



news



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## **A Discussion: Sharing Communication Strategies and Captioning Technologies**

Join us on Tuesday, May 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm for a Zoom conversation - check your e-mail for a Zoom link or send an e-mail request to [hearhlaa@yahoo.com](mailto:hearhlaa@yahoo.com) - we'd be so happy to have you join in!

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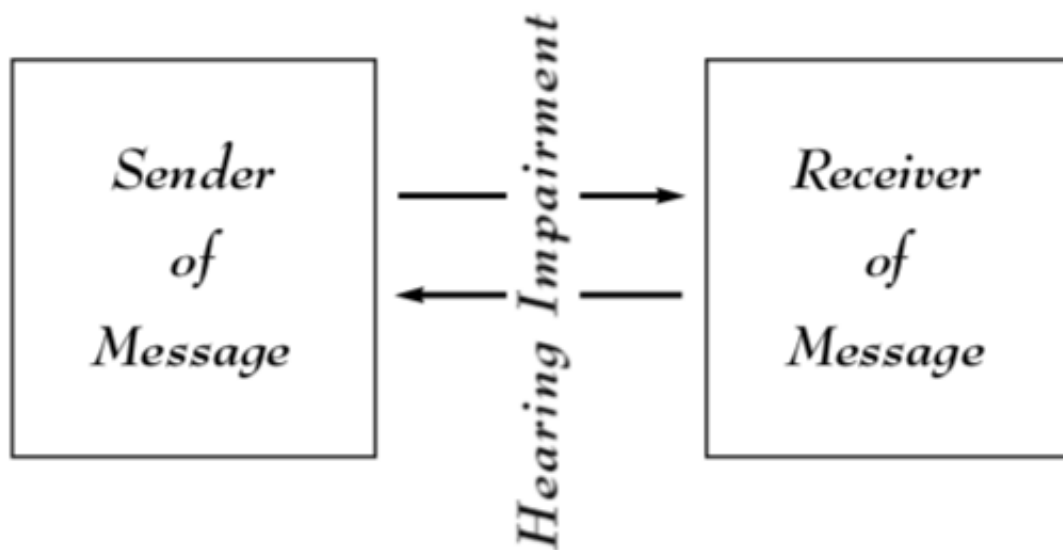
## **A Life-long Passion and Practice by Donna S. Wayner, Ph.D.**

I have been intrigued by hearing loss since childhood. When term papers were required in high school and college, I researched issues related to hearing and hearing impairment. Then, an advanced degree in Audiology placed me in the arena of working with people with various degrees of hearing loss. In writing my dissertation for the doctorate, I investigated the impact of hearing impairment on a marriage relationship.

These experiences were cerebral and academic. It is only in the last few years that this has dramatically changed. After my husband had a stroke a short time ago, resulting in a severe hearing loss in one ear and a severe-profound loss in the other, the way we lived and communicated for over fifty-five years changed overnight. Now, the challenges of hearing loss became very personal for both of us.

This leads to the immediate personal need to consider the theory of communication. For communication to be successful, it depends on two people; the sender of the message and the receiver. Both need to be involved. If anything disturbs the exchange, i.e. hearing impairment, the message is not delivered successfully.

# Hearing Impairment Affects Successful Delivery



When communication in any relationship is impacted by a hearing impairment, both partners experience less relational satisfaction. This substantiates the fact that a hearing loss is not only a problem for the person who has the loss of hearing acuity, but for the communication partner as well.

Over the years while in clinical practice as Director of The Hearing Center at Albany Medical Center, where diagnostic and rehabilitative audiological services were provided, we felt it vital when hearing aid and cochlear implant services were given that the patient's spouse/significant other needed to be included. Both persons required help in understanding the implications a hearing loss could have on their relationship and how to make it better.

As a result, every person receiving a hearing aid or cochlear implant at our facility was scheduled for a series of three classes related to their new hearing device; its use and care, the process of adjustment, audiological rehabilitation, communication strategies and speechreading. The curriculum and materials used were gathered and eventually assembled into several book chapters as well as books and clinical manuals published by *Hear Again, Inc.*

As a result of my husband's sudden dramatic loss of hearing, I have re-visited the curriculum materials included in my books to refresh my responsibilities as a communication partner. My husband and I have reviewed them together and work at implementing them.

Good communication involves action on the part of both members of a communication partnership. There are many things that individuals with hearing loss can do in order to take the best advantage of state-of-the-art hearing aids and cochlear implants. Actions by their frequent communication partners can also go a long way in reducing the interpersonal challenges that accompany hearing impairment. Even with the most sophisticated and advanced hearing instruments, being aware of how to communicate is essential.

The following material was included in the classes we offered at Albany Medical Center. It describes what each participant in a communication exchange can do to improve their interactions.

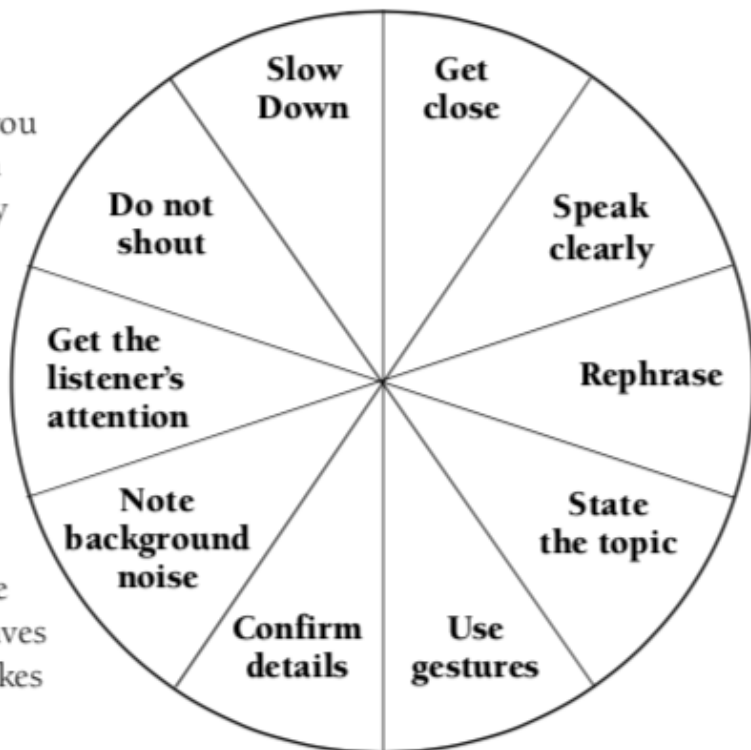
*The Listener can:*

- **Pay attention:** Concentration is very important
- **Develop good listening skills:** Concentrate on what is said.
- **Observe the talker:** What you see can supplement what you hear.
- **Plan ahead:** Think about possible challenges to clear understanding you may face. Plan what to do if they occur.
- **Take breaks if needed:** Listening with a hearing loss can be tiring. You can concentrate better if you are fresh.
- **Make specific suggestions about how to talk to you:** For example, it is better to ask a person to rephrase or slow down rather than just say "What?"
- **Provide feedback:** If you tell your partner what you heard, both of you will know right away if you understood correctly.
- **Double check details:** Repeating what you understood someone to say can prevent confusion later on, especially dates and times.
- **Do not bluff!** Pretending you understand when you don't is a "no-win" situation.
- **Set realistic expectations:** Some situations are just too noisy to expect to understand clearly even with the best hearing aids.



*The Speaker can help when the listener has a hearing loss by following these suggestions:*

- **Get the listener's attention:** If you wait until he/she is ready to listen before you begin talking, you may not have to repeat yourself.
- **Do not shout:** Talking louder usually makes matters worse.
- **Slow down:** Talking a little slower than usual often makes your voice easier to understand.
- **Get close:** It is best to move close to the listener before talking. It saves your voice from shouting and makes you easier to understand.
- **Speak clearly:** Don't exaggerate your pronunciation, but do try to finish speaking all the sounds of one word before you begin the next.
- **Rephrase:** If repeating one time does not help, it is better to use different words to express the same idea.
- **State the topic:** Tell the listener what topic you are about to discuss. Tell him/her when the topic changes.
- **Use gestures:** These can help with understanding.
- **Confirm details:** Politely double check that key details of a message have been understood accurately.
- **Notice background noise:** Turn the noise down or move to a quieter place, if possible. Be extra careful talking in a noisy place since it interferes with understanding.



From personal experience, when keeping the suggestions described above in mind, we re-discover that these recommended actions can indeed improve our daily interactions. By remembering that good communication only happens when both parties are involved and sensitive to each others needs, we are helped to navigate the consequences of hearing impairment. It is not always easy, but so very important.

# CART

Communications Access Realtime Translation

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HEAR NEWS is a newsletter of the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) Albany Chapter.

We are a not-for-profit self-help group for individuals who are deaf, have hearing loss and/or impairments. Any mention of opinions, products or services does not mean endorsement, nor does the lack of mention mean lack of endorsement.

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We welcome your input! Please send notes, articles and inquiries to the attention of the Editor at the PO Box or e-mail address above.

Please become a member of HLAA Albany Chapter; see the form on the final page of the newsletter.

And Go NATIONAL Join the Hearing Loss Association of America HLAA

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## INFORMATION YOU CAN USE

(Note: See [www.hearinglossalbany.wordpress.com](http://www.hearinglossalbany.wordpress.com) for more details)

- Albany Law School Civil Rights & Disabilities Law Clinic — [www.albanylaw.edu](http://www.albanylaw.edu)
- American Tinnitus Association — [www.ata.org](http://www.ata.org)
- Career & College Advice for Deaf & Hard of Hearing Students — [www.affordablecollegesonline.org/college-resource-center/deaf-student-college-career-advice](http://www.affordablecollegesonline.org/college-resource-center/deaf-student-college-career-advice)
- Hands and Voices — [www.handsandvoices.org](http://www.handsandvoices.org)
- Hearing Like Me — [www.hearinglikeme.com](http://www.hearinglikeme.com)
- Hearing Loss Association of America — [www.hearingloss.org](http://www.hearingloss.org)
- Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center — <https://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/>
- National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes — [nationaldeafcenter.org](http://nationaldeafcenter.org)
- Office of the NYS Attorney General, Civil Rights Division — [www.ag.ny.gov](http://www.ag.ny.gov)
- Young Adults - [www.hearingloss.org/content/young-adults-and-hearing-loss](http://www.hearingloss.org/content/young-adults-and-hearing-loss)

## Lion's Hearing Devices Loan-Out Centers — try out devices before you buy them!

- Center for Better Hearing, 318 Ridge St., Glens Falls, NY 12801 (518) 798-4800
- HearUSA, 258 Hoosick St., Troy, NY 12180 (518) 272-7323
- Madison & Saratoga Hearing Ctr, 14 Columbia Circle Drive, Suite 202, Albany, NY 12203 (518) 629-0889
- Madison & Saratoga Hearing Ctr, 414 Maple Ave, Suite 800, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866 (518) 430-4003
- Madison & Saratoga Hearing Ctr, 81 Miller Road, Suite 700, Castleton, NY 12033 (518) 708-8648
- Resource Center for Independent Living, 347 W. Main St., Amsterdam, NY 12010 (518) 842-3561
- Resource Center for Independent Living, 401 East German St., Herkimer, NY 13350 (315)866-7245

## Patronize These Accessible Venues!

And...if you know of other venues, please share them with us!

- AMC Loews ([amctheatres.com](http://amctheatres.com)) — Rotterdam — Captioning
- Barrington Stage ([Barringtonstage.org](http://Barringtonstage.org)) —first six rows of Main Stage are looped
- Bowtie Cinemas ([bowtiecinemas.com](http://bowtiecinemas.com)) —Schenectady, Saratoga, Wilton —“cup holder” Captioning
- Capital Repertory Theatre ([capitalrep.org](http://capitalrep.org)) — Loop
- Christ Community Reformed Church, Clifton Park (<https://www.ccrcc-pny.org>) — Loop
- Christ Our Light Catholic Church, ([christourlightchurch.org](http://christourlightchurch.org)) Loudonville, NY — FM System
- Crandall Public Library (Glens Falls) Christine L. McDonald Community Room (<https://www.crandalllibrary.org>)
- Delmar Reformed Church ([drchurch.org](http://drchurch.org)) — Loop
- First Presbyterian Church ([firstpresalbany.org](http://firstpresalbany.org)) 362 State Street, Albany—perimeter Loop on the right side of the sanctuary
- Gloversville Public Library's Carnegie Meeting Room (<http://gloversvillelibrary.org>)
- Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, ([www.gscl.org](http://www.gscl.org)) 510 Albany Shaker Rd, Loudonville, 12211— Loop
- Loudonville Community Church ([www.lcchurch.org](http://www.lcchurch.org)) — FM Receivers
- Our Lady, Queen of Peace Catholic Church, Princetown Rd, Schenectady ([www.olqprotterdam.org](http://www.olqprotterdam.org)) — Loop
- Proctors Theater — Loop in the Main Stage and the Addy
- Regal Cinemas ([regmovies.com](http://regmovies.com)) —Clifton Park, Crossgates, Colonie Center, East Greenbush, Wilton Mall and Aviation Mail — Captioning and Captioned Glasses
- Schenectady Light Opera Company, Schenectady, NY—FM Assistive Listening System
- Spectrum 8 ([landmarktheatres.com](http://landmarktheatres.com)) — Infrared and CCR-100 Captioning
- St. Mary's Catholic Church, Hamilton, NY— Loop
- St. Mary's Crescent Catholic Church Clifton Park ([www.stmaryscrescent.com](http://www.stmaryscrescent.com)) — FM System
- Unitarian Universalist Society of Schenectady ([uuschenectady.org](http://uuschenectady.org)) — Loop
- Universal Preservation Hall (<https://universalpreservationhall.org>) Saratoga Springs, NY loop

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