

What do you want others to know about this course?

**Living Successfully with Hearing Loss
Student Testimonials 2021
Compiled by Lisa Dillon Edgett**

What was the most important thing you learned in this course?

I have a better understanding on how to manage my hearing loss, how to communicate to my partner (and others) what my needs are to hear better and also what I need to change in my way of thinking and actions in order to live better despite the hearing loss.

The strategies and the knowledge gave me the confidence and support I needed to be able to try out the different scenarios we had learned in the class. I was able to understand my feelings and reactions to different situations, and to better understand how others may be feeling as well. I am becoming more aware of explaining myself to others of my hearing deficit and that it can be done in a very non threatening, and positive way...using assertiveness.

I can communicate better to the people around me. I can clarify topics and make sure I am able to follow along. I can recognize challenging situations quicker and try to adapt to my needs. I am more aware of others and my own speech, body language etc, and I check to make sure I am also understood by my partner. This course has helped me to slow down and be more proactive in communication rather than just reactive.

I have gained so much "theoretical" knowledge, which has helped me understand why and how I am affected by my hearing disability, which helps me formulate more realistic expectations. I have also learned so many practical strategies that have been instrumental in helping me communicate more effectively, which in turn has improved my relationships, my ability to be more relaxed and enjoy a greater variety of settings.

Advocating for myself at work. I always hid my loss and was quite passive in situations that I should not have been. The course helped me understand that people are willing to be accommodating and there are strategies to orient oneself in difficult situations. I still need to apply this to other areas of my life (social, religious, sports) but it's a positive start. I have been relieved of a tremendous weight.

Patience and acceptance. Recognizing challenges and having a good strategy to apply will benefit everyone.

I learned that while challenging, hearing loss doesn't need to have such a scary impact on life's interactions and conversations. There're indeed a few hard realities to it, and many tough pills to swallow (figuratively) - but with the strategies learned in this course it's still very possible to have engaging, prosperous, and important dialogue with the people in your life

I learned that I am not alone on this journey of hearing loss and that there are so many fantastic sites and people to connect with.

Definitely being more assertive! This is so important because you are able to let others know (in a good way) that you are struggling to hear. It also gives them the opportunity to learn how to help you. If the strategy we come up with works, then great. If not, at least the dialogue is open to try something else.

To stay engaged in the conversation. I found in the past that when others would talk I would not be able to get everything that was said. I never asked for clarification when I wasn't sure. I usually said nothing. Now I have the confidence to ask the speaker to repeat a part or all of what they said.

Just being more aware of the strategies - which I sometimes used unknowingly - helps me to pull them out more often and be better able to match the most effective strategies to the circumstances.

I was told that I would learn valuable information in this course and I could not agree more. So many topics were covered in the course that helped us understand the impact of hearing loss in our lives and how to best cope with it. I always say that knowledge is power and this course is the living proof. I wish everyone with a hearing loss would have the opportunity to take this course. I am so glad that it is now offered online.

I found this course rather "all consuming" and by that I mean that it forced me to think "deeply" about my hearing loss and coping. After some classes I felt really happy with the time spent. Never did I "not think" about the upcoming week's class. Being "kept on my toes" about my hearing loss and about others' hearing loss was and is important for a 90-year-old. Having more "assertiveness" training was very important for me. I am now constantly thinking "How can I improve" my assertiveness?"

Most important thing I learned in this class, is that having a hearing loss is "not the end of the world." My hearing is not perfect, I have to work harder to get things across, I will forever hear sentences that do not make sense, but "it's not my fault, and to not let it bother me." "Humor is a great way to deal with my hearing loss." I can laugh at myself. This was important for me to learn, because I felt alone and not everyone understood where I was coming from, but being in the class and reading what others felt, and hearing others talk about the same issues, helped me accept my hearing loss.

Assertiveness helps move emotions aside. I have had ongoing unrealistic expectations of how I "should" hear this has caused much disappointment, heartache, and even lower self-esteem. The class has helped me move into yet another stage of acceptance.

I learned to accept my hearing loss just a little more and how to make things better for myself. I learned about my rights, and I feel a little more comfortable and confident talking about my hearing loss, which, before, I would make every attempt to hide.

Although I registered to "support" my partner, I am certain I got as much value as he did.

This is an essential course for anyone with hearing loss.

We learned such a lot in each class and yet seemed to laugh a lot as well. It is the first time in my 88 years that I have ever enjoyed looking forward to the next class.

Without it I would not have been able to advocate for myself. I had been dealing with hearing loss and isolation for a number of years. Being a demographic that doesn't have as many resources for hearing loss (40s and working), this was instrumental in helping me continue to work and support my family, and be more connected to my community.

I only wish I hadn't been so stubborn in my 20's and early 30's and signed up for this at the first signs of hearing loss... rather than wait for it to have become a problem first.

Accepting my hearing loss instead of doing the "Poor me". Once this is accepted, it paves the way to help myself and others best manage my hearing loss. It allows openness to assertiveness and a good sense of humour. Loved meeting all the people in the class, felt a common bond, and now know I am not alone.

We are not alone in this journey.

**For more information about Living Successfully with Hearing Loss,
email Lisa Dillon Edgett: ldillonedgett@vcc.ca**