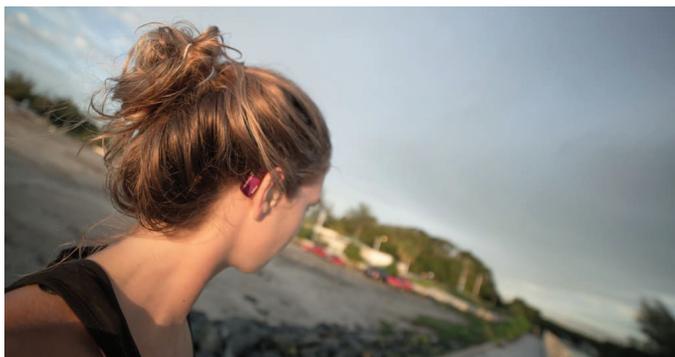


*Even though we have all left our teenage years far behind, I felt the messages the author is sharing are relevant to those of us with hearing loss, no matter our age. — Informer Editor*

## Deaf teens: 7 things I would tell my teenage self

By *jaimedelpizzo*, Aug. 27, 2018, posted in the the blog *Teens with Hearing Loss* at *hearinglikeme.com*



Now that I am in my 20's I look back at my teen years and wish I could tell myself a few life lessons to remember. Especially when my hearing loss brought me challenges I had to overcome.

Here are the top seven things I would go back and tell my teenage self.

### 1) Love and accept yourself

Cliché, I know. It really is the foundation of being the best version of yourself whether you have a hearing loss or not. Realize that you have been given a unique opportunity at this beautiful experience called life. Your world with a hearing loss is not any more or any less than anyone else's; it is just different and that is pretty beautiful. You might have one weakened sense but I bet you have some other kind of superpower to compensate for it!

### 2) Be kinder to people who just don't know

When I was younger, I used to get offended/ impatient/turned off if someone spoke to me obnoxiously loud, over-enunciated, or spoke to me like I was very dumb and not just hard of hearing. I used to let it eat me up because it made me feel very small or insufficient. Sometimes I would react with a bit of an attitude or feel vengeful in making them feel like they just made me feel. As I got older, I realize that these people just DON'T KNOW. They might be really great people who think they are helping us by doing these things.

If they have never experienced talking or getting to know someone who is hard of hearing or deaf, they will not know how to speak to you the way you want them too. Instead of letting my insecurities bring up walls, attitudes, impatience, sadness, anger or any of those emotions, I give them the benefit of the doubt. I now assume they are not aware of what might be best for us instead of assuming they are just ignorant and rude.

If this ever happens to you, try to kindly let them know you prefer something else. Inform them

*(continued on page 3)*



### September chapter meeting: CaptionCall phones

Jason Keller, CaptionCall  
Outreach Specialist and  
Jennifer Arevalo, Accounts

Manager will present the features of the latest model of CaptionCall Phone, how it is offered at NO cost (and no "catch") and how to upgrade to the latest model.

## CHAPTER CALENDAR

*All events are held at the at Weingart Center, 5220 Oliva Ave, Lakewood 90712 unless otherwise noted*

- Sep 13** Chapter meeting, 6:30: Jason Keller and Jennifer Arevalo of CaptionCall telephones
- Sep 15** HAT demo, 10:30-12:00
- Sep 26** Board Meeting, 12:00-2:00, Weingart craft room
- Oct 11** Chapter meeting, 6:30: Katie Wright, HLAA National Convention Review

Lip Reading classes are held Mondays 10:00–noon and Wednesdays 9:30–11:30 am



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

from **Gail Morrison**

### I should have taken my Pocketalker...

I recently had a meeting at my home where I placed my Pocketalker mic in the middle of the table and was able to hear a lot of the conversation. I was able to teach everyone there what I needed and how to use the mic successfully. Later, I tried the same thing (the mic in the middle of the table) at an event that was held in a restaurant. There, the Pocketalker picked up all conversation but, unfortunately, I got too much background noise, so it didn't work for me.

Now I was heading to another meeting in a restaurant (La Casita Rivera). Restaurants are very noisy places and I didn't realize that I should have been prepared to have everyone pass the mic around so I could hear. Once at the meeting, I realized my folly! It was not only noisy, but there was a lot of echo. The combination of background noise and echo spelled DISASTER for me and that's exactly what happened. I could hear people sitting next to me, but not the people at the other end of the table and, even then, one person sitting across from me spoke too softly and rapidly for me to hear. My Pocketalker would have solved all of these problems since I needed the sound directed into my ears rather than lost out in space somewhere.

Participants asked if I could hear: they are aware of my difficulties and are learning. I shook my head and said I was having a lot of difficulty with the echo. They told me that they would take notes so that I would know what was discussed but I wanted to be able to participate in the discussion. We were meeting to set up our programs for the ensuing year; I wanted to suggest that we have a speaker to speak on devices that help people to hear. Many of our members are elderly with hearing loss. The Diversity Statement for this organization states that it "... values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin,

DISABILITY, or class." I was not able to fully participate due to my disability.

I sent an email to the committee after the meeting to share the Diversity Statement and one member did respond that we will include an expert on hearing loss in a future panel on the topic of health. It pays to speak up!

I will not see you at the September 13th meeting as I'll be in Italy! See you all in October! **Ciao!**

---

**news from HAT** Hearing Assistive Technology  
by **Katie Wright**, HAT Chair

Did you know that our HAT Demos are the only such event in Southern California? There is no other way to easily try out hearing assistive devices before purchasing. We do NOT sell anything; we just show what is available for those with hearing loss.

The HAT Committee is eagerly anticipating our next HAT Demo on September 15. Ilga and I spent many hours this summer (mostly Ilga!) reorganizing the storage and display of our devices. The Demos are now in the big assembly room at the Weingart Senior Center, giving us more space and less background noise.

Our HAT Committee meeting will start at 9:30 a.m., before the Demo. Please consider joining us. We can always use the help. You don't have to know anything about the devices; there are plenty of other ways to help. We need someone to be at the Welcome Table at the Demos, and we can always use help setting up and putting things away. And ... if you want to learn more about hearing assistive technology devices, we will train you! If you are looking for a way to be more involved, please join us. At least come see what we're all about.

Our devices are divided into 4 categories: alerting, personal amplifiers for face-to-face communication, telephone, and TV listening assistance. Visitors fill out a simple form telling us what their needs are and then we do our best to steer them to devices that will help them hear and understand better. The Demo is open from 10:30 to noon on the 3rd Saturday of each month, September through May. Join us!

---

## Deaf teens: 7 things

*(continued from page 1)*

that the way they are interacting with you might not be ideal or make you feel very good. If they listen and change their ways, that's amazing! They just gained knowledge about this experience and will probably feel more comfortable talking to you. If they do not change their interaction methods, praise yourself for handling it in the best way possible and in a kind manner.

### **3) Your hearing loss is what you make of it**

In the world of 'disability,' and the world of sound we live in, a lack of hearing may seem like a negative thing. We are not perfect; our methods of communicating change, we may miss out on that wide spectrum of sound, we wear assistive devices in our ears, we use captions when we watch TV. These are things that may not conform with 'normal,' or the majority of society but that does NOT mean that having a hearing loss has to be 'disabling' in any way. A hearing loss is what you choose to make of it. If you make it a big deal, it will be a big deal. If you make it the worst thing that ever happened to you, it will be so. If you make it the BEST thing that ever happened to you, it will be so. If you accept it as who you are, it will be YOU. If you choose to let it stop you from living your dreams, that is your choice. If you use it to propel you towards your dreams, that is another choice.

You will project what you are reflecting inside. If you have a lot of animosity towards yourself because of your lack of hearing, people will see that radiating from you. If you are confident and love yourself because you are so perfectly imperfect, people will also see and feel this. We have one life to live and it is extremely short. It is too short for dwelling on your hearing loss or wishing you had something different. In the end, you cannot do anything about it except take it and run with it. Make the best out of everything you got and you WILL live a rich, full life.

### **4) Be grateful for those uncomfortable situations**

If I had a dollar for all of the uncomfortable situations I have been in due to my hearing loss, I could probably fly to Hawaii right now. But you know what? I wouldn't change any of it because I learned in every single situation. I learned how

to deal with those situations after many trial and errors. I learned something about myself in those experiences. I learned the limits or the limitless possibilities. I learned what reactions of mine worked or did not work. Most of all, those experiences made me stronger because my knowledge expanded, grew and matured.

These situations might be painful, difficult, discomfoting at times but remember that it is essential for you to grow and learn. Remember that you are not alone either, that everyone has these uncomfortable moments but how you choose to deal with them is up to you.

### **5) Don't waste your time or energy on detrimental people/things**

Those uncomfortable situations might be because of a certain person or thing. Maybe someone has made fun of your hearing loss in some way. Or maybe there is a meme on the internet that makes fun of HOH/deaf people. There are some unpleasant people out there and hopefully, you never interact with them but sometimes we are not so lucky. The biggest thing to remember is that these people are making you feel bad because they ultimately feel bad about themselves. Once again, very cliché but so true. These people have their own issues that they are projecting onto you for whatever reason.

If this happens, try to remember that you are wonderful the way you are. Try not to waste your time or energy thinking about the things this person said or did. It is normal to feel hurt by something someone might have said or done but don't dwell on it for too long. Remember that these people have their own insecurities, imperfections or issues that they are dealing with. They are not worth that fantastic energy of yours. Walk away from this person and go on about your life. Take offensive internet content (totally meaningless anyway) with a grain of salt (unless you can actually help the situation by taking action) and move on.

### **6) Allow people to help you but be independent**

It is important to realize when you need to ask for help and when you can take care of something on your own. Whether you are fiercely independent or pretty dependent, that happy medium can be

*(continued on page 4)*

---

## Deaf teens: 7 things

(continued from page 3)

very validating. For me, I probably err on the side of strong independence. I do not particularly like asking for help. Sometimes I choose pride over help or participation. I also sometimes choose to stay silent about my needs over voicing them. This usually means I will miss out on important information and ultimately I might not be making the most of a experience. I have been learning that speaking up and letting people know what I may need helps me avoid exclusion. This usually results in a richer experience!

Don't be afraid to ask for help when you really need it, like making a phone call, understanding crucial speech from someone unintelligible, asking someone to repeat themselves, taking extra safety measures when necessary. On the flip side, being too dependent on other people can be hindering your ability to be self sufficient. If you ask for help before trying or exploring other options, you might not be utilizing your fullest potential!

### 7) Reap the benefits

Since we are classified under the 'disabled' category of people in many situations, I try to use that to my advantage. For example, I can fly with my dog because she is my service animal. I can pretend to not hear someone if for any reason I wanted to avoid communication. People will most likely remember you more because you are so unique. Sometimes trains, ferries, places will have discounts for disabled people.

I can avoid jury duty because I most likely wouldn't be able to understand/hear the entire trial. I can sleep through my roommates' parties. I get to see the world in a way that most people won't experience. I had people seek me out in college for newspaper or class interviews regarding my hearing loss, which was very flattering! Take those advantages when you can!

#### **Jaime del pizzo**

*Jamie is a 25-year-old who loves to travel and do extreme sports, such as surfing and snowboarding. She has bi-lateral, severe-to-profound hearing loss, and wears Phonak Naída hearing aids. She's currently traveling the world and documenting her travels through her photography on Instagram @jaybirdphoto*

## HLAA Webinar:

### Auditory Brainstem Implant

September 19, 2018

5:00 pm - 6:00 pm Pacific Time

Ravi N. Samy, M.D. successfully implanted a cochlear implant (CI) in one ear and an auditory brainstem implant (ABI) in the other ear of a patient named Jessica, making her one of the few patients in the country to have both devices. The ABI was implanted with the Cochlear™ Nucleus® 7, the first made-for-iPhone sound processor approved by the Food and Drug Administration. With the combination of the ABI and the Nucleus 7 Sound Processor, Jessica can stream phone calls, video, music and entertainment.

Tune in to learn more about Jessica's unique case and as well as the CI/ABI program at the University of Cincinnati/Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center.

Captions will be available; webinar will be recorded for playback. To join, go to:

<https://hearingloss.zoom.us/j/524264929>

For audio, use your computer's speakers or your mobile device or phone:

(669) 900-6833 or (646) 558-8656

Webinar ID: 524 264 929



### Help your chapter whenever you shop at Ralphs

Register online at [www.ralphs.com/account/create](http://www.ralphs.com/account/create)  
or phone 1-800-443-4438 to call or renew.

When registering, reference number **XE889** for  
Hearing Loss Assn. LB/Lakewood Chapter.

*Thanks for your support!*



## If I Could Hear Perfectly for Just One Day



If I could hear perfectly  
For just one day,  
I'd ask everyone to whisper  
Facing away,  
Just to experience, for just one day  
The exquisite naturalness  
Of hearing perfectly.

If I could hear perfectly  
For just one **hour**,  
I'd ask someone to call me  
From another room  
So I could understand, just this once.  
The amazing feat  
Of hearing through walls.

If I could hear perfectly  
For just one **minute**,  
I'd ask the birds to sing  
All at once.  
Just to be able, for a glorious moment  
To tell them apart,  
Bird from bird.

While I can only hear perfectly  
For just one **moment**,  
From time to time  
Still – I throw thanks to the gods  
For the infinite gift and exquisite beauty  
of Assisted Hearing **all** of the time.

—Gael Hannan, August 21, 2018

## Hearing Assistive Technology HAT demonstration

**Saturday, September 15**  
**10:30–12:00**

Weingart Senior Center in Lakewood

Try out a large variety of devices that can improve your ability to hear better in difficult situations. These devices can be very helpful to people with or without hearing aids and are a lot less expensive.

*HAT does not sell hearing aids or hearing assistive devices. We DO provide information on where to purchase items we demonstrate.*

## Informer print subscriptions

Receive paper copies of our terrific newsletter, the Informer. A subscription for 12 monthly issues delivered by US mail is only \$10 per year.

## HLAA, Long Beach/Lakewood Chapter

### Officers

**President** Gail Morrison

**Vice-President** Joyce Bowlby

**Treasurer** Craig Bowlby

**Recording Secretary** Katie Wright

**Corresponding Secretary** Van VonBurg

### Committees

**Hearing Assistive Technology** Katie Wright

**Lip Reading** Linda DeGuire

**Looping** Ram Kakkar

**Membership** Flo McDavid (on leave)/Katie Wright

**Programs/Publicity** Gail Morrison

**Refreshments** Adela Praderas, Joyce Bowlby

**Ways and Means** *need volunteer!*

### Professional Advisor

Dr. David DeKriek, Au.D.

### Newsletter

**Editor** Katie Wright

**Layout** Ilga Dravnieks

### For more information about our chapter:

[hlaa-lb-lakewood.org](http://hlaa-lb-lakewood.org)

email: [info@hlaa-lb-lakewood.org](mailto:info@hlaa-lb-lakewood.org)

**Katie Wright** (323) 205-6794

[katie.hearingloss@gmail.com](mailto:katie.hearingloss@gmail.com)

## HLAA Hearing Loss Association of America

Join HLAA to receive *Hearing Loss Magazine* and to become part of the one organization that represents the interests of 48 million people with hearing loss in the U.S.

Send \$35 for individual or \$45 for family membership to:

Hearing Loss Association of America

7910 Woodman Avenue, Suite 1200

Bethesda, MD 20814

Or join online: [www.hearingloss.org/content/join](http://www.hearingloss.org/content/join)

For more information:

(301) 657-2248 or email [inquiry@hearingloss.org](mailto:inquiry@hearingloss.org).

Membership brochures are available at chapter meetings.

## CTAP California Telephone Access Program

For information, repair or exchange:

English Voice 1-800-806-1191

Spanish Voice 1-800-949-5650

[www.californiaphones.org/about-us](http://www.californiaphones.org/about-us)

**DISCLAIMER:** We believe the information contained in this publication has been compiled from reliable sources. However none of the contributors, sponsors, or anyone else connected with the Informer in any way whatsoever can be responsible for the appearance of any inaccurate or libelous information or for your use of the information contained in or linked from these pages. If you need specific advice, for example, for your particular hearing concerns, please seek a professional who is licensed or knowledgeable in that area. We further do not recommend or endorse any product or professional but supply such information as a public service.



## First Class

### Address Service Requested

Hearing Loss Association of America,  
Long Beach/Lakewood Chapter  
c/o Katie Wright  
7802 Kingbee Street  
Downey, CA 90242

### Upcoming Programs

- Sep 13** CaptionCall telephones
- Oct 11** Katie Wright, HLAA National Convention Review
- Nov 8** Dr. Gary Dorf, "How the Brain Works to Hear"
- Dec 13** Holiday party

---

HLAA Long Beach/Lakewood Chapter Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month, 6:30-8:00 pm, at the Weingart Center, 5220 Oliva Ave, Lakewood 90712

### **If you don't like meetings because you can't hear well, our meetings are different!**

- We have a high quality sound system
- You can borrow an assistive listening device
- If you have hearing aids with telecoils, we have a hearing induction loop
- If none of these help, we project captions on the wall for you to read.

We provide all these options free so you can understand what is said.



### **Hearing Loss Association of America**

**HLAA** opens the world of communication to people with hearing loss through information, education, support and advocacy.

The national support network includes the national office in Washington D.C., state organizations and local HLAA Chapters.

Join HLAA now at [www.hearingloss.org/content/join](http://www.hearingloss.org/content/join) to receive *Hearing Loss Magazine* and become part of the one organization that represents the interests of 48 million people with hearing loss in the United States.