WE HAD A WINE TASTING EVENT AT GRACE'S HOUSE FOR RHIANNON FOR HER FILM. RAISED A COUPLE THOUSAND DOLLARS.

IF YOU CAN THINK OF ANY IDEAS FOR FUNDRAISING, PLEASE LET ME KNOW. IF WE DID HAVE A WINE TASTING EVENT, WE HAVE A NICE HOUSE FOR IT OR IF YOU HAVE A CONNECTION WITH A RESTAURANT THAT WOULD GIVE US A GOOD RATE.

THINK ABOUT THESE KIND OF THINGS TOO, WE CAN HAVE FUN AND HAVE A FUNDRAISING. AND THEN WE CAN CALL IT FUN-RAISING. HAD TO SAY IT.

KAT: CAN YOU TALK ABOUT ALICIA'S RESTAURANT – ALSO GOING TO GO DO A FUNDRAISING NIGHT AT A RESTAURANT IN THE NEXT COUPLE MONTHS. WE ARE THINKING OF CALIFORNIA PIZZA KITCHEN. WHAT YOU DO IS YOU INVITE YOUR FRIENDS, THE FAMILY, A LOT OF PEOPLE TO GO AND HAVE DINNER THERE OR LUNCH DEPENDING ON THE TIME AND THEY WILL GIVE A PERCENTAGE OF THE SALES TO OUR CHAPTER. SO KIND OF A FUN WAY AND EASY WAY TO RAISE MONEY. BUT TAKE A GROUP OF PEOPLE TO GO THERE. SO WE CAN PLAN WHOEVER CAN MAKE IT CAN GO TO THE PASADENA CALIFORNIA PIZZA KITCHEN OR BURBANK OR SOMETHING. WE WILL GIVE YOU THE DETAILS LATER. BUT THAT WILL BE ANOTHER FUN WAY TO RAISE FUNDS.

>> DANNY: THAT'S A GOOD POINT. YOU GOTTA EAT. WE GOT EAT DINNER, SO GO THERE AND PICK UP SOME MONEY.

WE ARE REGISTERED WITH RALPH'S GROCERY STORE AS A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION. SO IF YOU GO ON TO RALPHS.COM, I BELIEVE, AND DESIGNATE WHEN YOU USE YOUR CARD THAT A CERTAIN PERCENTAGE GOES TO THIS NON-PROFIT. AT NO COST TO YOU WHATSOEVER.

LISA JUST SIGNED UP FOR THIS THING WITH AMAZON.COM. YOU GO TO THIS OTHER PLACE CONNECTED WITH AMAZON. THERE IS NO PRICE DIFFERENCE WHATSOEVER. YOU ARE STILL BUYING THROUGH AMAZON BUT OUR NON-PROFIT GETS A PERCENTAGE TOO. IF WE THINK ABOUT LITTLE THINGS LIKE THAT. KEEP US FINANCIALLY HEALTHY.

THANK YOU.

>> LISA: THANK YOU, DANNY.

YEAH, THE AMAZON THING, I WANT TO THANK MITZI FOR TELLING ME ABOUT IT. YOU BASICALLY SIGN IN FOR THE FIRST TIME, IT'S A DIFFERENT LINK, AMAZON SMILE. I HAVE TO SEND YOU THE LINK. IT'S ON THE NEWSLETTER WE DON'T HAVE TODAY.

YOU BASICALLY SIGN UP FOR THE FIRST TIME. IF YOU ARE ALREADY SIGNED UP WITH AMAZON, YOU SIGN ON USING THIS LINK USING YOUR LOG ON. YOU ARE JUST SHOPPING THROUGH THIS AMAZON.COM SMILE. AND WE GET A PERCENTAGE.

>> DANNY.: YOU CAN GO TO OUR ANTIBIOTIC SITE TO AND SEE IT.

>> LISA: IT'S ON OUR WEBSITE. IF YOU SEE THE NEWSLETTER.

EVERY LITTLE BIT HELPS.

FOR INSTANCE, SPEAKING OF FUNDRAISING, THIS FACILITY HERE, AT THE HEAR CENTER AND IT'S A NON-PROFIT CLINIC. THEY OFFER AUDIOLOGY SERVICES, SPEECH THERAPY SERVICES FOR PEOPLE AT REDUCED RATES IF THEY NEED THEM. THEIR MAIN FUND-RAISER IS THEIR ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT. THEY'VE RAISED HUNDRED AND THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS OVER THE YEARS. I ALWAYS SAY WE HAVE BEEN MEETING HERE FOR FREE

EVERY MONTH FOR 10 YEARS. AND WE TECHNICALLY HAVE BEEN MEETING HERE FOR FREE, BUT THEY EXPECT US TO DONATE TO THIS IF GOLF TOURNAMENT EVERY YEAR. WE JUST DONATED A THOUSAND DOLLARS. WE WILL BE SPONSORING THEIR HORS D'OEUVRE TABLE, WHICH I THINK IS HIGHLY APPROPRIATE FOR OUR CHAPTER. WE LOVE TO EAT.

THESE ARE EXPENSES, WE NEED TO RAISE FUNDS FOR OURSELVES. WE HAVE ONGOING EXPENSES AND IT'S IMPORTANT FOR US TO ENGAGE IF FUNDRAISING. SO.

>> MITZI: ELLEN SIMON APPROACHED ME ABOUT BEING ON THE BOARD HERE AT HEAR CENTER BECAUSE THEY LIKE A MEMBER OF HLAA ON HERE. I WOULD LIKE THE STEERING COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER THE MATTER BECAUSE I DO HAVE A BUSINESS AS WELL. IF YOU THINK THERE IS ANY CONFLICT THERE. OTHERWISE I WOULD BE WILL TO GO DO THAT.

>> LISA: I THINK THAT WOULD BE GREAT. I KNOW SAND DANNY AND KAT SERVED ON THE BOARD IN THE PAST.

>> MITZI: AS LONG AS YOU DON'T THINK IT'S A CONFLICT OF INTEREST.

>> LISA: WE CAN DISCUSS IT. I DON'T SEE IT AS BEING A CONFLICT.

ANYONE ELSE HAVE ANNOUNCEMENTS?

I DO HAVE ONE MORE ANNOUNCEMENT.

PAT STARTED A SIGN-UP SHEET ASKING FOR PEOPLE TO VOLUNTEER FOR ONE MONTH, WITH EITHER CLEAN UP OR SET UP DURING THE MEETINGS? WE HAVE HAD SEVERAL PEOPLE VOLUNTEER ALREADY. IT WOULD HELP US OUT --

IS THERE A LIST? ON THE PODIUM, WHEN YOU SIGN IN, AND WE ARE ALSO ASKING PEOPLE TO SIGN IN WHEN THEY GET HERE, THERE IS A SIGN-IN SHEET. IF YOU CAN SIGN UP JUST TO VOLUNTEER, YOU CAN HELP WITH SET UP, JUST HELPING TO MAKE COFFEE AND SETTING UP THE FOOD AREA. AND CLEANING UP, CLEANING UP ALL THE FOOD.

SO ALL RIGHT – I'M GOING…

SO I GUESS WE CAN START ON THE MAIN TOPIC OF THE DAY. I AM GOING TO BE TALKING ABOUT THE STIGMA OF HEARING LOSS. AND THEN WHAT I THINK WE CAN DO IS I WILL GIVE THIS PRESENTATION. WE WILL TAKE A BREAK AND COME BACK HERE AND OPEN UP THE DISCUSSION TO THE ROOM.

SO JUST A LITTLE BACKGROUND ON WHY I WAS STUDYING THIS TOPIC. I JUST GOT MY MASTER'S DEGREE IN ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY AND HUMAN SERVICES. TECHNOLOGY AND SERVICE IS FOR ALL DISABILITIES. I CHOSE TO FOCUS MOST OF MY RESEARCH PROJECTS AND WHATEVER PAPERS I HAD TO DO ON ISSUES RELATED TO HEARING LOSS. AND ONE OF THE THINGS THAT BECAME OF INTEREST TO ME OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS IS THIS PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEM OF UNTREATED HEARING LOSS. I DIDN'T REALIZE HOW FEW PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS ACTUALLY SEEK HELP FOR THEIR HEARING LOSS.

THERE IS REPORTED NUMBERS, LIKE 15% OF PEOPLE THAT HAVE HEARING LOSS ACTUALLY GET HEARING AIDS. AND WHEN YOU CONSIDER THE PREVALENCE OF PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS. SO MANY PEOPLE OUT THERE, I THINK IT'S ABOUT 17% OF THE POPULATION AND SO FEW OF THOSE PEOPLE ARE ACTUALLY GETTING TREATMENT. AND UNTREATED HEARING LOSS HAS BEEN LINKED TO DEPRESSION, STRESS, DEMENTIA. ALL SORT OF NEGATIVE THINGS THAT UNTREATED HEARING LOSS HAS BEEN LINKED TO. SO A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE CALLING IT A MAJOR HEALTH CONCERN.

I'VE BEEN INTERESTED IN THE BARRIERS, WHY ARE MORE PEOPLE NOT GETTING HELP.

OBVIOUSLY COST IS AN ISSUE. PEOPLE CAN'T AFFORD HEARING AIDS AND THEY ARE NOT COVERED BY INSURANCE. BUT THEY FOUND EVEN IN COUNTRIES WHERE HEARING AIDS ARE COVERED BY INSURANCE OR SUBSIDIZED BY THE GOVERNMENT, THERE ARE STILL LOW RATES. SO OBVIOUSLY OTHER FACTORS GOING ON.

AND ONE OF THOSE FACTORS IS STIGMA. I HAD TO DECIDE WHAT I WAS GOING TO WRITE THIS FINAL RESEARCH PAPER OP AND I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE AN INTERESTING TOP IB. BUT WHAT REALLY CLINCHED MY DECISION WAS ACTUALLY A RADIO ADVERTISEMENT THEY HEARD. I CAN HEAR THE RADIO NOW IN MY CAR, WHICH IS SHOCKING TO ME. I CAN HEAR TALK RADIO. I CAN HEAR ADVERTISEMENTS. I AM SURE THAT ALL THE OTHER CARS AROUND ME CAN ALSO HEAR MY RADIO, IT'S CRANKED UP SO HIGH. BUT I CAN ACTUALLY UNDERSTAND SPEECH.

AND THIS AD CAME ON THE RADIO, I DIDN'T THINK I HEARD IT RIGHT. BUT IT CAME ON EVERY DAY AT THE SAME TIME. IT WAS FOR HEARING AIDS, AND BASICALLY SAYS: ARE YOU TIRED OF NOT BEING ABLE TO HEAR ON THE PHONE. ARE YOU I TIRED OF NOT BEING ABLE TO HEAR THE TV, AND THEN IT SAYS ARE YOU TIRED OF NOT BEING ABLE TO UNDERSTAND BUT DO NOT WANT TO WEAR A BIG UGLY THING HANGING OFF YOUR EAR. I WAS SHOCKED THAT THEY SAID THAT. "A BIG UGLY THING HANGING OFF YOUR EAR." WHAT OTHER DISABILITY IS THIS ACCEPTABLE FOR. IF WE SAID WHEELCHAIRS ARE BIG UGLY THINGS, I THINK PEOPLE WOULD TAIG NOTICE. BUT FOR THIS I FEEL LIKE SO MANY PEOPLE HEAR THIS AND THEY DON'T EVEN BLINK AN EYE. IT'S JUST ACCEPTABLE. AND THEY PROBABLY THINK THAT THE PEOPLE THAT DO HAVE THE BIG UGLY THINGS CAN'T HEAR THE COMMERCIAL SO THEY'RE NOT OFFENDING ANYONE.

SO I JUST WAS REALLY PISSED OFF. AND I THOUGHT IF ANYTHING, ALL THIS DOES IS PERPETUATE THE BELIEF THAT WE HAVE TO HIDE OUR HEARING LOSS, AND WE HAVE TO HIDE OUR HEARING AIDS AND IT'S SOMETHING WE HAVE TO BE ASHAMED OF.

THAT'S WHY I AM GOING FO WRITE THIS PAPER ON STIGMA. IT'S A REALLY LONG PAPER. I AM TRYING TO CONDENSE IT FOR PURPOSES OF TODAY. I AM JUST GOING TO COVER THE MAIN POINTS.

OKAY. SO THERE IS MULTIPLE DEFINITIONS OF STIGMA IN THE LITERATURE, BUT ALL OF THEM PRETTY MUCH HAVE TWO COMMON ELEMENTS. THE FIRST IS THAT THERE IS A RECOGNITION OF A TRAIT THAT IS CONSIDERED DEVIANT FROM THE NORM AND UNDESIRABLE. AND THEN THE SECOND ELEMENT IS THE SUBSEQUENT DISAPPROVAL AND DEVALUATION OF THE PERSON WHO POSSESS THAT TRAIT.

THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF STIGMA THEY AM GOING TO TALK ABOUT.

PUBLIC STIGMA IS BASICALLY THE NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS THAT SOCIETY HAS OR OTHERS HAVE TOWARD THE INDIVIDUAL VIEWED AS HAVING THIS TYPE OF CONDITION. AND PUBLIC STIGMA LEADS TO SOCIAL REJECTION, JUDGMENT AND PREJUDICE.

THE SECOND TYPE OF STIGMA IS SELF STIGMATIZATION. WHEN PEOPLE INTERNALIZE THE STEREOTYPES THAT SOCIETY HOLDS. THEY TURN THEM INWARD. THEY FEEL THAT WAY ABOUT THEMSELVES. SO STIGMA REDUCES SELF ESTEEM. LEADS THE FEELINGS OF INFERIORITY, SHAME AND BUILT. WHEN PEOPLE START FEELING INFERIOR THEY TEND TO AVOID CONTACT WITH OTHERS. THEY FEEL THEY ARE SOCIALLY UNACCEPTABLE. AND THIS ALSO LEADS TO DEPRESSION AND STRESS AND SOCIAL ISOLATION.

ANOTHER STIGMA IS CONCEALABLE STIGMA. THOSE ARE STIGMAS LIKE HEARING LOSS, WE CAN HIDE OUR HEARING LOSS. THERE ARE STIGMAS THAT ARE NOT CONSPICUOUS. ANOTHER EXAMPLE IS IF SOMEONE IS HIV-POSITIVE OR SEXUAL ORIENTATION. SOMETHING YOU DON'T HAVE TO DISCLOSE IF YOU DON'T WANT TO AND IT'S NOT OBVIOUS.

PEOPLE OFTEN CONCEAL IN ORDER TO PASS AS NORMAL AND AVOID BEING STIGMATIZED.

HIDING OF CONDITION LEADS TO ANXIETY AND FEAR OF BEING DISCOVERED.

PEOPLE GO TO GREAT LENGTHS TO KEEP THEIR CONDITIONS HIDDEN. I CAN ACTUALLY KIND OF RELATE TO THIS. AND I THINK BACK WHEN I FIRST HAD MY HEARING LOSS. I WAS 20 WHEN I FIRST GOT DS T DIAGNOSED AND SPENT DECADES HIDING MY HEARING LOSS.

I USED TO GO TO THE GYM. I NEVER WEAR MY HEARING AIDS WHEN I WORK OUT. IT GETS UNCOMFORTABLE WHEN I SWEAT. I WENT TO THIS GYM CLASS AND I LIKED THIS GUY. AND HE STARTED TALKING TO ME. WHAT AM I GOING TO DO, I CAN'T ARE HEAR WITHOUT MY HEARING AIDS. I DID THIS FOR A YEAR. TIME IT OUT PERFECTLY SO I WOULD GET TO THE CLASS WHERE HE DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO TALK TO ME BEFORE CLASS, AND FAR AWAY SO HE COULDN'T TALK TO ME DURING CLASS. AND DURING THE COOL DOWN WHEN THEY TURN DOWN THE LIGHTS AND WE ARE STRETCHING. I WOULD INCONSPICUOUSLY PUT ON MY HEARING AIDS AND PUT DOWN MY HAIR. HE WOULD ALWAYS COME TALK TO ME. AND WE DID THIS FOR A YEAR. BUT I WAS LAUGHING THIS MORNING WHEN I THOUGHT ABOUT THIS, BECAUSE HE NEVER ASKED ME OUT. I THINK IT WAS FOR LONGER THAN A YEAR. AND I

THOUGHT WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THAT GUY? HE NEVER EVEN ASKED ME OUT.

>> YOU OR DIDN'T HEAR –

>> LISA: SO THE PUBLIC STIGMA OF HEARING LOSS DATES BACK TO ANCIENT TIMES AND ACROSS CULTURES. AN EXAMPLE IS ANCIENT GREEKS ASSOCIATED DEAFNESS WITH STUPIDITY, LACK OF REASONING, THE INABILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN COMMUNITY LIFE, AND NOT BEING ABLE TO HAVE FAITH IN GOD.

I WAS ACTUALLY SURPRISED WHEN I READ THAT, LIKE ARISTOTLE, I THINK A QUOTE FROM ARISTOTLE WHO SAID THAT THE DEAF WERE INCAPABLE OF REASON AND LESS INTELLIGENT THAN THE BLIND.

SAD THING IS TODAY MANY OF THESE NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS STILL EXIST. PEOPLE STILL PERCEIVE INDIVIDUALS WITH HEARING LOSS TO BE INTELLECTUALLY DEFICIENT, LESS COMPETENT AND BORING.

SELF STIGMA OF HEARING LOSS IS ALSO VERY PREVALENT TODAY. I THINK ONE OF THE REASONS JUST BECAUSE A LOT OF US ACQUIRED HEARING LOSS LATER IN LIFE, SO WE'VE GROWN UP IN SOCIETY. WE HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO SOME OF THE STEREOTYPES ABOUT DEAFNESS. WE MIGHT NOT CONSCIOUSLY KNOW IT, BUT WE ARE JUST AWARE OF CERTAIN STEREOTYPES. SO WHEN WE START TO LOSE OUR HEARING OURSELVES, WE VIEW THAT AS A SIGN OF WEAKNESS OR FAILURE OR WHATEVER NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS WE MIGHT HAVE ABOUT HEARING LOSS. WE TURN THOSE JUDGMENTS INTO (NOT CLEAR). THEY SAY PEOPLE FREQUENTLY SHAPE THEIR SELF CONCEPT BASED ON HOW THEY THINK OTHERS PERCEIVE THEM. SO WE START TO BELIEVE THAT NOT JUST OTHERS ARE THINKING THESE NEGATIVE THOUGHTS ABOUT US, BUT WE START TO BELIEVE THEM ABOUT OURSELVES.

THE BIGGEST STIGMA ASSOCIATED WITH HEARING LOSS IS AGE. THIS IS PROBABLY BECAUSE THE MOST COMMON MISPERCEPTION ABOUT HEARING LOSS IS THAT IT ONLY AFFECTS THE ELDERLY. SO WHAT HAPPENS IS THAT HEARING LOSS OFTEN BECOMES LINKED TO ALL THE AGEIST STEREOTYPES. NEGATIVE CHARACTERISTICS THAT ARE ASSOCIATED WITH AGING, WHICH WOULD BE MENTAL AND PHYSICAL INCOMPETENCE, SLOW COGNITION AND OVERALL GENERAL DECLINE.

SO A LOT OF, ESPECIALLY MIDDLE AGED ADULTS OR YOUNG ADULTS THEY FEAR THEIR HEARING LOSS THREATENED THEIR SENSE OF YOUTH AND LOWER SELF ESTEEM.

PEOPLE WILL PUT A GREAT EFFORT IN DISASSOCIATING THEMSELVES FROM THE STIGMA OF DEAFNESS AND DISABILITY. PEOPLE JUST DEVALUE THE WHOLE CONCEPT OF DISABILITY. IT'S ALSO BEEN LINKED TO MENTAL ILLNESS FOR CENTURIES.

SO THE HEARING AID EFFECT IS A TERM THAT REFERS TO THE NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS THAT PEOPLE HAVE ABOUT PEOPLE WHO WEAR HEARING AIDS. THESE PERCEPTIONS ARE FELT BY THE USERS AND BY

OBSERVERS. STUDIES HAVE ACTUALLY SHOWN THAT PEOPLE WHO WEAR HEARING AIDS HAVE REPORTED THAT THEIR HEARING AIDS MAKE THEM FEEL OLD, WEAK, AND HANDICAPPED. AS FOR OBSERVERS THEY DID STUDIES WHERE THEY WERE SHOWN PICTURES OF SOMEONE WEARING A HEARING AID, AND SOMEONE NOT WEARING A HEARING AID. THEY DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THESE PEOPLE. THEY VIEWED PEOPLE MORE NEGATIVELY IN TERMS OF ACHIEVEMENT, FRIENDLINESS, INTELLIGENCE AND APPEARANCE.

I ACTUALLY SPENT A LOT OF MY PAPER – BIG CHUNK OF THE PAUPER ON WORKPLACE ISSUES. BECAUSE THE WORKPLACE IS AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE MAKING GOOD IMPRESSIONS IS REALLY IMPORTANT TO PEOPLE. SO IT'S MORE LIKELY THAT IN THE WORKPLACE PEOPLE WILL CONCEAL THEIR HEARING LOSS THAN MAYBE WITH THEIR FRIENDS OR FAMILY.

SO WHAT HAPPENS IS PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS OFTEN CONCEAL THEIR CONDITION BECAUSE THEY WANT TO APPEAR COMPETENT. THEY DON'T WANT PEOPLE TO THINK THEY ARE INCOMPETENT OR ABNORMAL. THE WAY THAT THEY CONCEAL THEIR HEARING LOSS IS THEY MIGHT JUST SOCIALLY ISOLATE THEMSELVES AND JUST AVOID COMMUNICATION. OR THEY MIGHT JUST BLUFF OR PRETEND. I THINK ALL OF US AT SOME POINT ARE GUILTY OF BLUFFING. OR MIGHT MAKE UP EXCUSES LIKE THAT PERSON MUMBLES, WHY I CAN'T HEAR THEM. THEY WILL GO TO GREAT LENGTHS BEFORE THEY DISCLOSE THEIR HEARING LOSS.

PROBLEM IS THAT THERE HAVE BEEN FOUND TO BE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FROM CONCEALING HEARING LOSS AT WORK. THEY ACTUALLY FOUND THAT THIS ACT OF CONSTANTLY CONCEALING YOUR CONDITION DEPLETES COGNITIVE RESOURCES. SO YOU ARE TAKING ENERGY THAT COULD BE USED FOR OTHER THINGS TO HIDE YOUR HEARING LOSS. AND IT TAKES AWAY FROM JOB PERFORMANCE.

ALSO A LOT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL STRAIN AND STRESS. I READ AN ARTICLE THAT TALKED ABOUT YOU HAVE TO MANAGE IT. YOU MIGHT TELL SOME PEOPLE YOU HAVE HEARING LOSS, YOU MIGHT HIDE IT FROM OTHERS. YOU HAVE TO REMEMBER WHO YOU TOLD. YOU HAVE TO MAKE CONSTANT DECISIONS ABOUT WHO DO YOU WANT TO TELL AND WHEN IT'S APPROPRIATE. SO GETS TO BE VERY STRESSFUL FOR SOME PEOPLE.

THE OTHER NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCE IS THAT IT RESULTS IN A LACK OF COMPASSION FROM CO-WORKERS BECAUSE THEY DON'T KNOW YOU HAVE A HEARING LOSS. IF YOU DON'T TELL THEM YOU HAVE A HEARING LOSS AND THERE ARE COMMUNICATION DIFFICULTIES, THEN THEY WILL MAKE UP SOMETHING ELSE. THIS PERSON IS ANTISOCIAL OR SLOW OR RUDE OR WHATEVER NEGATIVE THINGS THEY ARE MAKING UP IN THEIR HEAD. IF THEY KNOW YOU HAVE I HEARING LOSS THEY MIGHT BE MORE COMPASSIONATE WHEN THERE ARE COMMUNICATION BREAK DOWNS.

I THINK ONE OF THE MOST DAMAGING CONSEQUENCES IS THAT PEEP FAIL TO ASK FOR ACCOMMODATION. SO IF YOU ARE HIDING YOUR HEARING

LOSS, THEN YOU DON'T WANT TO APPEAR INCOMPETENT SO YOU DON'T ASK FOR ACCOMMODATION. BUT WHAT IS IRON SICK THAT IF YOU ASK FOR ACCOMMODATIONS, YOU CAN PROBABLY PERFORM MORE COMPETENTLY IN SOME AREAS. IT WOULD IMPROVE YOUR COMMUNICATION AND LIKELY RESULT IN LESS STIGMATIZATION.

THOSE ARE SOME THINGS THAT IN THE WORKPLACE, BUT AS FAR AS THE OVERVIEW OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF STIGMA, I THINK #1 AGAIN IS A BARRIER FOR PEOPLE TO SEEK INTERVENTION. AND LIKE I SAID BEFORE, UNTREATED HEARING LOSS, IF YOU FAIL TO SEEK INTERVENTION, UNTREATED HEARING LOSS CAN LEAD TO DEPRESSION, LONELINESS, INCREASED RISK OF DEMENTIA. FAR REACHING CONSEQUENCES.

PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF FEELING STIGMATIZED. STRESS, DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY AND CAN ENDANGER YOUR LONG TERM HEALTH.

AND CAN LEAD TO WITHDRAWAL AND ISOLATION, LEADING TO REDUCED QUALITY OF LIFE AND LIMITS YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY IF YOU JUST WITHDRAW.

SO IN THE RESEARCH, ONE OF THE REPEATED STRATEGIES THAT PEOPLE SUGGESTED WAS TO JOIN A SUPPORT GROUP LIKE THIS. THIS IS ONE WAY THAT CAN REALLY HELP TO REDUCE FEELINGS OF STIGMATIZATION FOR PEOPLE. YOU COME TO A GROUP LIKE THIS AND MEET OTHER PEOPLE WHO ALL SHARE THE SAME CONDITION SO IT'S NO LONGER DEVIANT. INSTEAD HEARING LOSS IN THIS ROOM IS THE NORM. WHAT THAT DOES IS THEY START TO FEEL, LIKE THEY SAY A NORMALIZATION PROCESS. YOU START TO FEEL NORMAL AGAIN. BUILD BACK YOUR SELF EFFICACY AND SELF ESTEEM AND KU TAKE THOSE FEELING OUT INTO THE WORLD. SO GROUPS LIKE THIS ARE REALLY IMPORTANT.

THE MEDIA CAN ALSO DO A LOT TO HELP COMBAT STIGMA. THEY CAN PORTRAY MORE POSITIVE IMAGES OF HEARING LOSS AND HEARING AIDS THAT COVER A WIDER AGE RANGE.

I THOUGHT THAT DERRICK COLEMAN IS A GREAT EXAMPLE OF THIS. HE'S AN NFL PLAYER, DEAF AND WEARS HEARING AIDS AND ON AN NFL WINNING TEAM. IF WE SAW MORE IMAGES LIKE THIS I THINK IT WOULD REALLY HELP TO COMBAT THAT MISPERCEPTION THAT IT ONLY AFFECTS THE ELDERLY.

I KNOW WHEN I GOT MY HEARING AIDS – AGAIN, I WAS ABOUT 20, AND I STILL REMEMBER VERY VIVIDLY THE BROCHURE. WHEN I GOT MY HEARING LOSS DIAGNOSED. AND THE DOCTOR TELLS ME I NEED TO GET HEARING AID AND HANDS ME THIS BROCHURE. AND IT'S THIS SMILING GRANDPA SITTING IN A RECLINER WITH A CARDIGAN ON. I CAN PICTURE IT STILL. HE HAD HEARING AIDS, AND HE'S SO HAPPY HE CAN TALK TO HIS GRANDSON SITTING ON HIS LAP. AND I REMEMBER LOOKING AT THIS BROCHURE FEELING REALLY DEPRESSED. IT DIDN'T HELP ME AT ALL. THE DOCTOR SAID THIS WILL REALLY ENHANCE YOUR LIFE TO GET HEARING AIDS. AND I'M LIKE THIS IS NOT SUPPOSED TO BE HAPPENING TO ME.

SO THE OTHER THING THAT HEARING AID COMPANIES CAN DO IS STOP FOCUSING ON HOW INVISIBLE THEIR PRODUCTS CAN BE, AND INSTEAD FOCUS ON HOW MUCH THEY CAN IMPROVE PEOPLE'S QUALITY OF LIFE.

THEY ACTUALLY DID A STUDY, AND A LOT OF OLDER ADULTS SAID THAT IF THEY KNEW HEARING AIDS WOULD IMPROVE THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE, THEN THEY WOULD DEFINITELY PURCHASE THEM. SO I THINK THERE NEEDS TO BE A SHIFT IN WHAT WE ARE FOCUSING ON AS FAR AS HEARING AID AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY FOR HEARING LOSS GOES.

I WANTED TO END THIS PRESENTATION ON WHAT WE CAN ALL DO TO HELP COMBAT STIGMA.

I THINK THAT WE ARE IN A POSITION TO CREATE VISIBILITY AND BE POSITIVE ROLE MODELS FOR PEOPLE. WHEN I WAS DOING THIS RESEARCH, I COULD TOTALLY RELATE TO SO MUCH OF IT. YOU KNOW, LIKE I SAID, I HID MY HEARING LOSS FOR YEAR AND YEARS.

I WASN'T SO MUCH BEING ABOUT IT'S GOING TO MAKE ME LOOK OLD, I WAS 20. BUT I WAS REALLY CONCERNED WITH BEING "DISABLED." I HAD MAJOR, MAJOR RESISTANCE TO BEING SOMEONE WITH A DISABILITY. I HAD VERY NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS OF WHAT THAT MEANT. AND I HONESTLY FELT LIKE I WOULD RATHER BE DEAD THAN DEAF. I REALLY HAD THESE THOUGHTS AND THEY WERE REALLY STRONG. THERE WAS NO WAY I WAS GOING TO BE DEAF. THAT WAS WHAT I THOUGHT.

SO I TRIED EVERYTHING. I SPENT TONS OF MONEY ON HOLISTIC TREATMENTS. I THOUGHT I WOULD CURE MY HEARING LOSS. I AM VERY EMBARRASSED ABOUT SOME OF THE THINGS I TRIED AND HOW MUCH MONEY I SPENT. AND I ALSO DID ON THE OTHER EXTREME CRAZY THINGS LIKE SKYDIVING, AND DROPPING EVERYTHING AND MOVE TO GO ITALY. I DID ALL THESE THINGS. BUT THE ONE THING I DIDN'T DO WAS SIT DOWN AND DEAL WITH MY HEARING LOSS. I COULDN'T EVEN FACE THE FACT THAT I MIGHT BE GOING DEAF.

IT WAS ONLY WHEN I JOINED THIS GROUP AND I SAW ALL THESE PEOPLE THAT ALSO HAVE HEARING LOSS, ESPECIALLY THE WOMEN. KAT AND PAT WERE HERE IN THE BEGINNING WHEN I MET YOU. I JUST REMEMBERED MEETING ALL THESE AMAZING WOMEN THAT WERE IN RELATIONSHIPS, MARRIED, HAVE KIDS OR HAD JOBS. THEY WERE BASICALLY JUST LIVING FULL LIVES AND THEY WERE HAPPY. THEY SEEMED HAPPY. I THOUGHT MY GOSH, MAYBE THAT'S POSSIBLE FOR ME.

THE OTHER THING THAT REALLY CHANGED FOR ME FROM BEING PART OF THIS GROUP WAS MY PERCEPTION ABOUT COCHLEAR IMPLANTS. JUST LIKE WITH THE HEARING AIDS, I HAD SO MUCH NEGATIVE EMOTIONS ABOUT COCHLEAR IMPLANTS. I REALLY BELIEVED THAT I WOULD NEVER EVER GET A COCHLEAR IMPLANT. I MEAN, THERE WAS NO YEA IN HELL I WAS GOING TO GET A COCHLEAR IMPLANT WAS HOW I FELT BECAUSE IN MY MIND WHEN I REACHED THAT POINT OF WHERE I NEEDED A COCHLEAR IMPLANT, THAT WOULD MEAN THAT I WAS REALLY DEAF. AND AGAIN, I – THERE WAS NO

WAY I WAS GONNA GO DEAF. SO THAT'S HOW I FELT ABOUT COCHLEAR IMPLANTS. AND WHEN I CAME HERE AND I SAW PEOPLE WITH COCHLEAR IMPLANTS AND HOW WELL THEY WERE DOING AND THESE WERE NORMAL PEOPLE. THEY WEREN'T – WHATEVER I HAD IN MY MIND, THESE HORRIBLE IMAGES OF DEAF AND DISABLED. THESE PEOPLE WEREN'T LIKE THAT AT ALL. THEY WERE JUST AMAZING NORMAL, WONDERFUL PEOPLE. IT REALLY HELPED ME TO CHANGE MY PERCEPTION. AND I HAVE A COCHLEAR IMPLANT NOW WHICH I JUST – I WOULD NEVER HAVE BELIEVED THAT YEARS AGO, THE WAY I FELT.

SO YOU ALL REALLY CHANGED MY PERCEPTIONS ABOUT HEARING LOSS. AND MY PERCEPTIONS ABOUT MYSELF, REALLY. AND I FEEL LIKE WE HAVE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO DO THAT FOR OTHER PEOPLE. WE CAN TAKE WHAT WE DO IN THIS ROOM. WE ARE SO OPEN ABOUT OUR HEARING LOSS HERE. WE CAN DO THAT OUT IN PRESIDENT WORLD AND SHOW PEOPLE, YOU KNOW – I USED TO WEAR MY HAIR DOWN ALL THE TIME. NOW I TAKE PRIDE IN WEARING A PONY TAIL SO PEOPLE CAN SEE I HAVE A HEARING AID AND A COCHLEAR IMPLANT. SO WE CAN GO OUT THERE AND SHOW PEOPLE THAT PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS CAN BE PRODUCTIVE AND SAY ACTIVE AND CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS TO THEIR COMMUNITIES, TO THE WORKPLACE, AND IN THEIR FAMILIES.

SO THAT IS ALL I HAVE. I THINK THAT MAYBE WE CAN TAKE A BREAK NOW AND THEN HAVE A RAP SESSION AFTER THE BREAK.

SO IT'S A LITTLE EARLY FOR A BREAK. WE COME BACK HERE AT 11 OR CLOSE TO 11 AND WE HAVE THE WHOLE LAST HOUR TO TALK ABOUT THIS SUBJECT.

>> DANNY: THANK YOU, LISA.

[APPLAUSE].

KAT: LISA, WHAT GRADE DID YOU GET ON THIS PAPER?

>> LISA: I GOT AN A.

(BREAK)

>> LISA: READY TO GET STARTED?

KU HEAR ME?

WE ARE GOING TO – ACTUALLY, PAT'S GOING TO MODERATE THIS NEXT SECTION OF THE MEETING. WE ARE GOING TO HAVE A RAP SESSION.

BEFORE THAT NANCI LINKE-ELLIS HAS A COUPLE ANNOUNCEMENTS.

>> NANCI: GOOD MORNING. I HAVE A REPORT FROM THE HLA CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION STATE BOARD. WE HAVE A NEW PRESIDENT WHO IS A YOUNG FRESH MAN AT STANFORD WHO IS VERY ORGANIZED AND VERY INTERESTED IN GETTING STARTED. SO SHE HAS – I AM LOOKING – I LOST IT. THEY DECIDED AT THE LAST BOARD MEETING THEY WERE GOING TO DIVIDE THE TOP ISSUES THAT PEOPLE ARE INTERESTED IN AND DIVIDE THEM INTO TEAMS. AND EACH BOARD MEMBER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR BEING ON TWO COMMITTEES AND BE A TEAM LEADER FOR AT LEAST ONE.

I AM GOING TO TELL YOU WHICH ONES THEY ARE, AND THEN I WILL TELL YOU WHICH ARE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA BASED IN TERMS OF TEAM LEADER.

IF ANYONE IS INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING TO BE ON THIS COMMITTEE, NOT AS A TEAM LEADER BUT HELPING OUT.

FIRST ONE IS YouTube VIDEOS. THEY WANT TO DO NINE VIDEOS THIS YEAR.

ZINA UP NORTH IS THE ONE WHO IS COMMAND EARRING THAT. SHE'S THE PRESIDENT BECAUSE SHE DOES A LOT OF YouTube VIDEOS FOR HEARING LOSS.

COMING UP WITH TARGETING SHOWS WHERE WE CAN HAVE A BOOTH, HEALTH FAIRS. WE HAVE A BANNER WITH RUNNERS AND TABLE CLOTHS WHICH I HAVE THAT PEOPLE CAN BORROW FROM ME.

THERE IS A LOOPING COMMITTEE, HEADED BY A WOMAN NAMED DEBRA JONES. I DON'T KNOW HER. SHE'S FROM SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA. A BRAND-NEW BOARD MEMBER.

THERE IS ALSO – THERE IS CHAPTER DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP. ED OGIBA, HEAD OF ALL CHAPTERS FOR NATIONAL. GOING AROUND TO VARIOUS CHAPTERS AND DEVELOPING A CHAPTER DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP, ABOUT HOW TO MAKE IT GROW. HE'S A FORMER (NOT CLEAR) MARKETING COMPANY IN THE ADVERTISING INDUSTRY. HE'S DONE IT IN FLORIDA SUCCESSFULLY. GOT EVERY CHAPTER IN FLORIDA TO GO. WE ARE GOING TO DO A NORTHERN ONE AND A SOUTHERN ONE. ANYONE WHO WANTS TO BE ON THE COMMITTEE CAN HELP WITH THAT.

ALSO IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA, TALKING ABOUT DOING A CONFERENCE IN 2016. WHETHER A PAID ONE OR FREE ONE NOT DISCUSSED YET.

ED ALSO TALKED ABOUT DOING A PILOT WITH CHAPTERS, FLORIDA WHERE HE'S FROM, IN NEW YORK AND MANHATTAN DOING A TECH FAIR. UNDERWRITTEN BY SPONSORS. THE FIRST ONE THEY HAD 200 PEOPLE. LAST ONE THEY HAD 800 PEOPLE, AND MADE ABOUT $9,000. PUT TOGETHER KIND OF A BIBLE HOW TO DO THIS. THIS IS WHERE CHAPTER DEVELOPMENT.

ZINA AND I DID A SURVEY IN OCTOBER FOR DATES. WE SENT AROUND A NOTICE, THESE THE DATES THAT WERE CHOSEN. THE MINUTE WE WENT TO PLAN IT, EVERYONE SAID I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT. CAN'T WORK THAT DAY. SO WE PUT IT ON HOLD AND LOOKING AT EITHER SEPTEMBER OR OCTOBER TO DO IT. IT WOULD BE A ONE-DAY WORKSHOP. WOULD LIKE TO DO SOME KIND OF SOCIAL THING THE NIGHT BEFORE SO HE COULD GET TO MEET SOME OF THE MEMBERS. AND THIS IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT FOR NEW MEMBERS AND FOR PEOPLE WHO DON'T – PRETTY MUCH WHAT IT IS. THOSE ARE THE COMMITTEES. PRESS RELEASES. LOOPING. WE HAVE NO EXHIBITS IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN EMAIL ME OR LET ME KNOW HERE, AND I WILL MAKE THE INTRODUCTION TO THE STATE GROUP.

THAT'S IT FOR ME. SO.

>> PAT: CAN'T WALK AWAY WITH A MICROPHONE.

>> NANCI: I CAN TRY.

>> PAT: HI.

SHE'S COMING BACK.

JUST REAL QUICK BEFORE WE GET STARTED. LISA MENTIONED THE EARLIER PART ABOUT THE SIGN-UP SHEET. IT REALLY HELPS IF YOU MAKE SURE THAT YOU SIGNED IN, PARTICULARLY IF WE DON'T HAVE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS, BECAUSE WE WANT TO BE ABLE TO CONTACT YOU AND MAKE SURE YOU ARE CONTACTED WITH US AND CONNECTED AND GET ALL THE INFORMATION.

THEN AS FAR AS THESE SIGN-UP SHEETS FOR CLEAN UP OR SET UP. WE ARE NOT ASKING FOR A YEAR LONG COMMITMENT. WE ARE ASKING IF YOU CAN COME AND HELP. I WILL CONTACT YOU IF YOU SIGNED UP AND ASK YOU TO COME ON A CERTAIN MONTH.

MARCELLA, THANKFULLY, SIGNED UP FOR CLEANUP.

IF YOU WANT TO STICK AROUND, PLEASE PUT YOUR NAME DOWN SO I KIND OF HAVE A FEEL FOR HOW MANY PEOPLE.

PASS THIS AROUND.

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUT I TOLD LISA AT THE BREAK, WHAT SHE SAID AND HER TOPIC WAS SO AFFIRMING TO ALL OF US, I THINK. YOU KNOW, WE MAY HAVE HEARD IT BEFORE, BUT MAYBE NEVER SO CLEARLY THAT WE ARE NOT BROKEN. WE JUST DON'T HEAR VERY WELL. WE ARE NOT AT ALL – AND I KNOW, WHETHER YOU WERE BORN WITH A HEARING LOSS OR WHETHER IT'S AN ACQUIRED HEARING LOSS, THAT YOU'VE FELT STIGMATIZED AT SOME POINT.

IT'S SURPRISING TO ME TO SEE PEOPLE THINKING THAT – WAY BACK TO ARISTOTLE, THAT PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS ARE "LESS THAN" AND I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT IT A LOT THIS LAST WEEK OR SO, AND TRYING TO REMEMBER WHAT IT FELT LIKE WHEN I FIRST STARTED HAVING A HEARING LOSS AND WHAT I THOUGHT ABOUT MYSELF OR OTHERS WITH HEARING LOSS. AND I CAN'T QUITE STILL PUT MY FINGER ON IT.

WHY DO WE DO THIS? AND I THOUGHT MAYBE SOME OF IT WAS BECAUSE WE ALL GREW UP WANTING TO COMMUNICATE. AND WHEN WE ARE NOT RECEPTIVE TO LANGUAGE AS MUCH AS WE USED TO BE OR WE HEAR LESS THAN NORMAL PEOPLE ARE, THAT WE KIND OF LOSE THAT CONNECTION WITH THE WORLD.

I KNOW YOU ALL WANT TO SHARE SOME THOUGHT AND FEELINGS ABOUT WHAT YOU'VE HEARD TODAY. SO WHO WANTS TO START IT OFF? WHO WANTS TO KIND OF SHARE WHAT YOUR PERCEPTIONS OF PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS ARE, YOUR OWN – MINDY.

>> MINDY: SINCE LISA MENTIONED ABOUT HAVING HEARING AIDS – HAVE YOUR HAIR HIDING YOUR HEARING AID. I FIND I DO THAT, I DO ALL

THE TIME WHEN I HAVE MY HEARING AIDS. BECAUSE SOME COWORKERS KNOW I HAVE A HEARING LOSS BUT NOT EVERYBODY.

I WORK AT A JUNIOR HIGH AND SOMETIMES IF OTHER STAFF KNOW YOU HAVE A HEARING LOSS THEN YOU ARE NOT WORTHY OF DOING THINGS THAT NEED TO BE DONE.

>> PAT: MAKES ME WONDER SOMETIMES. I THINK BACK TO 40, 50, 60 YEARS AGO, I HAD AN AUNT WITH HEARING LOSS. SHE WORE THE BIG THING AROUND THE NECK. I KIND OF UNDERSTAND WHY SHE YOU WOULD WANT TO HIDE THAT. TODAY OUR HEARING INSTRUMENTS AREN'T THAT BIG. WHY WANT TO HIDE THEM?

>> SANDY: I THINK THAT DISABILITIES IN GENERAL, ESPECIALLY WITHIN THE WORKPLACE, ARE DENIED – AND STIGMATIZED. I AM A TEACHER. AN EDUCATIONAL HISTORIAN LOOKED AT TEACHERS WITH DISABILITY. THERE IS NOG IT. THERE IS NO PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION OR UNION GROUP OR EDUCATORS WITH DISABILITIES, UNLIKE PEOPLE WHO ARE OTHER MINORITIES.

THAT'S ONE.

#2. I WENT THROUGH MY OWN DISCRIMINATION WHEN I REPEATEDLY REQUESTED ALDs. IT WAS IGNORE, IGNORE. I SAW WHEN I WOULD RAISE MY HAND IN A STAFF MEETING AND ASK FOR SOMETHING TO BE REPEATED. I HEARD SNICKERS FROM OTHER TEACHERS. THIS IS SPECIAL ED, THEY SHOULD KNOW BETTER. THAT WAS A FOURTH COMPLAINT. I AM NOW CONNECTING WITH TEACHERS ON A NATIONAL BASIS. AND HEARING LOSS, I WOULD CALL ONE TEACHER SAYING THAT HER PRINCIPAL BASICALLY SAID THAT YOUR ITALIAN ACCENT IS TOO LOUD AND CAN YOU REALLY MONITOR YOUR KIDS WHEN YOU HAVE HEARING LOSS? SO THERE IS REAL STIGMA. AND TEACHERS (INAUDIBLE) THE SYSTEM. SO I WOULD HOPE THAT THIS KIND OF THING – THERE IS A WAY TO CROSS-COLLABORATE WITH ANOTHER DISABILITY ORGANIZATION ON STIGMA SO THAT – LIKE IF THIS WOULD GO INTO, EDUCATION, YOU KNOW, TALK TO PEOPLE IN YOUR EMPLOYMENT SECTOR THAT THEY LEARN ABOUT THIS. THEY HEAR IT. BECAUSE IN ALL THE YEARS OF MY BEING IN SPECIAL ED, I HAVE YET TO HEAR SOMETHING AS BASIC AS THIS. NOT ONLY FOR US AS WITH ONE ANOTHER. BUT FOR OUR KIDS. SO IT'S A CRITICAL THING THAT NEEDS TO BE DONE.

>> PAT: THANK YOU. THERE IS KIND OF THAT INTERNAL AND – LISA POINTED OUT IN HER PRESENTATION – THAT SELF-STIGMA. I AM WONDERING, OBVIOUSLY, PARTICULARLY IN THE WORKPLACE, WE DEAL WITH A LOT OF NEGATIVITY. EVEN IF WE ARE FULLY DIVULGING AND ADVOCATING FOR OURSELVES.

YOU THINK SOMETIMES IT'S FEAR THAT PEOPLE DON'T QUITE KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH US?

>> SANDY: WE DON'T TALK ABOUT IT. IF WE ARE NOT EDUCATED IN THIS. AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, MY UNION KNEW NOTHING. AND PEOPLE ARE AFRAID TO REQUEST REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR FEAR

THEY WOULD BE DENIED AND AS A RESULT OF REQUESTING ONE, THEY WOULD BE RETALIATED AGAINST AND LOSE THEIR JOB. IT'S VERY REAL.

>> PAT: IT'S DEFINITELY A REAL THING. I CAN REMEMBER WHEN I WAS WORKING AND PEOPLE SAID WHY DIDN'T YOU ASK FOR ACCOMMODATION. AND I THOUGHT AT THAT TIME, BEFORE I KNEW HLAA, WAS I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO ASK FOR. THERE WASN'T ENOUGH EDUCATION THROUGH OUR AUDIOLOGISTS OR WHATEVER, TO SAY THIS IS WHAT YOU NEED TO BE MORE SUCCESSFUL IN THE WORKING PLACE.

I WENT TO DO VOCATIONAL REHAB. AND THEY SAID WHAT DO YOU NEED TO BE SUCCESSFUL? I SAID I DON'T KNOW, THAT'S WHY I AM HERE. AND THEY THREW UP THEIR HANDS, AT LEAST THIS PARTICULAR COUNSELOR. YOU CAN'T TELL US WHAT YOU NEED, WE CAN'T HELP YOU. THIS VICIOUS CYCLE.

WHERE DO YOU START?

WHERE I STARTED WAS HLAA, WHERE I LEARNED WHAT I NEEDED TO DO.

KEN.

>> KEN: ONE COMMENT I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE IS – LISA, THAT WAS A GREAT PRESENTATION BUT ONE THING I THINK YOU LEFT OUT WAS THAT YOU INDICATED THAT YOU WENT TO ITALY FOR NOTHING? [LAUGHTER]. THERE MIGHT HAVE BEEN AN ITALIAN MAN INVOLVED?

>> PAT: WE KNOW THE STORIES.

>> KEN: ALL RIGHT.

ONE THING WITH STIGMA, YOU KNOW, A LOT OF US LOST OUR HEARING LATER IN LIFE. ME, FOR ONE, I DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT HEARING LOSS, AND I HAD A PARTICULAR THOUGHT ABOUT IT THAT I DIDN'T WANT IT. AND THAT DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO DEAL WITH IT. I DON'T WANT TO BE DIFFERENT. AND I WAS AFRAID PEOPLE WOULDN'T ACCEPT ME. AND I THINK WE DEAL WITH THAT, EVERYBODY – WELL, MOST PEOPLE DEAL WITH IT AS ADOLESCENTS. YOU ARE TRYING TO FIGURE OUT – THEY ARE TRYING TOO FIGURE OUT WHO THEY ARE, DEFINE THEMSELVES AS A PERSON, AND IF YOU LOSE YOUR HEARING LATER ON IN LIFE, THAT'S NOT WHO I AM.

THAT'S NOT WHO I WANTED TO BE. IT WAS NOT PART OF MY DEFINITION. WAS I ABLE TO ADAPT TO THAT IN MY OWN MIND EVENTUALLY. AND IT'S STILL AN ONGOING STRUGGLE AT TIMES.

BUT LATER ON IN LIFE WHEN PEOPLE START TO LOSE THEIR HEARING, A LOT OF PEOPLE TALK ABOUT YOU NOTICE – SOMETIMES IN YOUR PARENTS – AS THEY GET OLDER, SUDDENLY YOU START TO BECOME THE PARENT. IT'S LIKE A REVERSE ROLE. SO THEY MAY BE GOING THROUGH THE SAME PROCESS? THEY ARE CHANGING. IT'S NOT JUST THEIR HEARING LOSS, BUT THE OTHER PARTS, YOU KNOW, AS YOU AGE, YOU GET OLDER, THERE ARE THINGS THAT CHANGE ABOUT YOU AS A PERSON AND, SOMETIMES THEY ARE HARD TO ACCEPT.

THEY DON'T WANT TO LOSE THAT DEFINITION OF THEMSELVES AND IT BECOMES SOMETHING THAT THEY THINK THAT THEY AREN'T AND THAT MIGHT POSSIBLY BE REJECTED BY OTHER PEOPLE.

SOMETHING I JUST THOUGHT OF, HERE, IS THE ACADEMY AWARDS. THIS YEAR THERE WAS SO MUCH FUSS ABOUT DIVERSITY. AND HEARING LOSS IS DIVERSITY. AND PEOPLE ARE NOT ACCEPTING OF DIVERSITY A LOT OF TIMES BECAUSE OF A LACK OF EDUCATION, LACK OF EXPOSURE TO DIVERSITY. A LACK OF EXPOSURE TO PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS. AND THAT'S WHERE WE COME IN AS A CHAPTER, AS HLAA, AS A GROUP, THAT LISA TALKED ABOUT, IS GETTING OUT AND EDUCATING PEOPLE, AND EXPOSING THEM TO PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS THAT ARE PRODUCTIVE PEOPLE AND TO SHOW THEM THAT IT'S OKAY.

THERE IS <u>IMITATION GAME</u>, I BELIEVE, THE SCREENWRITER, I BELIEVE, THAT HE WON THE ACADEMY AWARD, AND HE GOT UP AND HE SAID, "YOU KNOW WHAT? I WAS WEIRD, I WAS DIFFERENT WHEN I WAS 16, AND I TRIED TO KILL MYSELF. AND LOOK AT ME NOW." HE SAID "ALL YOU WEIRD, DIFFERENT PEOPLE OUT THERE, KEEP ON BEING WEIRD, AND YOU SHOUT FROM THE TOP OF YOUR LUNGS –" TO PARAPHRASE. SO THAT'S WHAT WE NEED TO DO AS A CHAPTER.

>> PAT: I THINK WE GOT WEIRD COVERED. THAT ONE WE'VE GOT. AND DIFFERENT WE ARE. I THINK – SPEAKING FOR MYSELF.

AND YOU TOUCHED ON IT, KEN, IT'S THAT SENSE OF SELF. YOU KNOW, WHO AM I? I CAN REMEMBER AS MY HEARING GOT WORSE AND MY PERSONALITY CHANGED. BECAUSE I USED TO BE THE OUTGOING PERSON AND TELLING JOKES AT THE COFFEE POT AND STUFF AT WORK AND SHARING THINGS, SILLY THINGS ACROSS THE OFFICE. AS MY HEARING WENT AWAY AND I COULDN'T DO THAT, I BECAME "LESS THAN" IN MY OWN MIND. AND I THINK THAT WILE THERE IS A GREAT DEAL OF? SF STIGMA THAT WE NEEDED TO WORK ON. AS FAR AS ADVERTISEMENT, MY BIG THING. THOSE GRAY-HAIRED LADIES ON THE ADS I GET ALL THE TIME. I WANT TO TEAR THEM UP. BUT THINGS ARE CHANGING, BUT WE HAVE TO ACCEPT OURSELVES FIRST. WE CAN'T GET THE REST OF THE WORLD VIEW US AS OKAY IF WE DON'T THINK WE ARE OKAY. I THINK THAT'S THE HARDEST BATTLE IN THE BEGINNING, AT LEAST, YOU KNOW TO, NOT FEEL THAT YOU ARE BROKEN, THAT YOU ARE LESS THAN, THAT YOU CAN'T DO IT ANYMORE.

I KEPT BACKING UP AND BACKING UP AND BACKING UP UNTIL I WASN'T EVEN GOING OUTSIDE OF THE HOUSE ANYMORE. AND THAT'S NOT SOCIETY'S FAULT, THAT WAS ME. THAT WAS SELF-IMPOSED. SO WE NEED TO THINK ABOUT SELF-ACCEPTANCE FIRST, DON'T WE? AND I THINK, LIKE LISA SAID, COMING TO A GROUP LIKE THIS AND FINDING OUT YOU ARE NOT THE ONLY ONE MAKES A HUGE DIFFERENCE. YOU DON'T HAVE TO EXPLAIN IT. YOU DON'T HAVE TO BLUFF. NONE OF YOU HERE THINK TWICE IF I ASK YOU TO REPEAT SOMETHING FIVE TIMES. COME HERE. WE WILL GO – WHOOPS – SEE, I GOT WEIRD COVERED. BALANCE ISSUES THERE, FOLKS.

IT'S A JOURNEY, BUT I JUST THINK ABOUT ALL OF US HERE THAT ARE HERE FOR ONE VANE WE WANT TO LEARN HOW TO DEAL WITH OUR HEARING LOSS, WHATEVER WAY. WHETHER IT'S IN DEALING WITH OUR FAMILY OR DEALING WITH THE STORE CLERK OR OUR AUDIOLOGIST OR WHATEVER WAY THAT WE ARE INTERFACING, INTERACTING WITH THE WORLD OUT THERE, WE WANT TO BE A FORUM AND TO BE GIVEN THE COURAGE AND ABILITY TO GO OUT AND TAKE CARE OF OURSELVES AND GET OTHERS TO DO WITH US.

WHO ELSE WANTS TO – ALAN BACK THERE AND THEN JOE.

>> ALAN: LISA, A LOT OF YOUR STUFF HIT HOME, AND TO THE HEART. THANK YOU.

I THINK I'M FINDING – BEEN FINDING MYSELF LUCKY IN THE LAST YEAR AND A HALF SINCE MY RIGHT EAR WENT OUT ALL OF A SUDDEN.

I FEEL LUCKY IN THAT I'M NOT HAVING A PROBLEM INFORMING PEOPLE WHEN NEEDED. IT'S ONE OF THOSE THINGS. I'M NOT MAD AT GOD. I'M APPRECIATIVE FOR WHAT I STILL HAVE. IT SUCKS I CAN'T HEAR EMERGENCY VEHICLES IN STEREO ANYMORE, AND LISTEN TO MUSIC IN THE SAME WAY. BUT ONE OF THE PROACTIVE FINANCIAL BENEFITS I'VE FOUND IN ADVOCATING FOR MYSELF, IS, FOR EXAMPLE, A FRIEND INVITED ME TO JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK A FEW WEEKS AGO, AND SOMETIMES THEY HAVE ACCESSIBILITY PASSES THAT WAIVE THE CAR'S ENTRY. AND THE GAL AT THE BOOTH WAS GREAT. MANY FOLKS ARE – SYMPATHIES THAT THIS HAPPENED, AND THAT MEANT, GREAT – DON'T NEED THE PITY. BUT FOLKS ARE RESPECTFUL ABOUT IT. I FEEL LUCKY PSYCHOLOGICALLY THAT FOR ME, I DON'T LIKE THE EXPRESSION "IT IS WHAT IT IS" IT IS WHAT IT IS, AND DON'T HAVE A PROBLEM BRINGING IT UP WHEN NEEDED.

I DID START A JOB TWO WEEKS AGO, SO I'M EMPLOYED NOW, HAD BEEN LOOKING AND LIKE WE DISCUSSED IN THE LAST COUPLE MEETINGS SORT OF AND YOUR – LEGALITY OF WHEN ONE SHOULD DISCLOSE DISABILITY TO AN EMPLOYER SHOULD IT COME UP. IT HASN'T COME UP. I AM KIND OF IN A WAREHOUSE SITUATION WHERE PROJECTING VOICES IS KIND OF NECESSARY ANYWAY. SO IT JUST – IF IT COMES UP I DON'T HAVE A PROBLEM RELAYING THAT. THE NEED HASN'T COME UP.

>> PAT: JOE.

>> JOE: THANK YOU. REAL QUICKLY, REST ASSURED WHEN LISA BETH WAS DIAGNOSED WITH HEARING LOSS, THE ONE THING I DIDN'T DO WAS HOUND ON IT BECAUSE I WASN'T SURE WHAT SHE WAS GOING THROUGH IN HER MIND. AND I ONLY PLAYED ONE PRACTICAL JOKE ON HER RIGHT AFTER SHE GOT HER HEARING AID, THE VERY DAY, AND I HAVEN'T DONE IT SINCE THEN. IT WAS A DOOZY. I THINK WON – LISA, YOU ARE RIGHT, PEOPLE NEED TO BE A LITTLE MORE SENSITIVE, WHICH MOST OF US I THINK ARE. WE TRY TO. BUT THEN LISA BETH HAS BEEN TELLING ME FOR LIKE 20 YEARS THAT I'M GOING TO NEED GLASSES. AND ABOUT A YEAR AGO HER PREDICTION CAME TRUE. AND I AM USING HER GLASSES. IT WAS ABOUT A MONTH OR SO AGO, SHE GOES, HA-HA, YOU GOT GLASSES. WOW, I DIDN'T

SAY ANYTHING ABOUT YOUR STIGMA AND EVERYTHING. AND I HAD TO REMIND HER THAT OTHER THINGS ON THE HUMAN BODY TEND TO BREAK DOWN TOO, SO YOU BETTER COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS AND ALL THAT.

SO THEN MY JOB THAT I HAD AS AN EMT, I DEALT WITH A LOT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES. I HAD EXPERIENCE WITH DEALING WITH PEOPLE ESPECIALLY HEARING AND BLINDNESS AND MOBILITY ISSUES AND SO FORTH. I AM SURPRISED THIS COUNTRY TOOK A LONG TIME TO GET THERE BUT WE ARE GETTING THERE.

I FORGOT WHAT ELSE I WAS GOG SAY. IT WILL COME TO ME, BUT LIS A THE GENTLEMAN THAT YOU MET AT THE GYM, THAT WAS HIS LOSS, AND WE KNOW THAT.

>> PAT: HIS LOSS, KEN'S GAIN.

>> MITZI: I AM SO GLAD LISA DID THIS, THIS IS WHAT I SEE AS OUR CORE ISSUE IS THE STIGMA. AND TO COUNTER STIGMA, YOU NEED A PARADIGM SHIFT. YOU NEED TO CHANGE THE IMAGE OF HEARING LOSS. EVERYONE HERE IS ONE OF THE BEST ADVERTISEMENTS FOR CHANGING THAT IMAGE. WHAT IMPRESSED ME THE MOST WHEN I CAME TO THIS GROUP. WOW, WHAT AN ATTRACTIVE GROUP. NO, REALLY. THIS IS A GOOD LOOKING GROUP. AND IT GOES THROUGH ALL AGE GROUPS. AND THIS IS – APPEARANCES MATTER TO PEOPLE. THAT'S THE FIRST THING PEOPLE SEE IS YOUR OUTER APPEARANCE AND PEOPLE START JUDGING THERE. WHY WE HATE HAVING OUR HEARING AIDS SEEN, BECAUSE WE DON'T WANT THAT TO BE THE FIRST THING PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT US.

AS YOU CHANGE THE PERCEPTION OF THIS, THAT WON'T BE AN ISSUE ANYMORE.

LOOK HOW MANY PEOPLE IN THIS ROOM WEAR GLASSES. NO ONE CALLS YOU DISABLED IF YOU WEAR GLASSES. IT'S A MINOR PHYSICAL GLITCH, BOOM, YOU FIX IT. I REMEMBER A TIME WHEN IT WAS A STIGMA TO WEAR GLASSES. YOU WERE FOUR-EYES. I LIVED THAT.

SO IF IT CAN BE DONE FOR THAT, GLASSES ARE RIGHT OUT HERE, WE CAN DID THAT FOR HEARING LOSS. WE CAN MAKE THAT CHANGE. AND WE ARE DOING THAT HERE. WE ALSO NEED TO REMEMBER ABOUT THE STIGMA OF AGING. AND DON'T MAKE THAT A NEGATIVE HERE. WE'VE GOT TO REMEMBER THAT AGING HAS ALL KINDS OF FACES, AND SOME OF THE MOST DYNAMIC PEOPLE IN THIS ROOM ARE THE FREAKING OLDEST PEOPLE IN THE ROOM. AND ANOTHER REALLY ACTIVE ONE, MARCIA THERE; SHE RAN ME INTO THE GROUND AT THE LAST GARAGE SALE WE NEED TO MAKE SURE WE DON'T DENIGRATE AGING WHILE WE TALK ABOUT THE STIGMA OF HEARING LOSS.

>> PAT: I THINK SOMETIMES TOO, THAT WE SORT OF SELF-IMPOSE THAT STIGMA. I THINK WE BUY INTO IT. WHY WE HIDE IT. IT'S LIKE WHEN WE STARTED THIS CHAPTER, I THINK IT WAS CHLOE WHO HAD TO LEAVE. BROUGHT UP ABOUT HEARING INSTRUMENTS. THE EAR HORN AND THESE THINGS PEOPLE USED THROUGHOUT THE CENTURIES. YOU CAN

UNDERSTAND WANTING TO HIDE SOME OF THOSE THINGS BECAUSE THEY ARE VERY BIG, OBVIOUSLY, FLASHING LIGHTS ON THEM. WE THOUGHT IT'S TOO BAD THAT PEOPLE DON'T HAVE A BETTER FEELING ABOUT THEIR HEARING INSTRUMENT RATHER THAN BEING A NEGATIVE THING. FEBRUARY PEOPLE CAN GET USED TO BLUETOOTH AND EVERYBODY'S PLUGGED IN ALL THE TIME, YOU NEVER – IF YOU GO OUT IN THE WORLD, EVERYBODY'S GOT SOMETHING ON THEIR EAR OR IN THEIR EAR, AND YET WE STILL HIDE OURS.

>> MITZI: MICROPHONE ON YOUR SIDE.

>> PAT: IT'S ALL THESE THINGS THAT PEOPLE ARE WEARING OR HAVE ON. SO WE HAVE TO THINK A LITTLE BIT ABOUT WHY WE ARE STILL ASHAMED OF IT WHEN PEOPLE ARE USING TECHNOLOGY ALL THE TIME ON THEIR HEADS. SOME OF THEM TO HARM THEMSELVES. IT JUST KILLS ME TO SEE MY GRAND KIDS WITH THE EARBUDS IN THERE, BLASTING THE MUSIC AND THINKING YOU ARE GOING TO BE RIGHT WITH ME IN A FEW YEARS, KIDS. AND JUST THE WHOLE THING.

BUT IT IS CHANGING. SURVIVOR – I DON'T KNOW HOW MANY OF YOU WATCHED THE FIRST EPISODE OF SURVIVOR LAST WEEK. NINA, BILATERAL COCHLEAR IMPLANT IS ONE OF THE CONTESTANTS ON THIS CAREER'S SURVIVOR. TALK ABOUT GETTING IT OUT THERE IN THE MEDIA. DERRICK COLEMAN.

SHE'S IN HER 20s, I THINK, OR MAYBE 30s. SHE'S YOUNG, DYNAMIC, ATTRACTIVE, WITH TWO BIG OLD THINGS BEHIND HER EARS. WE NEED TO SORT OF THINK ABOUT MAYBE WHY WE ARE STILL IMPOSING THIS. SOME OF IT IS US AND NOT THE WORLD.

>> MINDY: I WANTED TO MENTION, MY SISTER IS GOING TO HAVE THIS EXPERIENCE. AT AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, AND SHE WAS TRYING TO GET A PARENT TO UNDERSTAND INSTEAD OF MAKE – I THINK IT WAS A SON FEEL BETTER BUT NOT MAKE THEM FEEL LIKE THEY ARE STUPID, DUMB, RETARDED BECAUSE THEY HAVE TO WEAR HEARING AIDS. AND MY SISTER SAID TO ME WHY DON'T THE PARENTS UNDERSTAND? HEARING AIDS ARE GOING TO HELP THEIR CHILD HEAR BETTER. AS A SAFETY EXAMPLE, FOR CROSSING THE STREET, IN A FEW YEARS MIGHT BE TO BE ABLE AND WITH THE HEARING AIDS WILL MAKE IT THAT MUCH SAFER FOR THE PERSON TO CROSS THE STREET SAFER. AND MY SISTER SPENT SOMETHING LIKE 25 MINUTES ON THE PHONE WITH ME TRYING TO FIND OTHER WAYS TO GET THIS PARENT TO STOP BEING MEAN TOWARD THE CHILD. AND I AM LIKE, I KNOW OTHER PARENTS WHO SAID TO ME, AND PARENTS SAID AT ANOTHER SCHOOL I WAS AT, MY KID HAS HEARING AIDS. SHE'S TOO DUMB, STUPID, HERSELF TO WEAR HEARING AIDS AND NEVER GOING TO LEARN SIGN LANGUAGE. I STARTED SIGNING WITH THIS GIRL AND SHE'S PICKING UP VERY QUICKLY.

>> PAT: YOU HAVE TO WONDER HOW THE WORLD, PEOPLE CAN BE THAT IGNORANT. I FEEL LIKE THAT'S SORT OF BECOME REALLY UNUSUAL

THAT PEOPLE ARE MUCH MORE ACCEPTING OF CHILDREN WHO HAVE HANDICAPPED OR WHO ARE DIFFERENTLY-ABLED. BUT I GUESS THERE ARE STILL DIFFERENT MEAN NEEDS OF EDUCATION.

>> SANDY: I WAS THINKING ABOUT STIGMA WHEN – WHILE I ACQUIRED HEARING LOSS PROBABLY 20 YEARS AGO, OR AT LEAST WHEN I STARTED TO AGE. I WAS BORN PATIENT PARALYSIS. SO I KNEW WHAT STIGMA WAS LIKE THERE. SO THAT WAS VISIBLE. I AM THINKING OF MY OWN STIGMA IN PEOPLE MAKING PERCEPTIONS BASED ON WHAT THEY SEE. YOU KNOW HOW PEOPLE WANT TO HIDE THEIR HEARING AIDS BECAUSE THEY FEAR. WHAT I WOULD SUGGEST IS THAT IT WOULD HELP TO LEARN ABOUT HOW STIGMA IS EXPERIENCED IN OTHER AREAS, WHETHER IT IS DISFIGUREMENT OR A MENTAL ILLNESS OR VISUAL IMPAIRMENT, ORTHOPEDIC IMPAIRMENT, STIGMA IS VERY REAL. AND I THINK SOMETIMES WHEN WE ONLY RECOGNIZE STIGMA IN OUR OWN DIMENSION, WE MAY BE LESS ABLE TO REALIZE THAT THERE IN THAT PERSON WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT OR ORTHOPEDIC IMPAIRMENT THERE IS A WAY TO FIND COMMONALITY AND BREAK THAT STIGMA BARRIER. AND SO THAT RATHER THAN BE A GROUP OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES WHERE VISION IS OVER THERE, DISFIGUREMENT IS OVER THERE, WE ARE BEGINNING TO FIND THAT THAT WE ALL EXPERIENCE STIGMA BUT IN VERY DIFFERENT WAYS.

>> PAT: I THINK STIGMA IS A HUMAN CONDITION. WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT ALL OF US GROWING UP WANTING TO BE "NORMAL" WANTING TO BE LIKE EVERYBODY ELSE. WE DON'T WANT TO BE DIFFERENT. GOD HELP THE PERSON WHO LOOKS A LITTLE DIFFERENT OR ACTS A LITTLE DIFFERENT OR REACTS DIFFERENT. WE ALL WANT TO BE ACCEPTED INTO THE GROUP. BUT WE ALL STIGMATIZE OURSELVES AND EACH OTHER TOO. IT'S THE HUMAN CONDITION. WE WANT TO BE LIKE EVERYBODY ELSE AND YET WE KEEP EVERYBODY THAT'S DIFFERENT OUTSIDE.

AS MUCH AS WE TRY TO GET PAST IT, I THINK SOMETIMES WE HAVE TO ALSO ACCEPT THAT IT'S NEVER GOING TO COMPLETELY GO AWAY, BECAUSE HUMAN NATURE IS TO PUSH ASIDE ANYTHING THAT'S DIFFERENT.

BEEN AROUND JUNIOR HIGH KIDS YOU KNOW THEY ALL WANT TO BE ACCEPTED, AND I DON'T THINK WE EVER CHANGE. WE ALL WANT TO BE OKAY, AND WHEN WE START LOSING OUR HEARING OR VISION OR WE HAVE A STROKE THAT SUDDENLY WE CAN'T WALK THE SAME WAY, NOW WE'RE DIFFERENT, AND THAT'S REALLY HARD BECAUSE WE LIKE TO BE THE DON'T WANT TO STAND OUT.

>> KAT: GOT A FUNNY STORY ABOUT FEELING STIGMATIZED BUT HAVING IT BE MORE INTERNAL THAN EXTERNAL. WHEN I FIRST GOT HEARING LOSS AND HEARING AIDS IN MY 30S. I WORKED IN A ROOM WITH TWO OTHER PEOPLE. I DIDN'T WANT ANYONE TO KNOW I WORE HEARING AIDS. I HAD TO CHANGE MY BATTERIES DURING THE DAY. I WAITED FOR BOTH PEOPLE TO LEAVE. SOON THEY LEFT I PUT THE NEW BATTERY IN, SHOVED IT IN MY EAR BEFORE THEY CAME BACK. AND THEN THE BATTERY

PACKAGE WAS EMPTY. I USED THE LAST BATTERY, AND INSTEAD OF THROWING IT AWAY IN THE TRASH I TORE IT UP INTO LITTLE PIECES SO SOMEBODY GOING THROUGH MY TRASH WOULDN'T SEE THIS PACKAGE OF INCRIMINATING EVIDENCE.

JUST LOOKING BACK WHAT WAS I THINKING. I WAS SO AFRAID THAT SOMEBODY WOULD THINK I WAS WEARING HEARING AIDS AND WHY WOULD IT BE SO BAD. THAT'S JUST HOW SOME OF US ARE. HOW I WAS. I AM TOTALLY OVER IT NOW. I CHANGE MY BATTERIES IN THE MIDDLE OF A MEETING, VERY OBVIOUSLY. I WANT PEOPLE TO KNOW I WEAR HEARING AS NOW. I STILL DON'T HEAR PERFECTLY, OF COURSE, BUT AT LEAST IT'S A REMINDER, OH, YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT. SHE DOES WEAR HEARING AIDS Y SHE DIDN'T CATCH WHAT I JUST SAID. IT'S FUNNY THE THINGS WE DO. NOT AS RADICAL AS GOING TO ITALY, MAYBE. TEARING IT UP SO WOULDN'T BE SEEN IN THE TRASH.

>> PAT: VERY TRUE. CATCH HERE AND THEN BACK TO YOU, IT'S EASIER AND THEN YOU TWO OVER THERE.

>> RENE ALEXANDER IS MY NAME. I DON'T HAVE A HEARING PROBLEM. AND I REALLY WANT TO SAY SOMETHING FROM THE OTHER SIDE.

I AM VERY IMPRESSED WITH WHAT I SEE AND HEAR IN THIS GROUP. BUT I MUST SAY, AND MAYBE YOU HEARD THIS BEFORE, IT'S VERY – AND YOU MENTIONED THAT, A LOT OF TIMES ALL THE STIGMA AND ALL THE SELF TALK WHICH RUNS IN OUR HEAD ALL THE TIME, IT'S LIKE A SONG WE CANNOT STOP SINGING INTERNALLY. YES, THERE ARE PEOPLE PROBABLY LOOK AT YOU AND STIGMATIZE YOU. BUT THEY'RE IDIOTS. THERE IS NOTHING YOU SHOULD BE ASHAMED OR SOMEBODY THAT THINKS THAT WAY. JUST SPENDING ONE SECOND OF YOUR TIME THINKING THAT GUY, THE PERSON IS AN IDIOT, IT'S NOT EVEN WORTH IT. IT'S JUST NOT WORTH IT.

OBVIOUSLY, WE CANNOT RESOLVE ALL THE PROBLEMS IN THE WORLD, BUT FRANKLY, I WOULD THINK THAT IF I TO HAVE SOMETHING EXCEPT BY BEING VERY SHORT, WHICH IS REALLY OBVIOUS, I WOULD JUST HAVE A LITTLE SIGN, PARDON MY BEING SO BRUTAL, BUT "HEY, I'M DEAF, AND YOU KNOW WHAT? GET OUT OF MY WAY" GET OUT OF MY WAY. SO I REALLY THINK THAT IT'S NOT AS BAD AS YOU THINK. BUT AS YOU SAID IT, YOU REALLY HAVE TO KIND OF BUILD YOURSELF UP. CONGRATULATIONS FOR EVERYTHING I HEARD.

>> PAT: WE ARE REALLY GLAD TO HAVE YOU AND MARIE WITH US. YOU WERE AT OUR CHRISTMAS PARTY AND HAPPY TO HAVE YOU HERE.

I WILL HAVE YOU INTRODUCE YOURSELVES LATER, MARIE.

>> NANCI: PART OF IT IS THE STIGMA COMES FROM PRIOR TO TECHNOLOGY. IF YOU LOOK AT THE CALIFORNIA TELEPHONE ACCESS PROGRAM IT'S CALLED DEAF AND DISABLED. BECAUSE THE CORE GROUP OF PEOPLE THAT HAD A HEARING PROBLEM, THE ONLY ONES THAT WERE VISIBLE WAS DEAF PEOPLE, ASL, CULTURAL DEAF PEOPLE. SO WHEN THE REVOLUTION STARTED WITH GALLAUDET AND HAVING A DEAF PRESIDENT

AND THE A.D.A. WAS SIGNED, THE CONCENTRATION WAS BUILT ON THE ASL DEAF CULTURE.

THE REST OF US DID NOT EXIST. THE REST OF US WERE JUST INVISIBLE AND THEY DUBBED US AS HARD-OF-HEARING, WHICH IS THE EXPRESSION THAT EVERYBODY KNOWS I ABSOLUTELY HATE. AND NATIONAL DOESN'T USE IT ANYMORE. THEY SAY "PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS." BUT TECHNOLOGY HAS COME ALONG, AND NOW WE ARE MORE VISIBLE. WE ARE MORE – WE ARE SAVVIER. WE ARE EDUCATED. PART OF THE MAINSTREAM WORLD. THERE IS A PARADIGM SHIFT AND THE CULTURALLY DEAF WORLD IS REALLY NOT HAPPY ABOUT IT. BUT OF THE PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS IN THE UNITED STATES, LESS THAN 5% USE SIGN LANGUAGE, BUT THEY GET ALL THE MONEY FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. AND WE, HLAA, IS A VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION, WHICH IS WHY WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO JOIN AND DONATE MONEY. NOT SUBSIDIZED. WE AS TAXPAYERS PAY FOR THAT. NOW AS THE LAWS HAVE CHANGED AND WE HAVE STREAMING DEVICES AND LOOPING AND CAPTIONING, IT'S OUR TURN TO BECOME VISIBLE BY ASKING FOR IT AND ADVOCATING FOR IT. AT THE END OF THE DAY, BOILS DOWN TO MONEY.

>> MALIK: YOU WANT TO TRAVEL WITH ME?

>> PAT: YOU ARE WALKING SO FAT.

>> MALIK: SO YOU GUYS KNOW I LIKE TO STAND UP HERE SO YOU CAN BOTH SEE ME AND READ ME AT THE SAME TIME.

THANKS, LISA, FOR SHARING WHAT YOU SHARED. AND CONGRATULATIONS ON THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF GETTING A DEGREE. IT'S REALLY A WONDERFUL THING.

SO TWO THINGS I WANTED TO COMMENT ON. THE FIRST WAS THE SECTION ON CAREER. I TALKED ABOUT THAT. I THINK ABOUT THAT – AM I – OKAY.

I BELIEVE THAT EXPERIENCE OF TRYING FIGURE OUT HOW TO NAVIGATE THE WORKPLACE AND THE HEARING LOSS AT THE SAME TIME. AND YOU LISTED KIND OF DIFFERENT REASONS OR DIFFERENT AFFECTS OF NOT DISCLOSING YOUR HEARING LOSS IN THE WORKPLACE. YOU FINALLY GOT TO WHAT IS TO ME THE MOST IMPORTANT AND THE BIGGEST MOTIVATOR WHICH IS IF YOU DON'T DISCLOSE AND YOU ARE HAVING TROUBLE COMMUNICATING, YOU LOOK STUPID, YOU ARE LESS EFFECTIVE. RIGHT? SO FOR ME, I DIDN'T WANT TO TELL PEOPLE, BUT I'M HOSTING I AM DOING PROJECT MANAGEMENT, I AM HOSTING CONFERENCE CALLS WITH 15 PEOPLE ON IT. IF I DON'T TELL THEM I HAVE A HEARING LOSS, I AM NOT ABLE TO DO MY JOB EFFECTIVELY, BECAUSE I AM NOT ABLE TO RUN THE MEETING THE WAY I NEED TO.

SO I – AT THE TIME, BEFORE I GOT MY COCHLEAR IMPLANT I WOULD START EVERY MEETING TELLING PEOPLE "I HAVE HEARING LOSS." I WOULD TELL THEM IF I WERE USING THE CapTel DEVICE. TELL THEM WHAT I WAS DOING AT THE STAR START OF EVERY MEETING. I WANTED THEM TO KNOW

THIS BECAUSE I WANTED TO BE ABLE TO DO MY JOB. IF I DIDN'T TELL THEM AND I MISSED THINGS OR THINGS DROPPED THEN I WAS GOING TO BE PERFORMING WORSE. SO IT WAS JUST ESSENTIAL AS A JOB FUNCTION TO DISCLOSE SO I COULD DO THE BEST POSSIBLE JOB THAT I COULD.

I THINK THAT'S #1 REASON TO DISCLOSE, IF YOU NEED TO. WE HAVE DIFFERENT LEVELS OF HEARING LOSS, SO SOME OF US MAY NOT NEED TO START EVERY MEETING DOING THAT. NOW THAT I HAVE MY IMPLANT I DON'T START EVERY MEETING DOING THAT. I DO IT ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS. IF I CAN UNDERSTAND YOU, I JUST TALK TO YOU. IF I HAVE TROUBLE UNDERSTANDING YOU I START OFF AND TELL YOU, I NEED YOU TO SLOW DOWN OR TAKE YOURSELF OFF THE SPEAKER PHONE OR WHATEVER IT IS, IN ORDER TO MAKE SURE I CAN DO THE BEST POSSIBLE JOB.

I THINK THAT'S THE BEST MOTIVATOR. YOU DON'T WANT TO BE IN A JOB WHERE YOU ARE NOT DOING YOUR PERSONAL BEST BECAUSE YOU ARE AFRAID TO TELL SOMEBODY ABOUT YOUR HEARING LOSS. TO ME THAT'S A SINGLE MESSAGE FOR THE WORKPLACE.

SHIFTING TO THE STIGMA OF BEING A TODDLER –

NO. WE TALKED ABOUT HIDING THE HEARING AID OR DESTROYING THE EVIDENCE OF THE BATTERIES. AND I THINK – THIS IS ANOTHER THING THAT IT REALLY DEPENDS ON A PERSON'S CONDITION. WHEN I FIRST EXPERIENCED HEARING LOSS, THOSE COMPLETELY IN-CANAL HEARING AIDS WHAT I USED AND THEY WERE SUFFICIENT FOR MY LEVEL OF HEARING LOSS. I THINK AT THE TIME IT WAS OKAY THAT I HAD THE HEARING AIDS YOU COULDN'T SEE. I DIDN'T NEED THAT MUCH AMPLIFICATION, AND I WASN'T AS FAR INTO THE WORLD OF HEARING LOSS AS I AM NOW.

IT ALSO I HAVE A DOUBLE STIGMA. I'M AN ACTOR. SO I WAS GOING OUT ON AUDITIONS IN AN INDUSTRY WHERE EVERYTHING WAS ABOUT HOW YOU LOOKED. SO I WAS INCREDIBLY SENSITIVE ABOUT IF PEOPLE SAW MY HEARING AID OR NOT. MY HEARING LOSS CHANGED THAT FOR ME. IT GOT WORSE, MY HEARING AIDS HAD TO GET BIGGER, BECAME MORE VISIBLE. I NO LONGER HAD A CHOICE ABOUT WHETHER THEY WERE VISIBLE OR NOT. FINALLY WHEN I DECIDED TO GET THE COCHLEAR IMPLANT. IT WAS GOING TO BE EVEN MORE VISIBLE. WILL TALK ABOUT EXTREMES. I DIDN'T GO TO ITALY. HOWEVER, HOW CLEAN CUT I AM I SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED START TO GO GROW OUT MY HAIR OR DREADLOCKS SO I COULD COVER THE IMPLANT AND THAT'S –

DREADLOCKS ARE NOT ME. BUT I WAS SO CONCERNED ABOUT HOW THE IMPLANT WAS GOING TO LOOK THAT I – REALLY, I STARTED GROWING OUT MY HAIR. I DON'T KNOW IF ANYBODY REMEMBERS AT THAT TIME. BUT MY HAIR WAS GETTING BIGGER. I WAS THINKING I WAS GOING TO GO GET DREADLOCKS AND COVER THE IMPLANT. I WAS GOING TO TRADE ONE LOCK FOR ANOTHER P. THEN SOMEBODY – I DON'T KNOW IF IT WAS AT A NATIONAL CONVENTION OR SOMEBODY COMING BACK THAT TALKED ABOUT NOT BEING INVISIBLE ANYMORE. IT KIND OF RESONATED WITH ME, MADE

ME THINK ABOUT THE GREAT LENGTHS I WAS GOING TO GO TOTO TRY TO HIDE, AND THEN I CUT MY HAIR OFF. CAME BACK TO NORMAL AND JUST DECIDED THAT THIS IS GOING TO BE THE NEW ME. IT WILL BE A PART OF WHO I AM. I WILL BRING IT WITH ME EVERYWHERE I GO. AND ONCE I GOT COMFORTABLE WITH IT, I THINK THE REST OF THE WORLD GOT COMFORTABLE WITH IT.

SO OUR HEARING LOSS JOURNEY CAN OFTEN DICTATE WHAT WE NEED TO DO. BUT I DO THINK WHEN WE DO – WE EACH HAVE KIND OF OUR OWN MOMENT OF ACCEPTANCE. AND ONCE WE GET THERE, EVERYTHING GETS EASIER. THANKS.

>> PAT: I THINK THAT'S DEFINITELY – REACH – DEFINITELY THE KEY. SELF-ACCEPTANCE HAS TO COME FIRST. WE CAN'T CHANGE THE WORLD VIEW OF US UNTIL WE'RE OKAY WITH US.

>> MITZI: NANCI REMINDED ME OF SOMETHING ABOUT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE HEARING LOSS GROUP AND THE DEAF CULTURE. BACK IN SEPTEMBER, HOTEERZ SPONSORED A PARTY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE. AND OUR HOSTS CONNECTED WITH BOTH WORLDS. SO WE HAD DEAF CULT AND YOU ARE YOUNG PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS. MY OBSERVATIONS AT THAT PARTY ASTOUNDED ME. THE PEOPLE FROM THE DEAF CULTURE WERE THE MOST OUTGOING, MOST COMFORTABLE, WITH THEIR HEARING LOSS BECAUSE THEY HAD TOOLS. THEY ALWAYS HAD THE TOOLS FOR COMMUNICATION WITHIN THEIR GROUP. IT STRUCK ME THAT PEOPLE WITH ACQUIRED HEARING LOSS WERE LOST IN THE WILDERNESS. WE GREW UP, WE HAD A CERTAIN SET OF COPING TOOLS.

WE ARE IN THE WORLD OF SPEECH. AND AS WE LOST THAT, WE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO. WE DIDN'T HAVE THE TOOLS. AND EVENTUALLY WENT TO AUDIOLOGISTS AND GOT HEARING AIDS. WE GOT NO EDUCATION ON HOW TO COPE. WE STILL DON'T. THERE ARE STILL SO MANY OTHER THINGS THAT CAN HELP US, AND SO MANY THINGS OUR AUDIOLOGISTS AREN'T DOING WITHIN THE CAPABILITIES OF OUR HEARING AIDS. AND THIS IS WHERE, AS YOU SAID, THIS IS OUR TIME, WE NEED TO SPEAK OUT AND WE NEED TO PUSH, AND PUSH OUR AUDIOLOGISTS, PUSH FOR OURSELVES, WE NEED TO RESEARCH FOR OURSELVES AND ACQUIRE THOSE TOOLS BECAUSE THE WORLD WE GREW UP IN WE DON'T HAVE THAT SET OF TOOLS. WE'VE GOT TO DEVELOP ABILITIES. LIKE YOU SAID TECHNOLOGY. WE HAVE TECHNOLOGY AND IT'S IMPROVING ALL THE TIME.

>> PAT: AND THE BEAUTY OF BEING HERE OR GOING TO A CONVENTION OR READING SOMETHING ON LINE IS THAT WE ARE EMPOWERED AND WE SHARE IT WITH EACH OTHER, AND WE FIND OUT THAT IT ALL COMES BACK TO FINDING OUT YOU ARE NOT THAT DIFFERENT. YOU ARE JUST ANOTHER PERSON WITH HEARING LOSS. AND WE COME HERE TO THESE MEET AND SHORE EACH OTHER UP AND GO HOME FEELING I HOPE – I KNOW AFTER ALL THESE YEARS I STILL GO HOME FEELING MORE EMPOWERED AT THE END OF THE MEETING BECAUSE I KNOW THAT WHAT WE

ARE DOING IS IMPORTANT. I KNOW THAT WE HEAR EACH OTHER. I KNOW, AND NO PUN, WE REALLY GET IT. AND BEFORE WE TOTALLY RUN OUT OF TIME, I WANT TO SHARE SOMETHING WITH YOU, GOING TO HAVE MARIE INTRODUCE HERSELF.

SOMETHING CAME UP IN MY FACEBOOK FEED YESTERDAY. AND IT WAS A POST IN HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION RECOGNIZED. THIS WOMAN, NAME PAT DOBBS, BEEN INVOLVED IN EDUCATING AND LIVING WITH HEARING LOSS AND PART OF HLAA, AND VERY ACTIVE IN THE COMMUNITY. SHE DEVELOPED AN ONLINE PROGRAM OF GUEST WEBINARS. I HAVEN'T HAD A CHANCE TO LOOK DEEPLY INTO IT. SHE CALLS IT A HEARING REVOLUTION. NINE POINT, SEEMS APROPOS TODAY.

READ YOU HER 9 POINTS. OUR LIVES DEFINE US, NOT OUR HEARING LOSS.

WE ARE INTELLIGENT, ENGAGED AND VALUED DESPITE OUR HEARING LOSS.

WE ARE HEROES OF OUR HEARING LOSS, NOT THE VICTIMS OF OUR HEARING LOSS.

WE TELL PEOPLE WHAT WE NEED AND ARE EMPOWERED AND HELP.

WE ARE HONEST ABOUT OUR HEARING LOSS. WE DON'T BLUFF AND FAKE OUR WAY THROUGH.

WE PROUDLY USE ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY WHEN IT'S AVAILABLE.

WE FIND HUMOR IN OUR HEARING LOSS WHEN WE MISUNDERSTAND.

WE ACCEPT WITH GRACE WHAT WE CAN'T CHANGE. WE CAN'T CHANGE THAT WE HAVE A HEARING LOSS BUT WE CAN ACCEPT IT AND BE OKAY.

AND WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR THE COURAGE THAT WE HAVE IN DEALING WITH OUR HEARING LOSS. ARE OTHER THANSO IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT WHAT SHE'S DOING, CHECK OUT HEARING REVOLUTION. SEARCH IT ON LINE OR GO TO PAT DOBBS OR FACEBOOK ON THE INTERNET.

WANT TO MAKE SURE WE GET MARIA INTRODUCED OFFICIALLY.

>> MARIE: I AM MARIE, AND MOVED HERE FROM NEW JERSEY IN MID-SEPTEMBER. AND FOUND OUT ABOUT THE ENCINO CHAPTER, WHICH IS NOW DISBANDED. AND TALKING TO PEOPLE, AND WAS ABLE TO GET TO THE CHRISTMAS PARTY. AND I WAS JUST THRILLED TO GO THERE AND MEET EVERYBODY. AND NOW I AM VERY EMPOWERED AND HAPPY TO BE HERE. AND I AM ACTIVELY GOING TO FIND AN AUDIOLOGIST AND GET MYSELF A HEARING AID BECAUSE I AM JUST MISSING TOO MUCH IN LIFE, AND I AM EXTREMELY EMBARRASSED TO ASK PEOPLE TO KEEP REPEATING THEMSELVES OR PRETEND I'M HEARING WHAT THEY ARE SAYING WHEN I AM NOT. AND I THANK YOU ALL FOR SHARING. I AM VERY, VERY HAPPY TO BE HERE.

[APPLAUSE].

LISA, I AM ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN THAT THAT YOUNG MAN ASKED YOU OUT SEVERAL TIMES. YOU JUST DIDN'T HEAR HIM. [LAUGHTER].

>> PAT: ALL RIGHT. THAT WRAPS UP TODAY. AND WE HAD A GREAT MEETING, I THINK –

>> LISA: I WANT TO QUICKLY THANK JANE, OUR CAPTIONIST.

>> DANNY: JANE! [APPLAUSE].

>> PAT: NEXT MONTH ON THE 28TH – MARCIA OVER THERE TOO. JEFF GRAMA, GOING TO COME TALK, THE AUDIOLOGIST FOR MANY OF OUR MEMBERS. GREAT TIME TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT TECHNOLOGY AND ALL YOUR QUESTIONS YOU WISH YOU ASKED YOUR AUDIOLOGIST. SO

MARCIA: MALIK AND I WENT TO THE SERVICE FOR JOE LEE. YOU WOULD BE PROUD OF MALIK. HE GOT UP AND SPOKE AT THE SERVICE SO BEAUTIFULLY. OF COURSE WITH HIS PROJECTION AND HIS VOICE I WAS ABLE TO HEAR WHAT HE HAD TO SAY. IT WAS A BEAUTIFUL SERVICE AND I WANTED TO SAY, BEAR WITH ME, YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN SO PROUD OF HIM.

>> PAT: ANYTHING ELSE REAL QUICK BEFORE WE BREAK UP?

ALL RIGHT. WE WILL SEE YOU ALL NEXT MONTH HERE, AND PLEASE, HAVE YOUR THINKING CAPS ON ABOUT FUNDRAISING IDEAS AND YOU KNOW, MAYBE YOU ARE A MEMBER OF ANOTHER GROUP WHO DID A GREAT FUND-RAISER WE NEVER EVEN THOUGHT OF. GIVE US ALL YOUR IDEAS. THANK YOU, EVERYBODY, HAVE A GREAT DAY.