



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Welcomes You To

**The Living Well
with Hearing Loss
Workshop**



An Interactive Workshop

This is the curriculum for an aural rehabilitation workshop held at the Portland VA Medical Center in Oregon & Bay Pines VA Health Care System in Florida from 2007 to 2009, as part of a VA RR&D funded research study. For best results, your computer should have video and sound capability. Please click the picture or center of the screen, where indicated, to activate the special features.



Guidelines

- * One person speaks at a time
- * Let us know if you don't understand
- * Respect each other's views and statements
- * Confidentiality

Questions



1. Share your name, where you live, how much a problem your hearing is
2. What is your top priority for improving life with a hearing loss? Examples:
 - ✦ Top situation where you want better communication
 - ✦ Learning about helpful technology
 - ✦ How to reduce communication stress
 - ✦ How to get people to do what you need



During this workshop, you will

- ❖ Collect your own Toolbox with the tools you want to use to improve communication



❖ Learn to



Stop



Think



Choose

Action Tools

BEFORE & DURING difficult communication

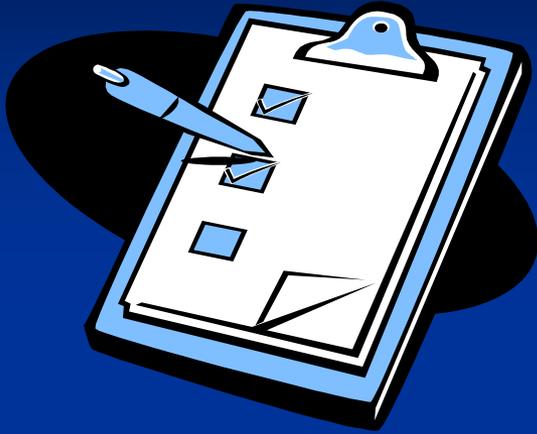
❖ Practice

Brainstorming



Problem Solving for Hearing Loss

Personal Toolbox



- Take notes or comment on tools you like
- Later check off your favorite tools
- When you come to a difficult listening situation remember to ***stop, think and choose*** “What tool will I use?”



The Lucky Seven



1. Hearing aids—know their limits, use them effectively
2. Be a communication partner
3. Use good communication skills and strategies
4. Manage stress and emotions
5. Respond to acoustics and lighting
6. Other technology to use
7. Be proactive—problem-solve and keep learning

Lucky #1

Hearing Aids

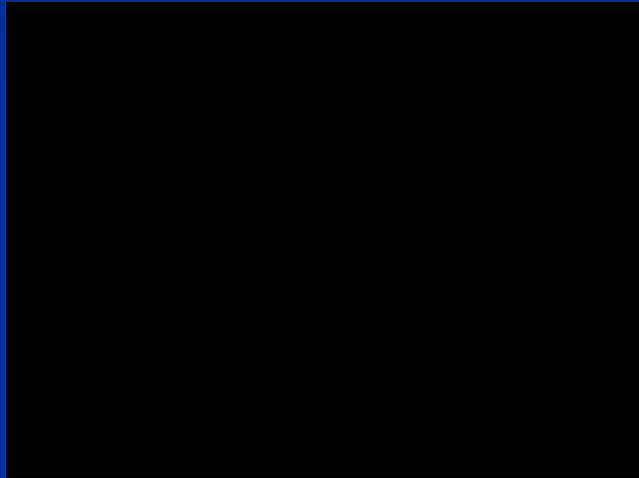
Understand the *limitations* of your hearing aids, and use their *capabilities* effectively.





Anatomy of Hearing

click center to play video

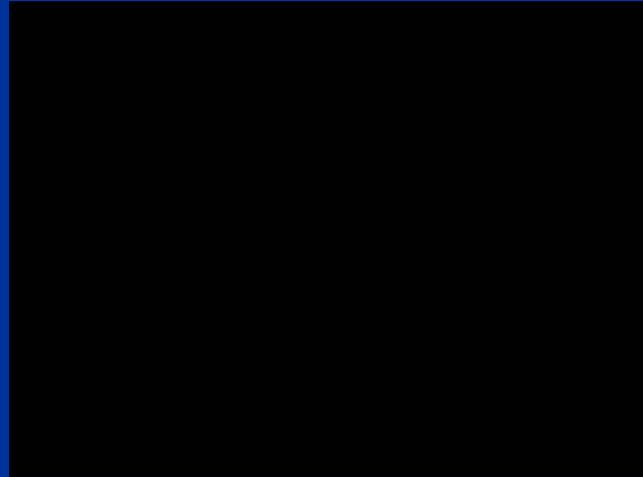


ARII SNHL.ppt.Ink



Sensori-Neural Hearing Loss

click center to play video



Frequency (Hertz)

Low Pitch **(Pitch)** **High Pitch**

Decibel Level
(Loudness Level)

Very soft Sounds

250 500 1000 2000 3000 4000

0
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
80
90
100
110



Woods



Rustling Leaves



Conversational Speech



Whisper



Dog Barking



Lawn Mower



Airplane

Very Loud Sounds

Frequency (Hertz)

Low Pitch

(Pitch)

High Pitch

Decibel Level
(Loudness Level)

Very soft Sounds

0
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
80
90
100
110

250

500

1000

2000

3000

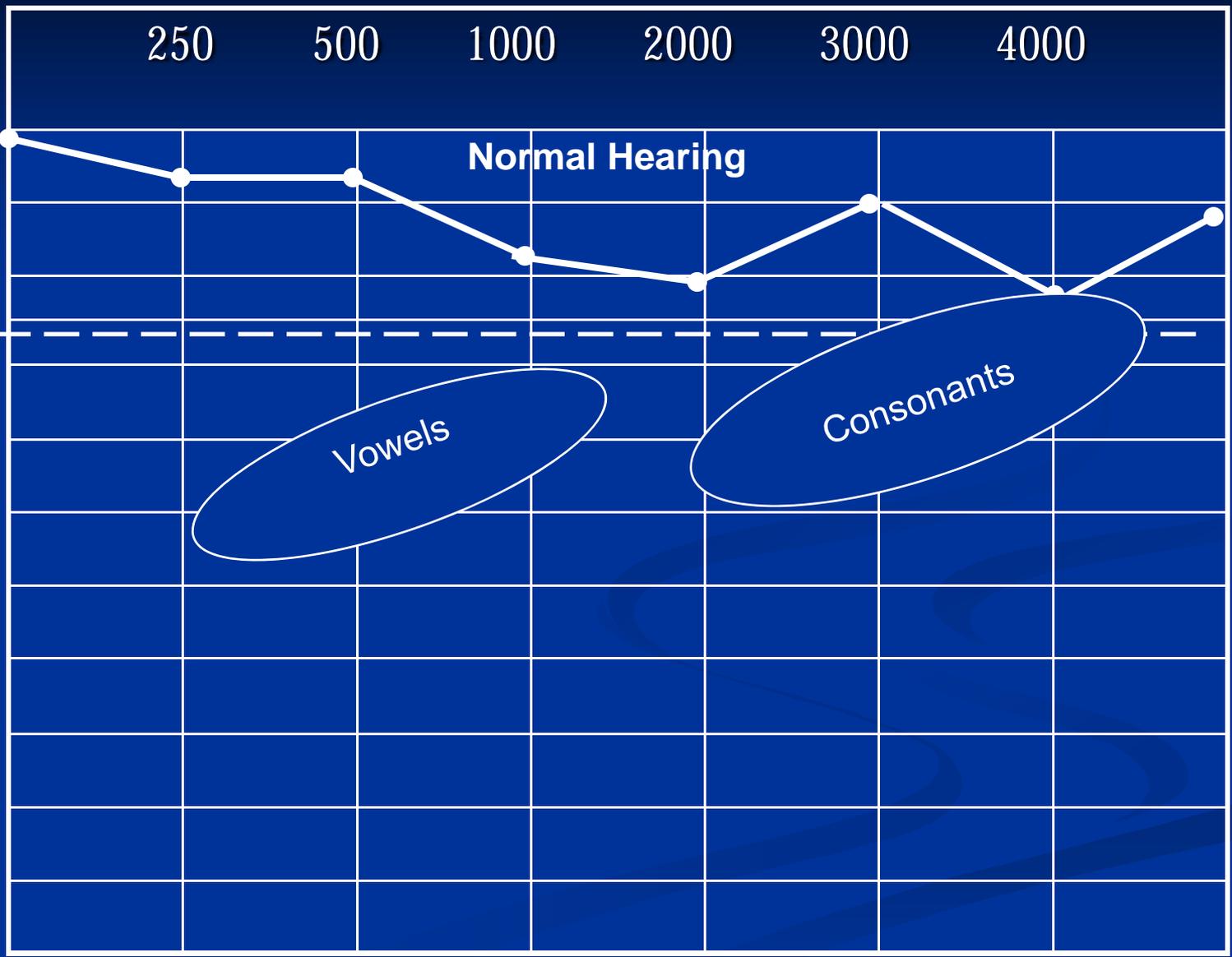
4000

Normal Hearing

Vowels

Consonants

Very Loud Sounds



Frequency (Hertz)

Low Pitch

(Pitch)

High Pitch

Decibel Level
(Loudness Level)

Very soft Sounds

0
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
80
90
100
110

250

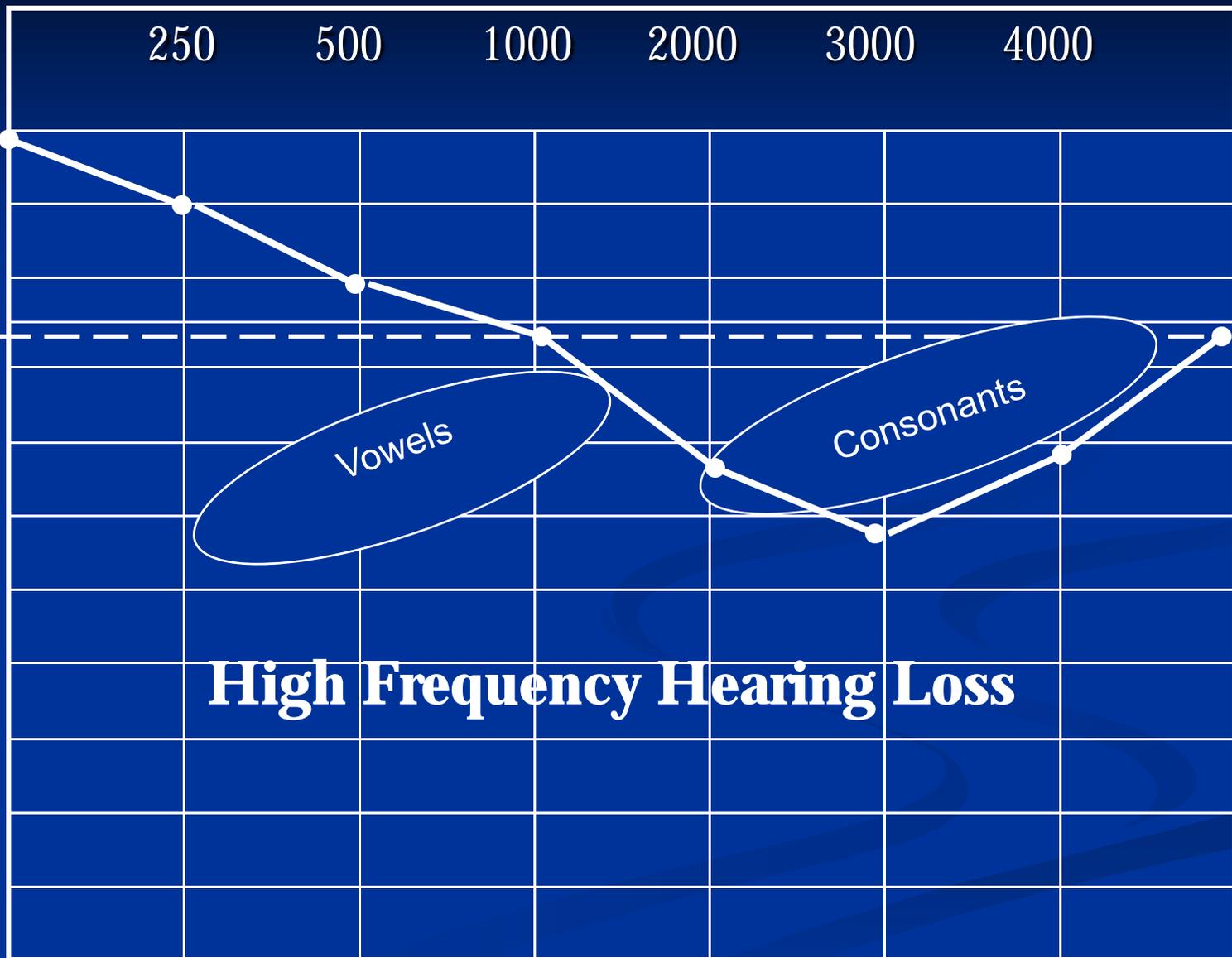
500

1000

2000

3000

4000



Vowels

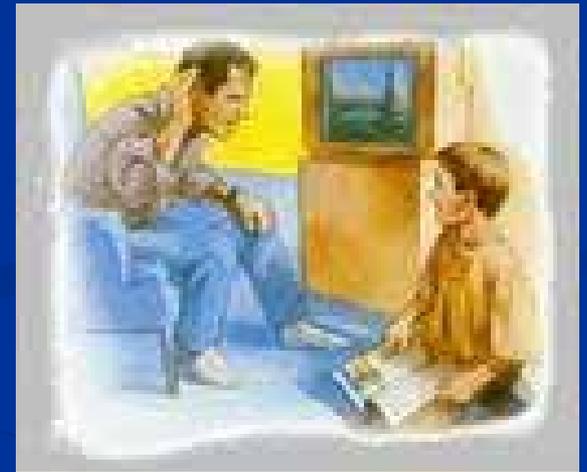
Consonants

High Frequency Hearing Loss

Very Loud Sounds

Factors That Influence Our Understanding of Speech

- Listener Qualities
- Speaker Qualities
- Environmental Factors



Using The Lucky 7 =

Better Understanding



Lucky #2

Communication Partners

- Engage the person you are speaking with as a communication partner—be a *appropriately assertive*. Respect your rights and theirs.



Communication Relationships

- Different approaches to your communication partner affect communication success
- Relationship behaviors: *passive*, *aggressive*, or *assertive*
- Assertive behaviors most likely to result in successful communication

The Assertive Communicator

- Courteous
- Explains the problem
- Clear suggestions
- Shares responsibility for effective communication
- Respects their limitations too





Hostess offers Ralph refreshment

Click to play video

Discuss: is this assertive behavior?





Ralph and friends watching TV
click for video and discuss: assertive,
aggressive, passive—or all three?





Lucky #3

Communication Skills

- Use good communication skills.
- Use *verbal* and *behavioral strategies* and *speechreading* actively, as needed.



Speechreading

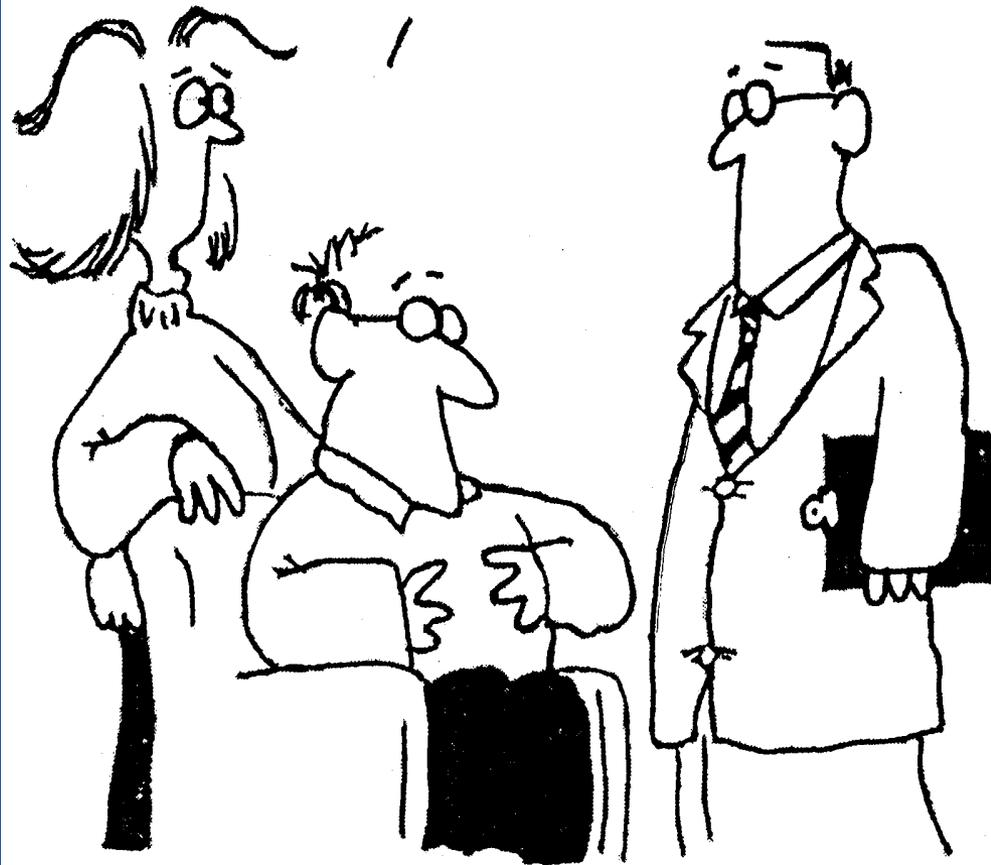


- Lipreading: only one factor in Speechreading.
- Speechreading uses everything available:
 - ◆ Auditory
 - ◆ Facial Expressions & Lipreading
 - ◆ Body Language & Gestures
 - ◆ Situation & Context
 - ◆ Voice Inflection

Tips for the Person with Hearing Loss

- Pay **attention** to the speaker
- Reduce your **distance** from the speaker
- Take a **break** if discussions are long
- Don't always say "**What**"
- **Do not bluff!**
- **Double check:** what you do or don't understand, or aren't sure—so you both know if you are communicating

Doc, he doesn't need
a hearing aid... he
needs a listening
aid.





Advanced Communication Tips

- **Specific** suggestions: how loud, how slow, face you, etc.
- Ask for **clues**: spelled out, rephrased, counting the numbers, written
- Try to **not interrupt**: most people repeat, and you can use context
- **Anticipation** is best, **repair** is also good.
- Have **realistic expectations!**
- **Your ideas?**





Dad & Son

How would you do better?

Click for video and discuss





Dad and Son Do Better

click for video and discuss



Time for Dinner?

Click for video and discuss



 **Dinner is Served!**
Click for video and discuss





A Visitor

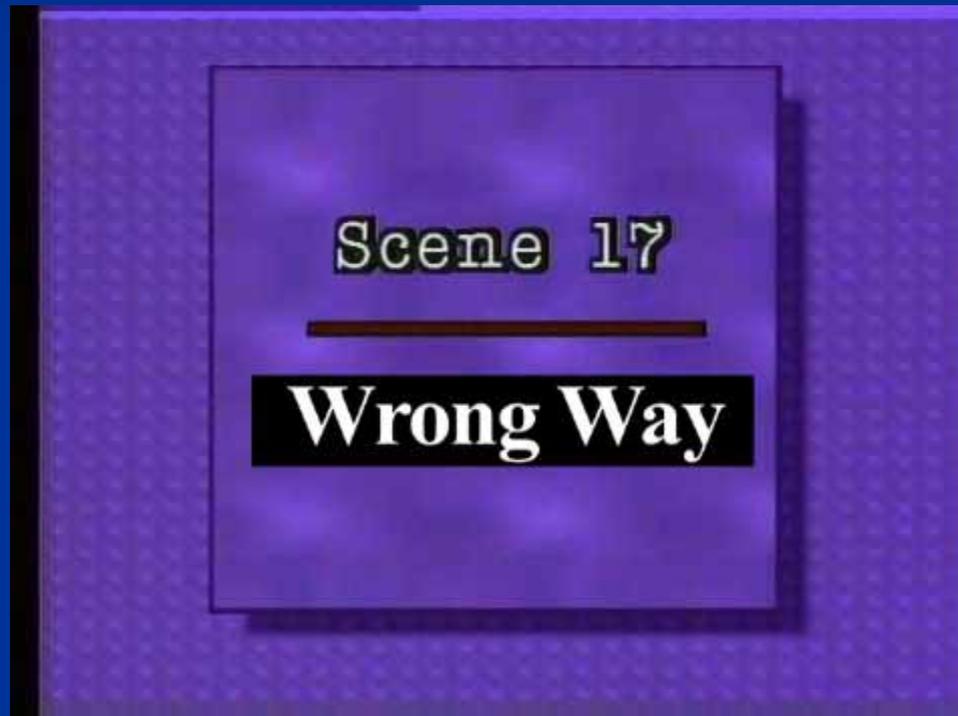
click for video and discuss





Telephone Communication

Click for video and discuss



❖ Remember to



Stop



Think



Choose

Action Tools

BEFORE & DURING difficult communication

Lucky #4

Stress & Emotions

❖ *Manage your feelings*—accept them and work with them. It may be a shame you have a hearing loss—

But it isn't shameful to do something about it!





Hearing Loss Stress & Emotions



Hearing loss = communication hassles

- Causes stress & many feelings
- How you cope affects how others relate to you
- And affects how you relate to yourself

A Few Things that May Help

- Its normal for some feelings to get stirred by hearing loss. Give yourself a break.
- Hearing loss doesn't cause all your troubles. Give others a break too!
- You don't have to feel guilty for asking people to do some work communicating. You have rights.
- Try “letting go” of embarrassment and vanity.
- Don't be afraid to let people know what your communication needs are. They usually will cooperate.





- You can manage communication stress, you've done so for other kinds of stress: a long deep breath or a glass of cold water are two old standbys.
- **Do what you can to change the things you can change; learn to accept what you can't change**
- Laughter may be the best stress reliever of all





Getting some professional help is often a good idea

Serious emotional problems may get wrapped up with hearing loss: depression, hostility, anxiety, marital conflict, isolation.

Some resources:

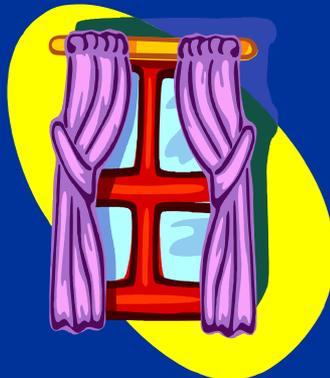
- ◆ VA clinics, other mental health clinics, private therapists, counseling through colleges & religious organizations
- ◆ Helping yourself may also help everyone who communicates with you



Lucky #5

Acoustics and Lighting

- Check the acoustics and lighting in your environment and ***respond*** to them.
- You can ***move yourself*** or ***change the environment*** to improve how you understand speech in a particular place.

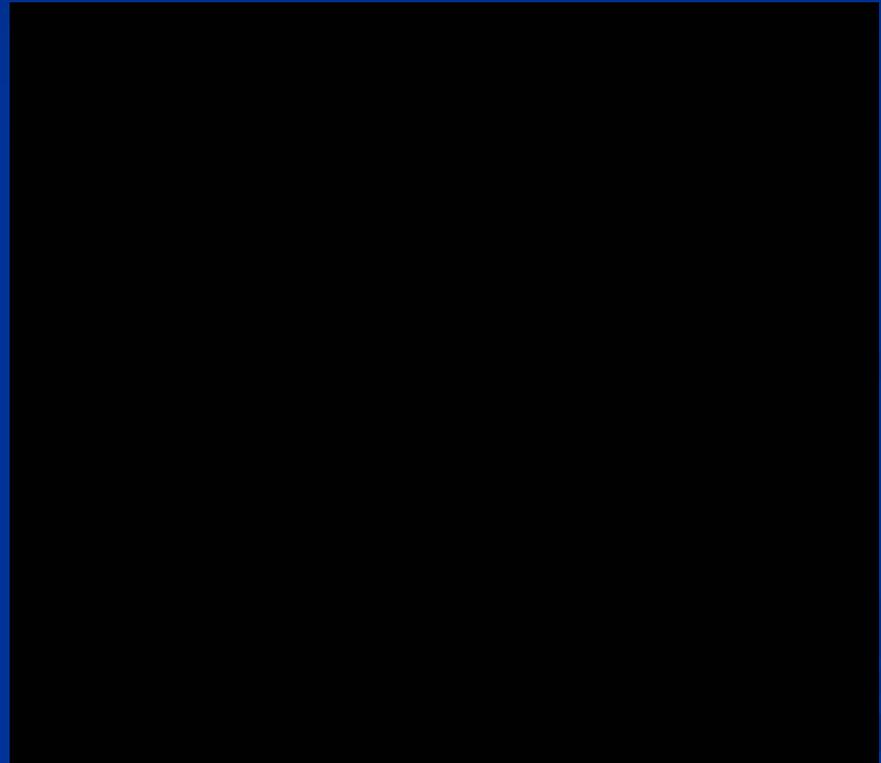




Sound Waves Weaken with Distance, and Can Interfere with Each Other

[click for video](#)

With bad acoustics, sound waves clash, making speech difficult to understand.





Echo

Echo, or Reverberation: reflected sound dramatically interferes with understanding speech.



Reverberant Speech (Echo)

click for sounds

- Dry speech (no reverberation) 
- 0.6 second reverb. time 
- 1.3 second reverb. time 
- 5.0 second reverb. time 

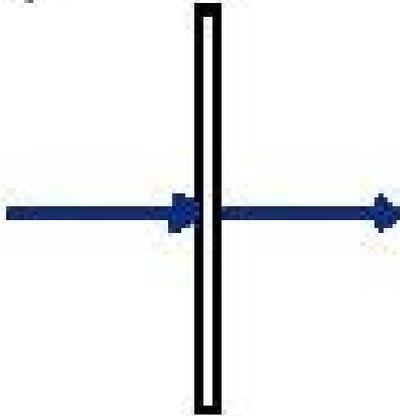
Hearing loss + Noise + Echo

Noise

Absorption

Echo

(a)



(b)



(c)





For Family & Friends: How Age, Noise, & Hearing Loss Affect How Speech Sounds

Click to play video

The video player interface features a timeline at the top with markers for 0, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, and 40 years. The main content area is split into two parts: a photograph of a man and a woman sitting at a table in a restaurant, and a line graph titled "PROGRESSIVE HEARING LOSS".

The graph plots Hearing Loss (HL) in decibels (dB) on the y-axis (ranging from 0 to 40) against Frequency in Hertz (Hz) on the x-axis (ranging from 500 to 4000). Multiple lines represent different age groups, showing that hearing loss increases with age and is most pronounced at higher frequencies.

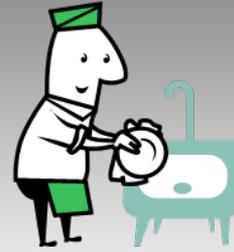
NASA

What to Do?



- Control background noise. Be assertive.
- Examples: don't sit near restaurant kitchens or open windows, turn down background music, buy quiet air conditioners.
- Use sound absorbers: curtains, carpets, soft hairs, ceiling acoustical tiles.
- Choose where speech sounds better: side restaurant booths; not surrounded by others; up close to lecturer; away from high ceilings.

Restaurant Challenge: Click twice, find worst & best tables. Why?



Dishwasher



Kitchen



Employee Workstation



Hallway/Bathrooms



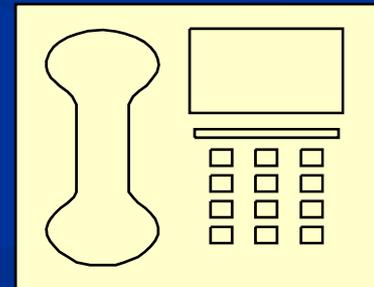
Front Door



Lucky #6

Other Technology

- Is there *other technology* to use? Yes! Use them too—they really can help!



Hearing Assistance Technology

- Aid communication by using sound, radio, light, or tactile stimulation
- Include:
 - Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs)
 - Personal Communicators
 - Alerting Devices
 - Specialized Telephones
 - Captioning





Personal FM & Pocket-talker Systems—

**Greatly reduce difficulties caused by
distance and background noise!**

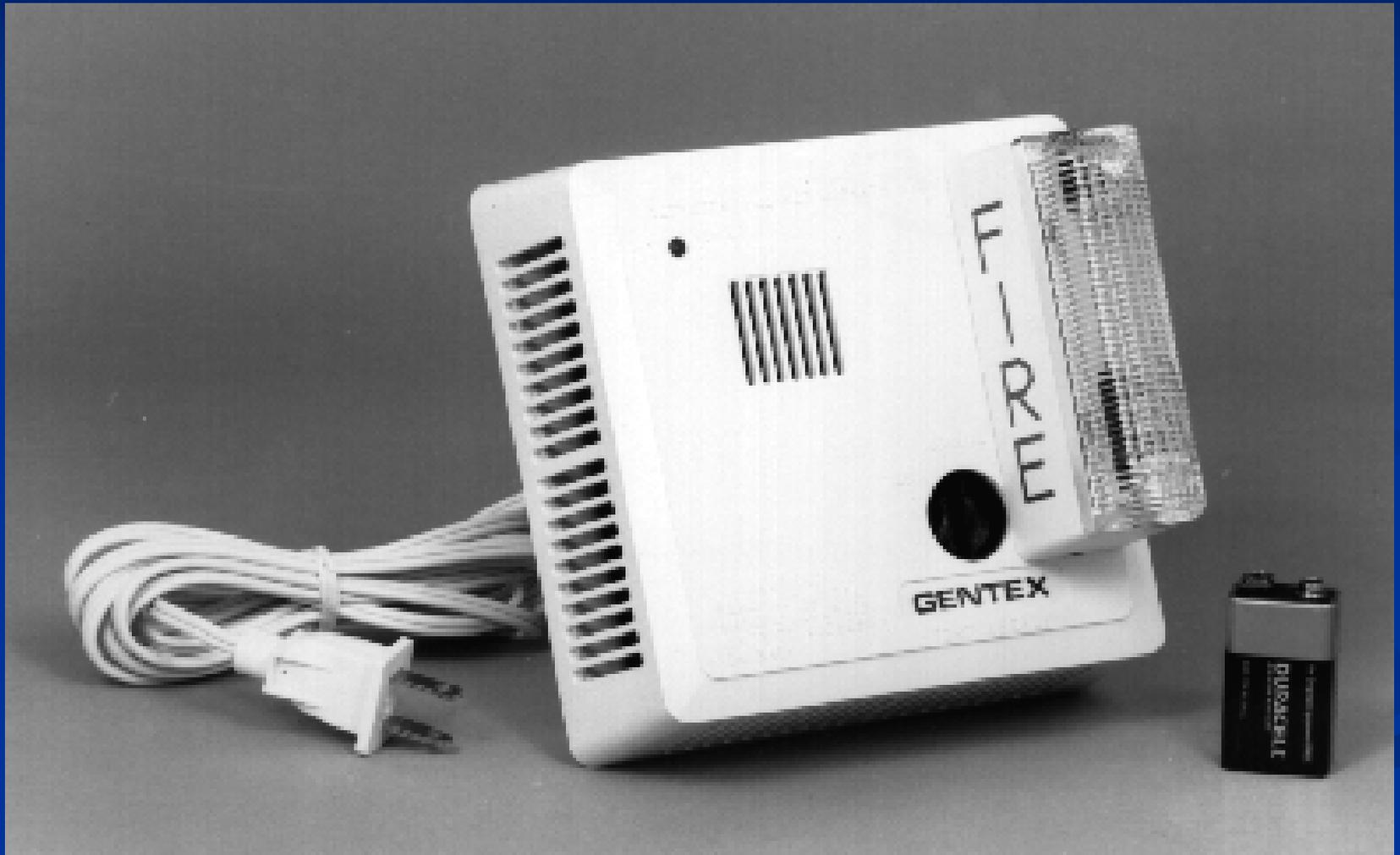




Infrared TV Listening System

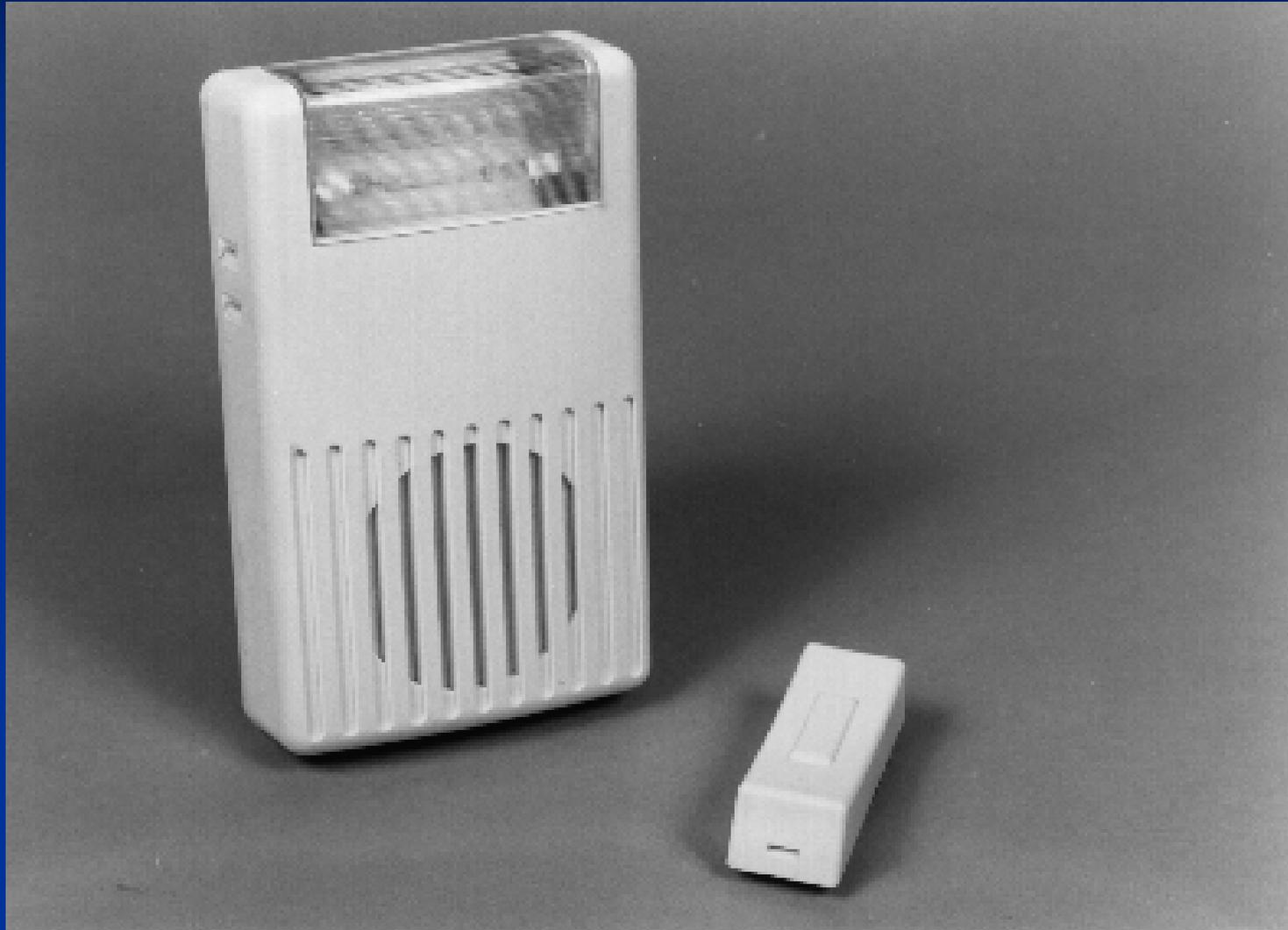


Fire Alarm with Strobe Light





Strobe Doorbell Signaler





Loud Alarm Clocks with Bed Shaker





Vibrating Alarm Watches

Captioned Telephone & Portable Phone Amplifier

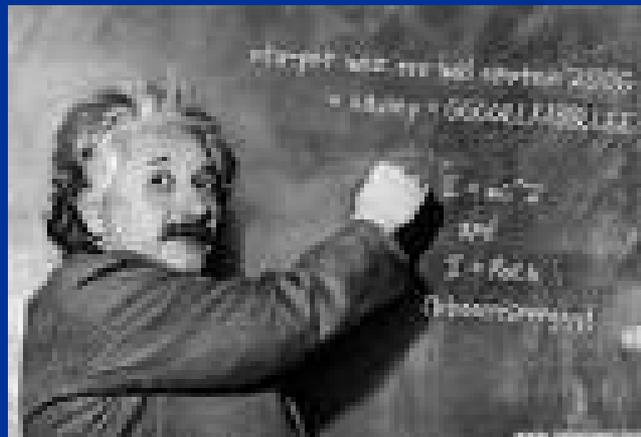




Lucky #7

Be Proactive

- ***Plan ahead*** and ***prepare*** for the hearing problems that may occur, before they occur.
- ***Problem-solve, brainstorm***—Find potential solutions. Use your tools!
- ***Keep learning***—look for new tools to improve communication.





- Now we'll "Put it all together"
- Check off your favorite tools on your Personal Toolbox
- We'll do Brainstorming for solving difficult communication priorities
- You can use the Lucky 7 Tools you've checked off in your Personal Toolbox

Brainstorming Rules

1. Focus on quantity first
2. No criticism or censoring
3. Unusual ideas are welcome
4. Then select, combine and refine ideas



Remember – No Criticism.

Be Creative.



Brainstorming for Hearing Loss

Click to play video





The Lucky Seven



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Thank you for your active participation

- Stop, Think & Choose!
- Use your Personal Toolbox
- **LIVE LONG & WELL!**

