If you are here for

**EFFECTIVE SUPPORT STRATEGIES FOR FAMILY & FRIENDS OF P.W.H.L.**

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You are in the right place!!
Soooo, why are you here?

- you care about a P.W.H.L.
- what you doing is not working
- what they are doing is not working
- you are frustrated
- you want to improve your success rate
- you want some new strategies
- You want greater understanding of the situation
- D. All of the above
Our Objectives for Today

- develop new ways of thinking and acting to facilitate better communication and a better relationship with a P.W.H.L.
- determine the locus of communication problems when hearing loss is a factor in a relationship
- identify & consider critical elements in spouse communication when hearing loss is a factor (parallel psychosocial reactions, personality types, habitual communication behavior,
- develop practical and effective communication approaches and strategies (collaborative problem solving, collaborative problems solving, using parallel repair strategies; non-verbal communication, etc.)
Effective Communication is of paramount importance for the health of any relationship, BUT...
Communication breakdown has significant impact on BOTH

> P.W.H.L. &
> Friends & Family
Psychosocial reactions to hearing loss for the person with hearing loss

- Frustration
- Anxiety
- Discomfort
- Anger
- Denial
- Self-pity
- Withdrawal
- Isolation
- Reduced quality of life
Parallel reactions of family members and friends

- Frustration
- Anxiety
- Discomfort
- Anger
- Denial
- Self-pity
- Withdrawal
- Isolation
- Reduced quality of life
Sooo…if communication is not working...

WHOSE PROBLEM IS IT, ANYHOW?
Well…

Since it takes at least 2 people to communicate, it is logical to assume that the responsibilities must be *shared*. 
## RESPONSIBILITIES

### Theirs
- Learn
- Maximize hearing
  - Use/update technology
  - Use effective strategies
- Reach Out (in positive ways)
- Let your needs be known
- Share your feelings
- Negotiate

### Yours
- Understand
- Share (your feelings)
- Ask (when you are not sure)
- Listen
- Use effective strategies
- Negotiate
- Support (but don’t nag)
- Encourage
- Applaud
Since this workshop is for family & friends let’s discuss your responsibilities...
Understand...

- Learn as much as you can about hearing loss
- Learn as much as you can about how hearing loss impacts on your spouse/family member/friend
- Get their perspective on how it effect them *(Perception is truth!)*
Listen/Ask…

Try taking the other person’s perspective.

“What’s it like in your spouses/friends/family members shoes?”
Listen/Ask...

- Ask what they are feeling...listen
- Share your feelings...they should know!
Listen...

- Easier said than done
- Most of us listen through the filter of our own experience
- Their experience is different than yours!
- Try to hear what they say and what they mean?
- Ask if you are not sure....
Understand…

Change is NOT easy!!!
Understand...

- Behavior is habitual
- Good intent is not enough
- *Readiness* is essential
- Support is needed
- Reminders help (some non-verbal)
Understand…

About **READINESS**…

- People change when they are ready (not when you want them to be)
- Knowledge may facilitate change
- You can be supportive…and forgiving
Negotiate…

Communication with a P.W.H.L. should be a collaborative effort
Collaboratively...

...develop solutions
Change what you can…

“Don’t frustrate yourself trying to change the unchangeable!!”
Some key phrases....

- “I feel______ when you________.”
- “I want to________.”
- “I need your help....”
- “Let’s try....”
- “Some things you do already that help...”
- “So and so does_____ and it really helps.”
- “It would really help if you...”
- “If I______, would you_____”
- “I really appreciate.....”
- “Wow! What a great idea!”
PREPARE...

For communication situations, when possible.

*Communicate with each other:*
  - plan ahead
  - negotiate “rules’
  - share responsibilities
2 + 2 = 5

- Visual plus
- Auditory plus
- Context plus
- Linguistic Knowledge
ANTICIPATE…

language and linguistic structures of routine and emergency communication interactions.
IN THIS SITUATION....

- Bessie will be giving me instructions
- Rupert will be asking for information.
- Dawn will be sharing information or her thoughts about....
- Morticia will be giving me feedback...
- Clarence will be discussing our project.
- Emmy Lou will be trying to sell Mary Kay products.
- Chauncey will be spreading rumors (again).
- Brucey will be talking about the man of his dreams (for this week).
CONSIDERATIONS

- Your relationship with the individual (boss, co-worker, friend, team member)
- The importance of what is being said; the key information you need.
- The language structures used (narrative, instructions, Q & A, etc.)
- Communication habits of the other person
- Confidentiality issues
Answer questions directly! (Cut the fluff)

- Yes or no questions
  - “Are you going to Bonnie & Scott’s presentation?”
  - Answer: Yes!

- Closed set questions
  - “When is Bonnie & Scott’s presentation?”
  - Answer: “10 A.M., today”

- Limited set questions
  - “Which are the best two strategies you got from Bonnie & Scott’s presentation?”
  - Answer: “All of them”
Which is better?

“When are we getting together again?

or

“What day should we have lunch?” (Followed by Where? What time?, etc.)
DEVELOP...

- Develop a wider selection of repair strategies
  ("HUH?" doesn’t cut it!)
- Be pro-active.
LEARN…
how to use maintenance strategies effectively and routinely

Confirm, confirm, confirm!
CREATE...

great excellent communication environments.
Change your environment… or change environments!

- Inventory your primary communication environments
- Make modifications when possible & over time
Be more (or less) Assertive!

- View Assertiveness on a continuum.
- Determine where you are
- Determine where you want to be
- Set realistic goals
3 Critical Elements of an Assertive Approach

- **Direction**
  - Be clear with your request

- **Rationale**
  - Provide a reason

- **Courtesy**
Support & Encourage…

- Change efforts
- “You can do it!”
- “How can I help?”
- Friendly reminders?
- See the humor in situations
- Laugh with them
Thanks for sharing this time with us…

Questions?

Comments?
Communication situations are complex, especially in primary relationships.

Hearing Loss may be compounded by:
- Sender problems
- Environmental Problems
- Feedback Problems
- Receiver Problems (Beyond hearing loss)
Parallel reactions to sensory loss (spouse, significant other, family, friends, group members)

**Vision Loss**
- Crisis
- Grieving
- Denial
- Anger
- Frustration
- Isolation/Withdrawal
- Reduced life quality

**Hearing Loss**
- Crisis
- Grieving
- Denial
- Anger
- Frustration
- Isolation/Withdrawal
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