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The Patient Perspective: What Your Clients Need From You

Shari Eberts & Gael Hannan

Disclosures

- **Presenter Disclosure:** Financial: Shari Eberts is the co-author of Hear & Beyond from which this presentation is drawn. She received an honorarium for this course. Non-financial: Shari Eberts is an HLAA board member. Financial: Gael Hannan is the co-author of Hear & Beyond from which this presentation is drawn. She received an honorarium for this course. Non-financial: Gael Hannan has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.
- **Content Disclosure:** This learning event does not focus exclusively on any specific product or service.
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Learning Outcomes

After this course, participants will be able to:

- Identify critical, integrated communication strategies that empower clients to live more skillfully with their hearing loss.
- Describe aspects about the lived experience of hearing loss that can help professionals to develop a deeper awareness and compassion for their clients.
- Discuss how to reframe their client-centered clinical approach to include non-technical communication strategies.

What We're Talking About

- Shari and Gael: Our Hearing Loss Stories
- Living Skillfully: What Does It Mean?
 - Understanding the Hearing Loss Journey
 - Three-Legged Stool of Critical Skills
 - Putting it All Together
- Clinician Role in the Successful Client Journey

The Hearing Loss Journey



SHARI & GAEL





“We shifted our goal from
hearing better to
communicating better.
That changed everything.”

Shari Eberts and Gael Hannan

Influences on the Journey

LIFE
EXPERIENCES

PROFESSIONAL
HEARING
HEALTH CARE

PEER
RESOURCES

Living Skillfully with Hearing Loss

- Understanding the Big Picture
 - What to expect on the hearing loss journey
 - What can be changed and improved
 - We are not alone; there is help and support
- Embracing the 3-Legged Stool of Critical Skills
 - Changing our attitudes about hearing loss with MindShifts
 - Using a broad range of technology to boost comprehension
 - Communication strategies to improve listening situations
- Putting It All Together
 - Applying these skills to all aspects of life
 - Relationships and support networks
 - "Hearing Hacks"

The Big Picture: Understanding the Journey

- Most people with hearing loss do not have the Big Picture
- Providers are key to setting the groundwork for success
- Hearing loss is a journey, not a problem you can 'solve'
- Hearing aids are not a stand-alone 'cure'
- Emotions of hearing loss need to be addressed
- While all journeys are unique, there are typical, recognizable stages

Five Stages of the Hearing Journey

Stage	Attributes
Debating with Yourself	Doubt, denial, external blame, stigma
Validating	HCP evaluation confirms hearing loss
Taking Charge	Deciding to move forward, hearing aids often a first step; adopting other strategies and skills
Living Skillfully	The ultimate goal: applying a variety of strategies for a communication-rich life
Refreshing & Restarting	Adapting to changes, adjusting as needed

The 3-Legged Stool of Critical Skills



MINDSHIFTS

A New Approach to
Hearing Loss

"I HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO
CHANGE MY JOURNEY.
THE PERSON WITH THE
MOST POWER IN MY
HEARING LOSS SUCCESS
IS ME."

The Attitude Selfie: Common Hearing Loss Attitudes

- Why me?
- Nobody understands what I'm going through.
- I want to hear better, the way I used to.
- I don't like to advertise my hearing loss. People will think I'm old or slow.
- My family and friends always forget about my hearing loss.
- Hearing aids are ugly, expensive, and don't always work.
- I don't want to bother anybody with my hearing loss needs.
- Who would want to hire me? Or love me? Or be my friend?
- I get angry at myself and others when we make communication mistakes.
- Everywhere I go, there is no access for people with hearing loss.

MindShifts: Taking a Different View

- Our attitudes towards hearing loss affect our behaviors
- Better attitudes turn into better conversations
- Transformed attitudes can help your client:
 - Take charge of their own success
 - Try new tools
 - Be more assertive in having their needs met
 - Improve their working relationship with you

Two Powerful MindShifts

Attitude	The Mindshift
Nobody understands what I'm going through.	Many people experience the same challenges as I do. I can learn from them. I'm not alone.
Hearing aids don't always work.	Technology is my friend.

How To Shift Your Mind

- Optimize rather than perfect
 - The goal is to make it better, not necessarily perfect
 - Consider different tactics and try again tomorrow
- Practice to build confidence
 - Putting new attitudes into action takes practice
 - Use positive self-affirmations (try a mantra)
- Prioritize self-care
 - Practice mindfulness, gratitude and forgiveness
 - Manage energy: eat well, sleep well, live well
 - Find the humor in hearing loss

TECHNOLOGY

Plugging Into Better Hearing

"TECHNOLOGY IS MY FRIEND. MY DEVICES LET ME HEAR SOUNDS I HAD FORGOTTEN OR HAD NEVER HEARD BEFORE. THEY CONNECT ME TO OTHER PEOPLE AND THE WORLD."

Technology: Plugging Into Better Hearing

- Understand what technology can and cannot do
- Hearing aids often the tool of choice, but more is required
 - Branded accessories (i.e., remote mics, TV streamers)
 - OTC devices
 - Smartphone Apps: speech-to-text or amplifier
 - External accommodations: CART and hearing loops
- Our two Must-Have features:
 - Telecoils to be used with loop systems
 - Bluetooth streaming capability

COMMUNICATION GAME CHANGERS

Transforming the Conversation

"I WANT TO
COMMUNICATE BETTER,
AND IT TAKES MORE THAN
TECHNOLOGY TO DO THIS. I
MUST USE SOFTER SKILLS
TOO."

Communication Game Changers

- Don't hide, self-identify!
- Speechreading: visual cues
- Self-advocacy: knowing how to have your needs met
- No bluffing
- Communication best practices: both speaker and listener
- HEAR, our favorite tool, improves any listening situation

H.E.A.R.

IMPROVE ANY LISTENING SITUATION

H

HEARING CHECK

Can I understand what's being said?

If not, something needs to change.



E

EVALUATE

What will improve the situation?

More light?
Less noise?
Adjust speech?
Different seat?
Tech tools?



A

ARTICULATE

I will ask for what I need because my communication partners will also benefit.



R

REVISE & REMIND

Make adjustments if necessary. Remind people what I need.



Putting it All Together

- Using the 3-Legged stool in everyday life
- Applying “Hearing Hacks” to life events and activities
- Managing impacts of hearing loss on relationships
- Building support networks: family, friends, peers
- Creating a strong relationship with the HCP



“The best HCPs are *communication specialists* who create personalized solutions, including both technology and non-technical strategies.”

Shari Eberts and Gael Hannan

Clinician's Role in a Successful Journey

- Paint the Big Picture and set appropriate expectations
- Understand the client's lifestyle needs
- Respect your client's knowledge and emotions
- Take your practice beyond the hearing aid
- Share information resources
- Recommend peer support/mentoring, courses and conferences, and consumer organizations (HLAA)

Client's Role in a Successful Partnership

- Share our hearing loss journey and struggles
- Be honest about our difficult communication situations
- Respect your expertise as well as our own
- Be open to:
 - New attitudes and practicing MindShifts
 - Trying and embracing all types of technology
 - Developing game-changing communication habits



“Living *skillfully* with hearing loss is an ongoing process... and so, for each of us, the journey continues.”

Shari Eberts and Gael Hannan

Thank you! Questions?

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