



March 2021 Newsletter

Renew your membership in our local chapter for only \$15 a year! Ways to renew: pay at our website on the “Donate” button in the upper right-hand corner; mail your renewal with your name, address, phone number, and e-mail to: East Bay Chapter, HLAA, P.O. Box 12484, Oakland, CA 94604-2484. See back

page to sign up and support National HLAA.

March 13, 2021, Meeting by Zoom! Zoom in and see your friends from HLAA-EBC.
Schedule: 9:30 a.m. Meet and Greet; Program: *Nancy Tye-Murray, Ph.D., a professor of Otolaryngology and Head and Neck Surgery at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, Missouri, will review the conditions associated with untreated hearing loss and describe how digital therapeutics (DTx) are changing the face of healthcare with an example of how DTx may be used to treat hearing loss and its downstream effects.*



Register for this free event here: www.hearinglosseb.org After you register, you'll be sent the link to join the meeting.

Consider staying after the meeting for AfterWords – a chance to ask more in-depth questions, as well as discuss anything you want with fellow members!

HLAA-EB will post to the California State Association webpage and our website.

Check out our website: <http://www.hearinglosseb.org/> Contact us: info@hearinglosseb.org

MEETING NOTES: *How to Live with Hearing Loss Thru A Sense of Humor & Clear Communication*

At our February 13, 2021 meeting via Zoom, several brief clips from two videos were shown that demonstrated some of the everyday situations that often present major challenges for individuals living with various levels of hearing loss (HL). The clips were selected from comedian and hearing loss advocate Gael Hannon's video "*Hearing Loss Isn't Funny . . . But Living with It Can Be Easier*" and the video "*Let's Make It Clear*" by the Texas Dept. of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services. Discussion by meeting participants, which was interwoven between the video clips, resulted in a series of practical tips for living life with hearing loss by relying on a sense of humor and clear communication.



Gael Hannon

Miscommunications: Here are some typical situations where HL may lead to humorous or serious miscommunications. 1) Talking with retail store clerks; 2) Ordering at a restaurant; 3) Going to the theater or movie; 4) Requesting assistance in an emergency; 5) Going to the doctor, dentist or hospital; 6) Being pulled over by a police officer; 7) Teaching or attending a class; 8) Participating in small or large group meetings, video-conferencing, & phone calls.

Challenges: Special challenges confronting those of us living with hearing loss may include the following:

- Self-denial that you are “less than perfect” & reluctance to acknowledge your own hearing loss.
- Personal embarrassment from mislabeling as “deaf and dumb” or “incompetent” or “you’re not listening”.
- Feeling isolated, invisible, disconnected & even depressed about your social relationships with other people.
- Often smiling, laughing, nodding, bluffing, or faking it when it’s not clear what is asked or said to you.
- Being ignored or being laughed at when you can’t hear a question or don’t respond appropriately.
- Difficulty of getting others to recognize your problem & the distinction between “hearing” vs. “understanding.”
- Becoming fatigued from the extra work that it takes to listen & participate in a conversation or discussion.
- Limited success in “retraining” others who ignore your requests or reminders of ways to help you hear better.
- Frustration in trying to lip-read & understand muffled speech of mask-wearing speakers in noisy environments.
- Complications for individuals who have a hearing loss as well as a visual impairment or other physical problems.
- Difficulty of listening to & understanding speakers who have heavy accents, speak too softly or too fast.
- Handling people calmly who respond that “...it doesn’t matter” when you say “I can’t hear you.”
- Feeling vulnerable to danger when you can’t hear people, events, & alerting sounds in your surroundings.

Practical Tips: Several practical tips for successfully living with HL were shared in the videos & by meeting participants:

- ✓ Be honest with yourself about your hearing loss while acknowledging your hearing defects to others.
- ✓ Rely on your sense of humor & a positive attitude while learning to accept & live with your hearing loss.
- ✓ Don’t be afraid to speak up initially & assertively in letting others know about your specific hearing needs.
- ✓ Check out the variety of HA’s, Assistive Listening Devices (ALD’s) & wireless mics now available on the market.
- ✓ Ask about t-coils, & insist that they be installed when you are buying new hearing aids (HA’s).
- ✓ Request a quiet location and seating with good lighting in noisy public settings, when it’s available.
- ✓ Be prepared by designating someone to help translate or interpret what is being said in noisy family gatherings.

- ✓ Ask about and/or order captioning in advance of small or large group meetings or video-conferencing.
- ✓ Learn how to test & adjust audio & video for meetings via Zoom or other video-conferencing techniques.
- ✓ Request written handouts and/or PowerPoint slides matching what is spoken at large group meetings.
- ✓ Practice good listening techniques, such as paying attention, focusing, & using visual cues and gestures.
- ✓ Ask people politely to repeat or rephrase a question or a response that you don't clearly hear or understand.
- ✓ Use "Please Face Me" buttons & other signals to others that you have a hearing loss.
- ✓ Encourage speakers to speak slowly & clearly, while giving cues when the conversation or topic changes.
- ✓ Keep close at hand a pad of paper & pen for you and others to write it down when you can't hear what's said.
- ✓ Be kind, patient, & respectful in "educating" others about HL, while thanking those who help you hear better.
- ✓ Remember -- a sense of humor & clear communication may make it easier & more fun to live your life with HL.

~ Kathy Fairbanks

Good News from Hearing Health Foundation:

Emerging Research Grants (ERG) Scientist Tenzin Ngodup, Ph.D., Discovers New Neuron Type That Will Inform Tinnitus Research [ERG grantee Tenzin Ngodup, Ph.D., and colleagues set out to take a closer look at the ventral cochlear nucleus \(VCN\)](#) to reveal new types of inhibitory neurons with functions that could be of clinical significance to tinnitus. They discovered a novel class of inhibitory cell, and this result could suggest new targets for tinnitus therapies through inhibitory neuronal activation, and insights into new prevention strategies.

WORLD HEARING DAY IS March 3rd! If you missed it there is always next year 🤝

As the global health community recognizes World Hearing Day on March 3, the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) and the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) will use this year's international observance to spotlight the domestic toll that untreated hearing loss takes on adults in the United States—as well as the disparities in hearing health care in communities of color.

Spearheaded by the World Health Organization (WHO), World Hearing Day is meant to raise awareness about how to prevent hearing loss—and promote ear and hearing care around the world. This year, the theme for the observance is "Hearing Care for All," and it will be marked by a significant development: WHO's release of the World Report on Hearing on March 3.

In the United States, hearing loss is the third most common chronic health condition. The number of adults aged 20 years or older with hearing loss is projected to increase from 44.1 million in 2020 (15% of adults aged 20 and older) to 73.5 million by 2060 (23% of adults 20 and older), making it a growing public health concern.

"We know that adults with hearing loss often wait years or even decades before seeking help," said HLAA Executive Director Barbara Kelley. "Many mistakenly feel they are getting by, but in reality, they may be socially isolated, withdrawn or depressed, or experiencing declining health. We need to look at hearing loss as a whole health issue and prioritize it accordingly. World Hearing Day gives us the opportunity to communicate that hearing loss is serious; effective treatments for it are available; and treatment makes a remarkable difference as adults live longer, and ideally more fulfilling, lives."

"Despite the compelling advantages of treatment, only one in five people who would benefit from a hearing aid actually uses one," said ASHA 2021 President A. Lynn Williams, Ph.D., CCC-SLP. "While hearing loss is

undertreated among all adults, statistics show that this is especially true in communities of color. The reasons are multifaceted, with individual, provider, health system, societal, and environmental factors all potentially playing a role. As we recognize the theme of 'Hearing Care for All' this year, it's important to highlight disparities in our society and promote equitable access to treatment."

JOKE CORNER:

Three retirees, each with a hearing loss, were playing golf one fine March day....

One remarked, "Windy, isn't it?"

"No," the second man replied, "It's Thursday..."

And the third man chimed in, "So am I. Let's have a beer."

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED!! Specifically, we need a Publicity Chair, but other volunteers are needed as well. Please contact Dale Davis, our EB Chapter leader, to discuss the possibilities! Contact: daledavis94605@gmail.com. Leave your number so she can call you. THANK YOU!

HEARING AID BATTERIES! Only 17 cents apiece at Costco.

HLAA members can join the hearOclub to have batteries delivered to your home! Use the coupon code **HLAAmember** online at hearclub.com or by calling 833.LISTEN-2 (833.547.8362).

East Bay Leadership Team

The chapter is run by a Steering Committee, Leader Dale Davis, ddavis94605@gmail.com, who also oversees the Membership Database.

Outreach, Walk4Hearing Chair, National Chapter Coordinator/Liaison: Susan Jeffries Fitzgerald, susanlj29@gmail.com

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JOIN THE NATIONAL HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION – THEY ARE ADVOCATING FOR YOU!

Go to this URL to join today: <https://www.hearingloss.org/make-an-impact/become-a-memberrenew/>

OR, if you prefer to pay by check or card through the mail, Nancy Asmundson has membership forms to send to you or you can contact HLAA at 301-657-2248 or e-mail membership@hearingloss.org.

Your membership form will go along with your payment to 6116 Executive Blvd., Suite 320, Rockville, MD 20852. Call 301-657-2248 or e-mail membership@hearingloss.org.

COSTS:

Regular Membership/year (will receive *Hearing Life* magazine in print and digital format): Individual - \$45; Couple/Family - \$55; Professional - \$80; Nonprofit - \$80;

Online Membership (receives *Hearing Life* magazine in digital format only): Individual - \$35; Student - \$25.

Veteran Membership: Complimentary one-year Regular Membership & Lifetime Online Membership.