

Help make hearing loss...

Invisible No More!



This PowerPoint was presented by Michael Eury at the HLAA Leadership Conference, Saturday, October 23, 2010

Why is hearing loss invisible?

- It's usually difficult or impossible to tell by looking at someone that they have hearing loss.

Why do people with hearing loss feel invisible?

- We often feel isolated because one of our vital senses is fading away, creating communications challenges.
- We sometimes feel marginalized by those who do not understand or lack the patience to deal with our hearing loss.

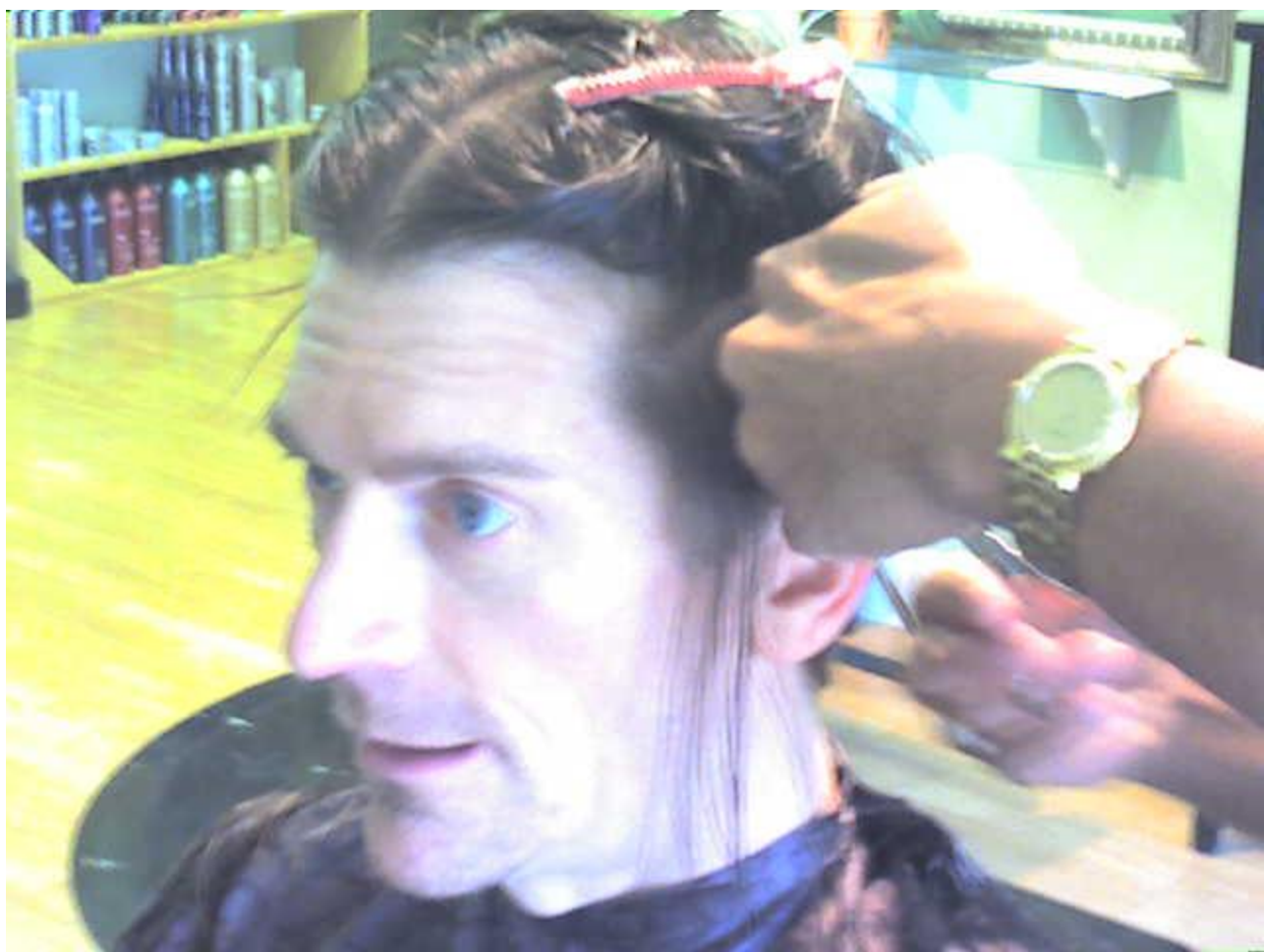
Why do people with hearing loss feel invisible?

- While accommodations for those with other disabilities are increasingly common, they are rarely found for people with hearing loss.

What do people with hearing loss do to make ourselves invisible?

- We bluff through conversations, pretending to understand when we don't have a clue as to what was said.
- We conceal our hearing loss by growing or styling our hair to hide our hearing aids or cochlear implants.





**And advertisers even tell us to
hide our hearing loss!**



Now you see it...Now you don't.

The hearing public simply turns a
'deaf ear' to our condition...

...which is surprising when one considers
that there are ***at least 48 million
Americans*** with hearing loss!

While we often seem invisible...

...we don't have to stay that way.

It's time to make hearing loss *invisible no more!*

- As HLAA leaders, it is our responsibility—and our moral imperative—to reach out to others who are beginning their journey into hearing loss, and to educate the hearing public about our condition and our needs.

Here's how...

Stepping Out **Getting Personal**

Every personal encounter is an opportunity to share a story or a fact about hearing loss.

Step out of your comfort zone and be an ambassador for people with hearing loss.

Stepping Out

- Inform those around you of your hearing loss and communication needs...

...but do so with a smile, with grace, and with patience.

Stepping Out

- When you notice others with hearing aids or CIs, say hello.

This is a great way to make friends, to network for HLAA, and to extend a helping hand to those in need.

Stepping Out

- When you meet or know someone in denial about their hearing loss, be welcoming and non-threatening. Prepare an “elevator speech” with an important fact about hearing loss.

Let them know they're not alone, and that life is much sweeter once they address their hearing loss.

Stepping Out

- Inform—and remind—your hearing family and friends of the importance of hearing protection.

From iPods to vacuuming, they're constantly assaulted by potentially damaging sounds.

Stepping Out

- Inform—and remind—your coworkers and/or employees of the importance of hearing protection.

Stepping Out

- Inform service employees of the importance of hearing protection.

If your landscaper doesn't wear hearing protection when mowing your yard ... loan him yours!

Stepping Out

- On city sidewalks and in other noisy environments, subtly teach others to protect their hearing by covering your ears.

Most aren't aware that fire trucks, ambulances, construction work, etc. pose threats to their hearing.

Speaking Out **Going Public**

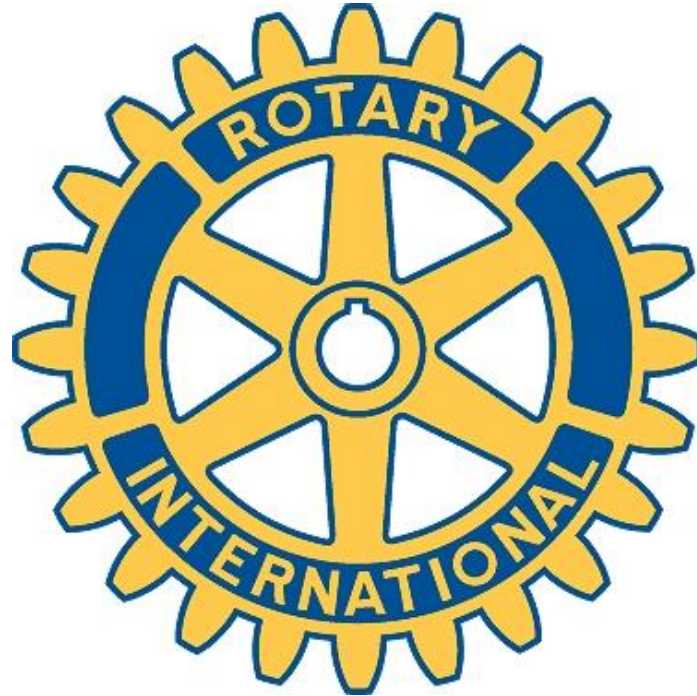
We complain that the community at large isn't aware of hearing-loss concerns, so it's up to us to educate them.

Speak out in public forums to inform the hearing and hard of hearing about hearing loss.

Speaking Out

- Promote yourself as a hearing-loss speaker at civic groups in your community.

Groups routinely looking for guest speakers include...



Service-oriented organization of professionals.

www.rotary.org

Choose “Club locator” to find local clubs.



Service-oriented community organization,
emphasis on children's needs.

www.lionsclubs.org

Some chapters collect used hearing aids
for distribution to needy.

Speaking Out

Other groups welcoming guest speakers:

- Kiwanis International
- Moose Lodge
- Shriners International
- Senior Centers/Assisted Living Centers

Check your community listings.

Speaking Out

- Public libraries often host events with guest speakers.

Schedule an “Introduction to Hearing Loss” talk during “Better Speech and Hearing Month.” Create a reading list of books on hearing loss.

Speaking Out

- Churches offer the speaker a venue for informational and inspirational talks.

Consider “faith sharing” by relating your personal struggles with hearing loss.

Speaking Out

- Contact your audiologist or hearing care provider to ask to speak to their orientation groups about HLAA.

This is helpful to new hearing-aid wearers and a networking opportunity for your HLAA chapter.

Speaking Out

- And don't forget to personally invite your audiologist or hearing-care provider to join HLAA!

Speaking Out

Write letters to your local newspaper or to magazines about hearing-related issues such as:

- accessibility limitations in public places
- lack of insurance coverage for hearing aids

Reaching Out

Group Efforts

There's strength in numbers, and organized chapter or state programs make permanent impressions.

Reach out as a chapter to spread awareness of hearing loss.

Reaching Out

- Sponsor a Walk4Hearing to spread awareness and raise funds.



Reaching Out

- Place HLAA chapter/state booths or tables at area:
 - hearing expos,
 - health fairs,
 - and senior/aging seminars.

Reaching Out

- Place HLAA chapter/state booths or tables at high-visibility venues such as:
 - church bazaars
 - street fairs and community festivals, and
 - county fairs and state fairs.

Reaching Out

- Project a professional appearance by producing uniform business cards for your group.

Reaching Out

- Use the reverse side of your business card to convey important information.

Hearing Loss Association of North Carolina is a state association of Hearing Loss Association of America.

Its goal is to promote the interests of people with hearing loss, to support the local chapters in North Carolina, and to cooperate with state agencies and non-profits related to hearing loss.

For more information, see our web page at:

www.nchearingloss.org

Reaching Out

- Project a professional appearance by purchasing a tablecloth sporting your chapter's logo, and/or by commissioning a presentation board to identify your chapter and mission.

Reaching Out

- Have your chapter's members conduct a letter-/email-writing campaign to local media about hearing-related subjects.

For example, just before Veterans Day send messages about hearing loss being the #1 injury sustained by soldiers.

Reaching Out

- Create eye-catching (hot pink or neon) postcards and have members “blitz” a recipient on a target topic, such as: fashionable hearing aids for adults!

(This method is not recommended for contacting legislators.)

How do we pay for this outreach?

- Walk4Hearing proceeds
- Other fundraising efforts (from large projects such as hearing conferences to smaller ones like garage sales)
- Grants
- Sponsorships

*It's up to YOU to help us become
invisible no more!*

Stop dreaming about a world where

- hearing instruments are considered as common as eyeglasses
- every broadcast is captioned
- every public gathering place is looped
- insurance companies cover the costs of our hearing instruments...

- Step out,
 - Speak out, and
 - Reach out
- and one day, we will all be...

Invisible No More!