

Living with Hearing Loss Program

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Thank you for inviting me to beautiful Columbus

- Welcome one and all to the workshop

Who Are We?

- Hard of Hearing?
- Deaf?
- Late-Deafened?

• Trychin, 1991

Definition: Hard of Hearing

- Do not rely on sign language
- Function in the "Hearing World" in terms of family, friends, etc.
- Rely on their native language (English, Spanish, etc.) as their primary language

• Trychin, 1993

Definition: Hard of Hearing

- Have some degree of hearing loss from mild to profound
- Vary in age of onset anywhere from infancy to late adulthood
- Can benefit from assistive listening devices

• Trychin, 1991

Definition: Late-Deafened

- Have a severe to profound hearing loss
- Age of onset after the development of speech and language
- Derive little or no benefit from ALD's
- Rely on visual representation of their native language (English, German, etc.)
- May also use some system of sign language
- Function primarily in hearing world

• Trychin, 1993

Signs and Symptoms

- Frequently asking people to repeat
- Inappropriate response to what is said
- Difficulty understanding in groups
- Puzzled expression when listening
- Intently watching the speaker's mouth
- Strained expression around eyes

• Trychin, 1993

Signs and Symptoms

- Turning the head to one side to hear better
- Avoids social situations-withdraws
- Talks too loudly or very softly
- Turns up TV or radio much too loud
- Blames people for not speaking clearly
- Defensive about communication problems

• Trychin, 1993

Myths and Misconceptions about Hearing Loss

- Hearing aid myth
- Lipreading myth
- Sign language is for everyone
- Professionals understand hearing loss
- People who are hard of hearing understand hearing loss

• Trychin, 1987

Hearing Loss as a Communication Disorder

- Because hearing loss is a communication disorder, it effects both the individual who has it and those who are attempting to speak to him or her.

Two problems

Not understanding:

"I did not understand and knew it."

Misunderstanding

"I thought I understood, but didn't."

Problem Situations Reported by HOH

- Hearing alarm signals
- Voice from another room
- Can't see speaker's face
- Poor illumination
- People whispering
- Voice's on TV or radio

• Trychin, 1993

Problem Situations Reported by HOH

- Conversations in a moving car
- Family dinners at holidays
- Understanding conversations on the phone
- Several people talking
- Medical situations
- Outdoors-wind, traffic, etc.

• Trychin, 1993

Problem Situations Reported by HOH

- Person who's speech is not clear
- Misinterpretation of mistakes
- Unaware person is talking to me
- Movies, plays, lectures, classes
- Stopped for traffic violations
- Dancing and talking

• Trychin, 1993

Problem Situations: Students Who Are HOH

- Teacher talks while facing the blackboard
- Other students ask questions from behind
- Teacher talks while walking around room
- Teacher uses microphone as a pointer
- Teacher lectures while students take notes

• Trychin, 1991

Problem Situations: Students Who Are HOH

- Uncaptioned TV, video tapes or films shown
- Recorded as absent, didn't hear name
- Examine time announced from rear of room
- Air conditioning drones on during lecture
- Teacher has heavy foreign accent

• Trychin, 1991

Problem Situations: Students Who Are HOH

- Teacher does not provide written outline
- Unable to follow other student's comments in work groups
- Teacher comments on films, slides, or videos when lights are out
- Difficulty understanding PA announcements

• Trychin, 1991

Problem Situations: Family/Teachers/Staff

- Difficulty remembering what to do
- Not knowing whether she/he understands
- The variability in his/her ability to understand
- Hard to get her/him to understand me

– Trychin & Albright, 1993

Problem Situations: Family/Teachers/Staff

- Having to repeat often
- Having to interpret too frequently
- When we become frustrated or irritated
- When she/he doesn't pay attention

– Trychin & Albright, 1993

Problem Situations: Family/Teachers/Staff

- Not talking/participating
- When he/she is not understanding someone else
- Student is isolated/ no friends

• Trychin & Albright, 1993

Feedback Loop

- Train students
- Educate/train teachers
- Establish a collaborative effort

Speaker Factors that Influence Understanding

- Does not get listener's attention
- Does not face listener
- Turns away while talking
- Talks too rapidly/too slowly
- Talks too softly/too loudly
- Does not enunciate clearly

– Trychin, 1991

Speaker Factors that Influence Understanding

- Uses too little/too much facial expression
- Uses too little/too much body language
- Has a foreign accent/regional dialect
- Has distracting mannerisms
- Has an untrimmed beard or mustache
- Has a boring delivery or message

• Trychin, 1991

Environmental Factors that Influence Understanding

- Background noise
- Poor lighting
- Poor room acoustics
- Too far from source of sound
- Visual or auditory distractions
- Objects interfere with seeing speaker

• Trychin, 1991

Environmental Factors that Influence Understanding

- Poor seating arrangements
- Inadequate ventilation
- Lack of assistive listening systems
- Lack of alerting systems
- Lack of visual aids-overheads, CART, etc.
- Illegible visual aids

• Trychin, 1991

Listener Factors that Influence Understanding

- Severity of hearing loss
- Type of hearing loss
- Use of hearing aids
- Use of assistive listening devices
- Attention level
- Emotional state

• Trychin, 1991

Listener Factors that Influence Understanding

- Fatigue level
- Distracting sensations
- Distracting thoughts
- Motivation to hear
- Expectations about ability to understand
- Unfamiliar with terminology used

• Trychin, 1991

Listener Factors that Influence Understanding

- Unfamiliar with speaker's voice
- Tinnitus status
- Speechreading skills
- Other physical symptoms-vertigo, pain
- Manual communication skills

• Trychin, 1991

Reactions

- Physical 
- Behavioral 
- Emotional 
- Cognitive 

• Trychin, 2001

Physical Reactions to Communication Problems

- Muscle tension-shoulders, neck, back
- Stomach problems
- Fatigue
- Head aches
- Increased blood pressure
- Appetite changes-eat more, eat less

• Trychin, 1991

Behavioral Reactions to Communication Problems

- Bluffing
- Withdrawing
- Blaming
- Demanding
- Dominating conversations
- Guilt tripping

• Trychin, 1991

Emotional Reactions to Communication Problems

- Anger
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Embarrassment
- Frustration
- Guilt

• Trychin, 1991

Cognitive Reactions to Communication Problems

- Can't think straight-confused
- Hard to focus attention
- Distracting thoughts
- Distrustful of others
- Decreased self esteem

• Trychin, 1991

Mental Health Risks of Hearing Loss

- Becoming chronically nervous; Anxious
- Becoming chronically sad; Depressed
- Feeling anger much of the time
- Loss of group identity
- Feeling marginal in own family
- Loneliness

• Trychin, 1991

Mental Health Risks of Hearing Loss

- Becoming distrustful of people
- Withdrawing from social contact
- Developing poor self-image
- Feeling incompetent
- Feeling unacceptable to others
- Feeling marginal socially
- Feeling loss of influence or control

• Trychin, 1991

Interventions

1. Manage situations:
 - Equipment/assistive listening systems
 - Communication behavior:
2. Manage oneself:
 - Changing physical reactions—relaxation
 - Changing dysfunctional thinking

Speaker Guidelines

- Pick the best spot to communicate
- Get the listener's attention before talking
- Be sure your face can be clearly seen
- Do not have objects in your mouth
- Speak slowly and clearly
- Rephrase if you are not understood

• Trychin & Boone, 1987

Speaker Guidelines

- Inform listener when changing subject
- Don't shout
- Try to be patient, calm, and relaxed
- Speak to, not about, the person who is HOH
- Use facial expressions and gestures
- Ask for tips to improve communication

• Trychin & Boone, 1987

Listener Guidelines

- Pick the best spot to communicate
- Anticipate difficult situation-plan ahead
- Inform others how best to talk to you
- Pay attention to the speaker
- Look for visual cues of what is said
- Ask for key words in writing if needed

• Trychin & Boone, 1987

Listener Guidelines

- Do not bluff
- Inform the speaker about what you heard
- Reinforce speaker's helpful communication
- Set realistic goals for understanding
- Balance your needs with those of others
- Arrange for breaks if meetings are long

• Trychin & Boone, 1987

The Risk of Failure to Inform Others About Your Hearing Loss

- Unfriendliness-Aloofness
- Incompetence-Laziness
- Uncooperative-Dodging responsibility
- Low intelligence
- Personal problems-Weird
- Lack of social skills

• Trychin & Albright, 1993

TRY TO AVOID

- Being apologetic
- Putting yourself down
- Being impolite
- Expressing anger
- Guilt tripping
- Being defensive

• Trychin & Albright, 1993

Be sure to:

- Inform others about your hearing loss
- Inform them about what to do
- Remind them when they forget
- Model the communication behavior you want
- Reinforce other's communication efforts

• Trychin, 1991

"Why don't they do what they should?"

- Don't believe they have problems
- Don't relate problems to hearing loss
- Don't believe there is anything they can do
- Blame all problems on hearing loss
- Don't know what to do to prevent or reduce communication problems

"Why don't they do what they should?"

- Get in their own way while trying to resolve communication problems
- Don't believe they can do what is required
- Don't believe their efforts will resolve the problem

"Why don't they do what they should?"

- Don't believe it is socially acceptable to ask others to do what needs to be done
- Some people have multiple reasons for failure to take action.

Eligibility criteria to consider

- **Mobility**—Meniere's, neuromas, trauma—talking and walking, driving, being outside.
- **Speaking**—age of onset, degree of hearing loss, talking too loud/softly.
- **Hearing**—people assume that if you can talk, you can also hear, or if you can hear, you should be understanding, or if you can understand in some conditions, you should in others.

Eligibility criteria to consider

- **Seeing**—Poor vision, can't see non-verbal cues or speech-read, light in eyes or too dim, eye fatigue.
- **Cognitive processing**—need more time to integrate spoken information, constant visual attention is tiring, confusion/anxiety from difficulty understanding compounds problems

Eligibility criteria to consider

- **Self-direction**—dependencies, low self concept, low self-efficacy, failure to accept and/or deal with hearing loss
- **Interpersonal skills**—failure to initiate, problems with escape avoidance behaviors, bluffing, blaming, inadequate socialization.
- **Work tolerance**—fatigue, noise, eyestrain, social isolation/discrimination.
- **Work skills**—mistakes/misunderstandings, difficulty in education/training situations.

Case-closure data

- **Age:** older—45 vs. 30
- **Employment status**—majority already employed, want to maintain jobs
- **Average cost of service**--\$1,200.00
- **Number of visits:** seen once or twice on average.

How's Your Work Life?—What the client who is hard of hearing/late-deafened needs to know

- Facts about the hearing loss:
 - Type
 - Severity
 - Audiogram profile and speech banana
 - Age of onset
 - Slope of onset
 - Related physical conditions
 - Psychosocial effects of hearing loss

Work-related factors

- **Communication demands at work:**
With whom, where, how, frequency, duration.
- **Communication barriers at work:**
 - Noise, lighting, communication behaviors, location of work area, distractions, use/not use hearing aids, use/not use ALDs and/or telephone devices,

Work-related factors

- **Strategies for overcoming barriers:**
 - know how and when to use hearing aids/ALDs, etc. and use them.
 - Use other print/visual systems, e.g., CART, TTYs, video displays, etc.
 - Modify work environment
 - Educate self/others about hearing loss

Work-related factors

- **Learn effective coping strategies:**
 - How to inform others
 - How to anticipate and prevent problems
 - How to ask for communication change(s)
 - How to manage one's distress reactions
- **Take speech reading classes**
- **Learn some finger-spelling/sign language**
- **Get some counseling/therapy**
- **Look into cochlear implants**

Summary

- **Clients with hearing loss often need:**
- Information about hearing loss and its effects on them and on others,
- Realistic information about hearing aids and other assistive equipment,
- Training in effective communication tactics and strategies, and
- Training in self-management tactics and strategies.