

# Emotional Impacts of Hearing Loss

Hearing loss affects communication. This can be funny, but at other times, it can be embarrassing, frustrating, or worrying.

It can be annoying when, despite our best efforts, we are not able to hear what is being said. We sometimes get frustrated with ourselves. We sometimes get frustrated with others.

It can be upsetting or lonely when everyone appears to be having a good time, yet hearing loss stops us from being able to join the conversation, catch the punchline of the joke, or even follow what the conversation is about.

Sometimes, we can become self-conscious when we don't know what others are talking about, and we can feel embarrassed, flustered, or disoriented when our contributions do not align with the actual conversation.

## How is hearing loss affecting you?

- Frustration / Anger
- Social overwhelm
- Worry / Nervousness
- Feeling like a burden
- Exclusion/Rejection
- Hopelessness
- Embarrassment
- Low self-confidence & self-worth
- Sadness
- Fear
- Shame
- Grief
- Loneliness
- Guilt
- Insecurity

## What can I do?

- **Know that you are not alone.** At some stage, everyone with hearing loss will feel some of these feelings.
- **Talk to a professional.** If these feelings last a long time or feel overwhelming, it could be helpful to reach out to a professional for help, such as your GP or a psychologist.
- **Talk to your family and friends.** Let them know how you feel in challenging situations and work together to problem solve realistic solutions.
- **Check your hearing** and use your hearing devices regularly to provide optimal opportunity for hearing and communication within social situations.
- **Improve your communication skills** TIP: see our Communication Strategies factsheet or attend one of our RehabPlus sessions.
- **Be kind to yourself.** People have a tendency to focus just on bad things. Remind yourself about positive things that have happened, or will happen in the future. Remind yourself that you are capable; "I can do this" and "we will work this out." Catch yourself when you are thinking negative thoughts and STOP. Change the story in your mind and be kind to yourself.
- **Learn to unwind.** Make time to practice breathing exercises, yoga or meditation.