



INNOVATIVE PERCEPTIONS

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR HEARING AWARENESS IN THE GREATER BOSTON AREA

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Your Trusted Hearing
Healthcare Professionals

Communication Strategies: It's a Two Way Street

Celebrating
10 Years!



Did you know?

- Dogs have about 18 muscles in each ear (the exact number depends on the breed). This is why they are able to lower, tilt and rotate their ears, unlike humans. This helps them find where sounds are coming from in order to hunt and is used to communicate via body language.
- Dogs can hear about 4 times better than humans.
- Puppies are born deaf-their ear canals do not open for a few weeks.

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The inner ear is an amazingly complex structure and hearing aids are incredible devices—like little computers that can be adjusted and customized for each individual's ear and type hearing loss. But our hearing is also dependent on cognitive processing, i.e., how the brain can figure out what is going on. In addition, many other variables (noise, distance, and speech patterns) also significantly effect our ability to hear and communicate with one another. Good communication strategies can benefit everyone —not just those with hearing loss. Adopting good communication habits can help reduce communication breakdowns and ease the strain of hearing loss for both the hearing and hearing impaired. The following are some easy to follow communication repair strategies that you can implement into your daily life to make communication easier for you and everyone you interact with.



Strategies for Family and Friends:

- Get the persons attention BEFORE starting to speak. Something as simple as saying their name will help them change their focus;
- Do not try to converse from different rooms (sound does NOT travel through walls);
- Don't chew gum; keep hands away from your mouth;
- Speak at a natural pace. Try to remember not to speed up at the end of the sentence;
- If someone doesn't understand what you have said, try to REPHRASE it differently instead of just repeating it;
- In a group, take turns talking and try not to interrupt;
- Try to reduce background noises, such as TVs , music, open windows, fans ,etc.

Strategies for the Hearing Impaired Listener:

- Listen with your eyes as well as your ears—pay attention to the speaker by facing them;
- Do not "bluff", let the speaker know if you do not understand what was said;
- Be pro-active— tell other's you have a hearing loss;
- When dining out, try and choose a seating location that is sheltered from loud background noises.□

The Secret to a Longer Life

Everyone hopes to live a long, happy and healthy life, but is there really a secret to it? Psychologist Susan Pinker gave a TED Talk on this very issue and it turns out that the number one factor that leads to a long life is Social Interaction. There are certainly other factors that play a role such as genetics and lifestyle choices but having a good social network and keeping involved has been shown to be the number one indicator. In order to be involved, we have to be able to communicate and feel that we are included in conversations. Someone with hearing loss often feels left out and can begin to withdraw from activities. Regular hearing healthcare check-ups are important to detecting hearing loss early so you can live a long , happy and healthy life. Take this short quiz and if you answer yes to any of these questions, come in and get your hearing tested:



- 1) Do people seem to mumble?
- 2) Is it hard for you to follow the discussion, especially in crowds?
- 3) Is the TV volume up louder than others need?
- 4) Do you often say "Huh?" or ask for repetition?
- 5) Has someone close to you been concerned about your hearing.□

Zebrafish, Fruit Flies and Hearing

The ear is a remarkably complex system. Our inner ear has about 20,000 tiny hair cells that enable us to hear. These hair cells respond to different tones and send those sounds to our brain. It's like we have a baby grand piano in each of our ears ready to play the sounds of life for us. This all occurs in the space about the size of a quarter! The complexity of the inner ear is one reason why it has been so difficult to regenerate hair cells to fully repair hearing loss. However, more researchers than ever are working on a permanent treatment for hearing loss. The zebrafish and your common annoying fruit fly are helping researchers to find a treatment. It has been shown that the hearing organs in fruit flies (which are located in their antennae) are similar to the hair cells of our inner ear. The fact that there are so many fruit flies, decreases the cost that is associated with this type of research. The zebrafish's stripes also have hair cells that



function similarly to the inner ear hair cells of humans. The biggest difference between the hair cells on the zebrafish and

the inner ear hair cells is that the zebrafish's stripes are easily accessible since they are outside their bodies, whereas the inner ear hair cells are internal and not accessible. The hope is that with better access to similar hair cells, scientists will be better able to research what causes damage to our hearing and how we can protect it.□



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WE'RE ON THE WEB!
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Dear Friends,

*I cannot believe it, but it has been 10 YEARS since I opened this practice and I could not have done it without all of you. It has been amazing working with you all and I certainly look forward to the next ten years! There have been many improvements in hearing aid technology in the past ten years, and things continue to improve. **To celebrate our ten year anniversary and to thank you for choosing Audiology and Hearing Solutions, now through May 31, 2018, we are offering up to 15% off any new hearing aid.** As always, for our current patients, there is no risk; if you do not feel that the new technology is helping you enough, you lose nothing. So if you have been putting off upgrading your hearing aids, this is the time. We look forward to seeing you soon!*

Sincerely,

Dr. Melonie Marple



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