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## SOUNDNEWS

Volume 13, Issue 2 • Summer 2020

### 9 TIPS TO HELP DETECT HEARING LOSS



Does your loved one have a hearing loss too? As someone who experiences hearing loss, you're at a unique advantage to help others in your life recognize their own. Here are some signs to look for to see if it's time to help someone seek treatment.

1. **HOW'S THEIR BALANCE?** Responsible for our body's balance, the vestibular system in the inner ear could be causing hearing problems as well as stability issues.
2. **ONE SIDED.** Look to see if your loved one favors an ear and leans into the conversation that way. One ear could be affected more than the other, causing them to attempt to use their "good ear."
3. **ISOLATION.** As you know, places with background noise are harder to hear in when you are hearing impaired. If you notice that your loved one doesn't want to do the things that once made them happy, it could be because they're avoiding noisy events and outings.
4. **IT'S NOT FUNNY.** If you notice your loved one laughing at your jokes more frequently, it may not mean that you've hit your comedic stride. It could be that they want to feel engaged and are trying to take social cues from those around them without being able to hear what's going on.
5. **SAYING YES OR NO AT THE WRONG TIME.** If their replies seem out of place, it may not be that they are distracted. It could be that they aren't able to fully understand you.
6. **TURNING UP THE VOLUME ON THE TELEVISION, RADIO, AND OTHER DEVICES.** This sign is pretty self-explanatory: If your family member or friend can't hear, they are going to adjust devices so they can.
7. **SOCIAL SITUATIONS.** It can be difficult to admit to hearing loss, and at times the situation is avoided altogether — at all costs. Sounds coming in differently and with less clarity can lead to social anxiety.
8. **PLACING BLAME.** Have they been blaming outside noise or others for a misunderstanding in the conversation or an out-of-place response? Rather than admit there's a problem, sometimes it's easier to act like outside factors are the issue.
9. **"WHAT?"** If you feel like you are repeating yourself more often, it is a good time for your family member or friend to get their hearing checked.

If more than a few of these hit home, then it is time to refer your friend or loved one to us for a hearing consultation.

Help them see what a difference better hearing makes in their daily lives.  
**CALL 707.832.4744 TODAY!**

# BREAKING HEARING LOSS STIGMAS

## ONE CONVERSATION AT A TIME

Those affected by hearing loss may have difficulty explaining how their life changed when they began to lose their hearing. Though it can be difficult to articulate what it's like to live with hearing loss, speaking up can be very empowering. This guide can help you through those conversations.

Educating others empowers them and yourself to change hearing loss stigmas. How you respond to your hearing loss can influence how others do as well.

Research tells us that concealing your hearing loss can create tension in your social or professional life that could negatively affect your health and well-being. On the other hand, talking about it alleviates the strain of trying to hide the condition. Plus, it increases your chances of finding a support network with others who understand.

To be a successful advocate, the most essential trait you can have is openness. As an advocate, it's important to communicate fully and have the confidence to request this openness from others. Good advocates are tenacious, patient, and gracious toward those who help their cause.

It's also a good idea to talk to your physician. Oftentimes they do not screen for hearing loss during a physical. Remind them that screening for hearing loss is important because it can be a window into your overall health. By bringing this to their attention, who knows who else you'll be helping?

### THE SOONER YOU IMPROVE YOUR HEARING, THE QUICKER YOUR LIFE CAN CHANGE.

About 48 million people have significant hearing loss in the United States alone. Those who seek treatment often see improvement in their overall health.



Mental health improves

36%



Relations at home improve

56%



Overall quality of life improves

48%



Relations with loved ones improve

40%

# How to Talk About Your Hearing Loss in Different Social Situations

A hearing loss advocate is open and can ask others to be the same. When you normalize hearing loss instead of hiding it, you lessen the negative stigma around a hearing impairment. Hearing your best means having the right technology for the environments you're in most often — fit specifically to your unique hearing needs — and maximizing that technology with better communication strategies. Being honest with co-workers, family members, and friends about what you need is the first step toward understanding.



**Your loved ones are the most important people in your life, and they feel the same way about you.** They are there to support you, but they may not know how. Here are our suggestions to help start that conversation.

## TALK IT OUT.

Whether you've just been diagnosed with hearing loss or you're fit with technology, it's best to speak to those closest to you about your hearing loss.

## BE HONEST.

Explain how your daily activities are affected by your hearing loss. Give specific examples so they understand what they can do to help.

## LET THEM KNOW.

If you wish your loved ones would do something different or help you out, let them know. This can be an ongoing conversation.



**There is value in knowing you're not the only one in the workforce with hearing loss.** Of the people with hearing loss, 60 percent are either in the workforce or in educational settings. These steps will help you talk to your employer about not only your hearing loss but how to help you continue to do your best work.

## BUILD CONFIDENCE.

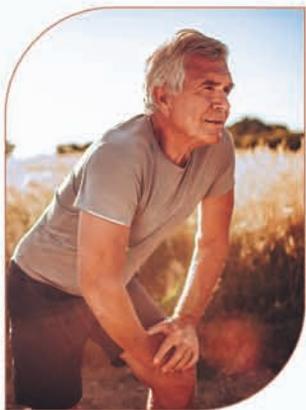
Talking to your employer about your hearing loss may be intimidating. To help build up your confidence, practice what you want to say to make sure you cover the important points.

## HELP YOUR EMPLOYER.

Explain how your hearing loss affects your duties at work. Come to your employer with solutions so they have a better understanding of how to help.

## KNOW YOUR RIGHTS.

Learn your employer's policy for supporting people with a disability or health condition, as well as what steps you can take together to ensure you're able to do what you do best.



**Depending on your personality and mood, the public can be the easiest or most difficult to explain your hearing impairment to.**

## BE OPEN.

Explain that you have a hard time hearing, and ask for what you need. That addresses your hearing impairment while establishing a foundation for the conversation.

## IT'S UP TO YOU.

Do not feel obligated to tell everyone about your experience. The more you practice advocacy, the easier it will be to judge whether telling that person is helpful.

## LAUGH IT OFF.

If someone has a negative reaction because you did not hear them, make light of the situation. Speaking directly to what happened forces a conversation, which increases education and understanding.



## Start breaking the stigmas.

Call us for more information on hearing loss, workplace rights, community programs, and how you can advocate against hearing loss stigmas.





VISIT US  
**ONLINE!**

[www.HumboldtAudiology.com](http://www.HumboldtAudiology.com)



or call to make your appointment!

**707.832.4744**



## COVID-19 UPDATE

During this time, our office may look a little different, but our services remain the same. We are dedicated to the safety of our patients and staff and have implemented many measures to ensure everyone remains healthy. Although we are open, our front door is locked. We are currently only

seeing patients who have scheduled appointments. If you need your aid serviced, are in need of supplies, or have any questions, please call us first and we will determine the right course of action. While all this means things look a little different in our office, the result will still be better hearing.