



Canadian Hard of Hearing Association North Shore Branch

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September and December by CHHA – North Shore Branch,
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Editor: Hugh Hetherington Issue 117 June 2022

Mountain Ear

From the Desk of the President

Hi Everyone,

So, welcome to what might be the end of winter. Obviously we are nowhere near the end of spring, but we can hope that it will soon make way for summer to make its appearance. I'm not sure about everyone else, this being Canada and ice being such a favourite, but summer is always my favourite season.

I've just finished watching Liverpool scrape by Chelsea in the F.A. Cup Final and hoping that Arsenal can win their last two games and finish above Spurs in the Table. If you don't follow me, then you must be watching some minor sports that are domiciled here in North America.

As you may remember, in my last letter I said that I was about to buy new hearing aids, as I was noticing the increasing frequency with which I was asking people to either repeat themselves, or, more correctly, re-state themselves as I was having more and more difficulty understanding others. I'd like to give you an update on my quest so far.

At this very moment, I am once again wearing the same instruments that I have been using for the past 5 years. I won't plug any company, but I will give you an update on my experience so far.

The first new hearing aids that I wore for a little over a week before they went back, were rechargeable behind the ear. The "company" actually warranted the daily life expectancy of 18 hours, but suggested that on a full charge that they would last

at least 24 hours, or more, depending on how much streaming you do. Mine NEVER made 18 hours, or 15 hours, and usually died after about 13 hours of use. Certainly, not enough for me. I get up up at around 7:00 am, go to bed at around 11:00 pm, and the company reps told me the poor life of the battery was my fault, actually, they said it was "my usage".

June Presentation

Monday, June 20, 2022

7:00 pm Via Zoom

Guest Speaker

Neil Bauman, Ph.D.

Owner of Website

Hearinglosshelp.com

Topic:

**“Hypersensitive to Sound?
Your Questions Answered”**

(Also see page 5)

For information call

604-926-5222

**To request an invitation to join this Zoom
meeting please email
chhansb475@gmail.com**

Can you imagine, I wanted to wear them all day. Anyway, back they went, in exchange for the battery operated devices. So, this where I tell you to NOT just be fobbed off, make sure you know what you want, and need, and keep working on “new” appointments till they come through for you. Everyone’s usage is different so its important to check this out for yourself.

It seems that even the new battery operated devices now go through power so quickly that the P13 batteries don’t last anywhere as long as the older aids. My old hearing aids could last 10 days on P13. The Hearing Aid company said that the new hearing aids would go through the P13 in 4 or 5 days, maybe 6 or 7, but I found that they lasted 4 days at most, and once only 3.5 days, and, on wearing out gave me less than 1 hour’s notice before dying. Don’t just take the Company’s word for “any” statements, check and test everything.

Although some of the qualities of the aids were superior to my old aids, the numerous areas where I felt that I was actually getting less, meant, to me that I was getting nowhere near the \$6000 value that I was paying for.

I will be getting new aids from another competitor next week, and in my next letter after this I’ll let you know if my, obvious, current dis-affection is with one Hearing Aid company, or the Industry as a whole.

What I’m really saying here is that when you acquire new Hearing Aids you are buying the right to evaluate and check what you are given. Go back sufficiently enough times to ensure that you know what you are getting AND that you are getting what you want. And, come to ”Sound Advice” if you need independent help.

I know that as President of CHHA – North Shore Branch I should probably be much more positive, but so far into this process I have had most of my positiveness knocked right out of me.

On a much happier note, my wife and I and another 4 couples went to Harrison Hot Springs last week. First trip away for 2 ½ years. The Copper room is still closed, staffing issues, and they are not serving 4:00 Tea, but we had a lovely time. If you can, you should go, and warm your tootsies.

Till next time

Alan

April Presentation

By Hugh Hetherington

On Monday April 25th Neil Bauman, Ph.D., of the website hearinglosshelp.com gave us a presentation via Zoom entitled “Hearing Loss at the Crossroads: We Want to Choose the Right Path—So Why Do We So Often Choose the Wrong One?” The contents for the talk were taken from part 2 of his book “Keys to Successfully Living With Your Hearing Loss”. He likens it to coming to a crossroad with the option to take one path or the other. In hearing loss terms, he called one path the “Emotionally based coping strategy” and the other “the Problem based coping strategy”. In the first option, the person’s wish is to find an easy way out and the second option is to look for a successful solution by finding a coping strategy based on the problem encountered in the hearing situation.

The coping strategies we use can have one of three outcomes.

Improve the situation to our benefit (A good coping strategy)

Leave the situation unchanged (An ineffective coping strategy)

Make the situation worse (A bad coping strategy)

Typical bad coping strategies include “opting out or escaping” from a bad situation and also “bluffing”. Typical good coping strategies include “Getting closer”, “Using an assistive listening device”, “Getting a person’s attention before starting a conversation”, “Cutting out background noise” and many others mentioned in his book.

The reason emotion based coping strategies don’t work is because we use them to make us feel better, while problem based coping strategies are chosen to solve the communication problem to help us communicate more effectively.

In Neil’s talk and in his book “Keys to Successfully Living with your Hearing Loss” he gave a number of examples including those mentioned above. You can purchase his book (and many other books on various hearing loss issues) from his website “hearinglosshelp.com” or from “amazon.ca”.

Neil will be speaking with us again on June 20th where he will be talking about “Hypersensitivity to Sound” and the many types of hyperacusis.

It's All About the Carpet

Bilateral, Bimodal Hearing: What's the Difference?

By Rick Waters

Although St. Paul's now performs second cochlear implants for patients who qualify, the majority of us implant users still have but one implant and processor. (If you have two implants, you are said to be bilateral).

And, many of us with just one implant continue to use a hearing aid in the non-implanted ear. In this instance, we are said to be bimodal. I want to share a few thoughts and tips on bimodal hearing.

First, most CI makers have an arrangement with one manufacturer of hearing aids to ensure that their products are compatible. The vast majority of BC implant recipients have an implant from Cochlear Corporation, and their implants are engineered to work with Resound Hearing aids. The accessories and the remote controls work well together, and offer hearing benefits that are worthwhile. Advanced Bionics CIs are made by the same company that makes Phonak hearing aids, and of course, they are engineered to work with Phonak hearing aids. Medel on the other hand, like to tout the fact that their CIs work well with all brands of hearing aids. Finally, although there are no Oticon CI users here as far as I know, it would be reasonable to assume that their CIs would work well with Oticon hearing aids. Obviously, if you have the opportunity, you'd want to choose the brand and model of hearing aid that is both suitable for your hearing loss, and compatible with the CI which you have. The CI audiologist can program the two instruments to work together, and if you have a smart phone, can link or pair both instruments to the phone.

And while we're discussing audiologists, remember that the CI audiologist at St. Paul's is a specialist in cochlear implants, and will only work on the programming (mapping) of the CI processor. Your hearing aid audiologist will work on the hearing aid programming, and will not be involved in the CI programming.

So with that out of the way, I'd like to share my philosophy and opinions on how best to hear with a bimodal arrangement.

Now, I'm going to talk about carpet.

Yes, carpet! Let me explain. After sound waves enter your ears, travel through the ear canal to strike

the ear drum, and produce vibrations, those vibrations are transmitted by the three little bones in the middle ear (the ossicular chain) to the oval window of the cochlea. The cochlea is shaped like a snail shell, and is tiny, typically the size of a pea. Inside the cochlea are millions of tiny hair cells which float in a fluid called endolymph, and respond to the vibrations, producing electrical impulses on the auditory nerve, thus sending stimuli to the auditory processing centre in your brain. These impulses in the auditory processing centre are perceived as sound. Now, imagine that the cochlea was like a room in a building, and the hair cells were like a carpet in the room. The area of the carpet with the most wear after some use, would be the area right inside the entrance to the room, as that's the area that carries the most traffic. And so it is within the cochlea, where the tiny hair cells near the oval window tend to be the first to be damaged and thus less able to provide the signals the brain needs to hear, and it is those cells which are the ones that respond to the high frequency sounds that are so important to speech.

The typical hearing loss pattern shows a much more significant loss in the higher frequencies than in the lower tones. This is because, as mentioned above, the tiny hair cells that respond to the high frequencies are located at the entrance to the cochlea, and are the first to "wear out". As many of you are probably well aware, a CI does an excellent job of stimulating your auditory processing centre with the middle and higher frequency sounds that are so important for hearing speech. In effect, they do the job of those tiny hair cells at the entrance to the cochlea, and thus let you hear those high frequencies again. Think about the carpet which I mentioned above. In the cochlea, the hair cells right at the entrance are the hair cells which respond to the high frequency vibrations, and that's why the typical age-related loss is most pronounced in the high frequencies.

In fact, the original design aim of cochlear implants was to allow the users to hear (process) speech. Because of the very small size of the cochlea (about the size of a pea), and the problems associated with inserting the electrodes into the cochlea without causing any damage, the electrode array does not intrude far enough into the cochlea to stimulate the hair

All opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association or CHHA – North Shore Branch.

cells which produce the lower frequency sounds. For this reason, some CI users report that the sound they hear can be “thin”, or “tinny”. By contrast, hearing aids do an excellent job of reproducing the lower or bass frequencies, but due to the typical pattern of hearing loss, do not do as good a job on the higher frequencies, the frequencies that are so important to hearing the consonant sounds.

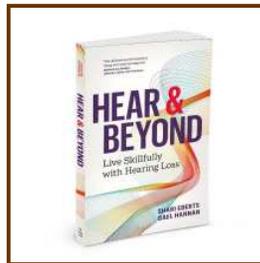
Some audiologists, and CI makers (Medel) believe that the best results are obtained by trying to program the hearing aid to match, as closely as possible, the sound quality produced by the cochlear implant processor. The feeling is that this produces the most natural sound, and is closest to what nature intended. Others believe that with the cochlear implant doing an excellent job of producing the higher frequencies that are essential for hearing the consonant sounds, the hearing aid can be programmed to help emphasize the bass notes. They reason that the brain’s audio processing centre will combine the two inputs, and the result will be a sound that is centred in your head, and covers the full spectrum of sound. With this strategy, the wearer will have some sense of directionality in hearing, and voices and music will sound more natural. As a side benefit, if the hearing aid is programmed in this manner, the likelihood of that annoying “squeal” from feedback is substantially reduced.

My own preference, based on my experience, is for the hearing aid to be programmed to complement the CI, by emphasizing the lower frequencies, and for the CI to do what it does best — help with the higher frequencies. I have found that this gives me a fuller, more natural sound, and is particularly beneficial in helping me recognize who is speaking, and as a bonus, makes music sound much more akin to how it sounded before my hearing loss progressed to the severe or profound point.

At this point, I’d like to be clear that I’m not an audiologist, nor am I an Otolaryngologist, and these are just my opinions. They are based on what works well for me. We are all different, with different hearing histories, and differences in the physiology of our inner ears, so “your mileage may vary.” My recommendation is to discuss this with your audiologist, and to be prepared to experiment, by perhaps having two or more programs installed in the hearing aid to allow you to compare the sound, and see what works best for you.

Gael Hannan — Do We Need Another Hearing Loss Book?

If you have hearing loss, you already know that the conventional approach to treatment is focused on hearing aid technology. Without a handbook to help you figure out how to actually live with it, you’ve likely been getting by on information pieced together from various sources—and yet, you may still struggle with the life-changing impact of hearing loss.



That’s how I lived my life for decades – because there was no one to tell me how to do it differently. I didn’t have the Big Picture about hearing loss or know that there were ways to be better at living well with it.

When I connected with the Canadian Hard of Hearing Loss Association many years ago, that all changed. I shed the crippling stigma and slowly adopted new tools that improved how I communicate with other people and the universe. I even wrote a memoir about the hearing loss life.

But still, there was no comprehensive guide, or operating manual written by people who have hearing loss and know what they’re talking about. We needed one book that covers the technical, mental, and interpersonal skills we need for better conversations. All the stuff that I had to learn the hard way, on my own, over a long period of time.

I thought, yes, the world does need another hearing loss book!

So, two years ago, I reached out to Shari Eberts, a renowned hearing health advocate, to write the book that we wished had been available to us earlier in our journeys. The result is a skills-based approach to hearing loss that is centered not on hearing better, but on communicating better. We wrote it with warmth and humour, sharing our own stories and outlining invaluable insights for navigating all areas impacted by hearing loss (such as relationships!), using new mindsets, behaviours and workarounds to make almost any listening situation manageable.

Isn’t that what we all want – to make communication better and easier?

Hear & Beyond: Live Skillfully with Hearing Loss was released on May 3 and is available anywhere books are sold (online and in bookstores) in both paperback and e-book versions.



Gael Hannan Advocate and Author

“The Way I Hear It: A life with Hearing loss”

“Hear & Beyond: Live Skillfully with Hearing Loss (With Shari Eberts, May 2022)

Bio: Gael Hannan is a hearing health advocate, humorist, and author. She has an international following for her engaging, insightful, and humorous presentations and articles which can be viewed on the website hearinghealthmatters.org. Gael is the author of the acclaimed book “The Way I Hear It”. Her second book, Hear and Beyond: Live Skillfully With Hearing Loss, written with Shari Eberts, was released on May 3, 2022. Gael uses bimodal technology for her profound hearing loss and has served on the national and provincial boards of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association since 1995.

Hypersensitive to Sound?

Are your ears particularly sensitive to certain sounds? Do you hear (perceive) some sounds, many sounds, or all sounds as too loud and/or too sharp—such as the sounds of dishes or cutlery clinking, dogs barking or doors slamming? Do certain sounds make you wince, jump or cry out in pain? Do you find that specific sounds particularly annoy, anger or frighten you? Do you yank your hearing aids out of your ears at times because you can’t stand the racket they produce?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, you likely have one or more of the seven conditions lumped under the umbrella of hyperacusis. Yet few doctors and audiologists know much, if anything, about these various kinds of sound hypersensitivities, nor how to effectively treat them.

If this is your situation, you are indeed fortunate. At the June 20th Zoom meeting of the North Shore branch of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association, we will be having as our guest speaker, Neil Bauman, Ph.D. Dr. Neil is the author of the book, “Hypersensitive to Sound?—Successfully Deal with Your Hyperacusis, Recruitment and Other Sound Sensitivities”.

In his talk, Dr. Neil will briefly explain the various kinds of sound hypersensitivities and reveal some of the secrets to successfully dealing with these largely-unknown conditions. Come and bring your questions with you. Dr. Neil loves to answer your questions.

This talk which was originally scheduled for April 25, 2022 has been rescheduled for June 20, 2022.



Notice of Annual General Meeting 2022

Dear CHHA Member,

The Annual General Meeting of the Members of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association (CHHA) will be held virtually via Zoom on the 4th day of June, 2022, at the hour of 12:00 p.m. (EDT).

Each individual CHHA Member is entitled to attend, and cast one vote. If you are unable to attend you may vote by proxy, by means of a written proxy, appoint a proxy holder to attend and act in the manner and to the extent authorized by the proxy.

The Annual General Meeting documents and a proxy ballot will be provided to members 21 days prior to the meeting as mandated by the National Bylaws.

All members wishing to participate in the AGM must register for this meeting no later than Tuesday, May 31, 2022 by 5:00 p.m. (EDT)

Please RSVP your attendance by registering online. (“regrets” are not necessary)

As per the Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act, any Member wishing to receive a summary of the financial statements for the year ending December 31, 2021 may do so by requesting a copy by email at info@chha.ca.

Marilyn Kingdom
National President

Canadian Hard of Hearing Association

For more information and to register for the AGM go chha.ca/annual-general-meeting-june-4-2022/

Living Successfully with Hearing Loss

Why are specific 'repair' strategies more powerful and effective than our habitual "what?" or "pardon?" when we don't understand?

How can we make better use of the visual cues we receive when we watch our communication partners?

How can we navigate the frustration felt by us (and those who talk to us!) when we just can't understand?

Learn about these strategies and much, much more through the Living Successfully with Hearing Loss courses delivered through Vancouver Community College. Courses will continue to be delivered online through the Fall semester, where weekly material is delivered through a course website, and weekly meetings on Zoom provide time to review, discuss, and practice. The current cost of the course (tuition and applicable college fees) is around \$285. If you are 65 or older when the course begins, you can apply for a senior tuition waiver - the remaining fees are about \$95.

Level 1 courses (<https://vcc.ca/courses/dhhe-0618/>):

Tuesday afternoon, 1pm from Sept. 13 to Nov. 29
Tuesday evening, 7pm from Sept. 13 to Nov. 29

Level 2 courses (<https://vcc.ca/courses/dhhe-0619/>):

Wednesday afternoon, 1pm, from Sept. 14 to Nov. 30
Wednesday evening, 7pm, from Sept. 14 to Nov. 30

Please contact Lisa Dillon Edgett to learn more, ask questions, or register for an upcoming term. Courses begin in January, April, and September.

Lisa Dillon Edgett, Ph.D., RAUD, Aud(C)
Phone: 604-871-7348

Email: ldillonedgett@vcc.ca

Sound Advice

Presented by:
**The Canadian Hard of Hearing
Association
North Shore Branch**

**When we meet, we discuss topics
and issues dealing with hearing loss.
We look forward to seeing you there.**

**West Vancouver Seniors' Centre
sessions and Silver Harbour sessions are
now being held online as Zoom meetings,
West Vancouver on the First Friday of
each month and Silver Harbour on the
following dates: Monday April 25, June 27
and September 26. All meetings begin
at 10:00 AM**

**To receive an invitation to join
either meeting send an email to:
chhansb475@gmail.com and you will
be added to the list for both. You are
welcome to join either meeting
or both if you desire.
(No meetings in July and August)**

**Subjects to be addressed include:
Technology;
About Speechreading;
Expert Coping Strategies;
Improving Hearing Environments**

**Note: we will be working with both Silver
Harbour and West Vancouver Seniors'
Centre to re-establish some in-person
meetings again soon.**

Stay tuned for announcements.

**For Information call:
604-926-5222**