



Client Success Story 2019

Canadian Hearing Services is a leader in our community on hearing health and is supported by Ministry of Health and United Way. Think of CHS as a library on hearing health.

Hearing Health, Hearing Loss...What is the Big Deal? After all, doesn't it mean the only thing a person needs to do is wear a hearing aid? Hearing affects communication and communication is the basis of all interaction. What is often overlooked is the overwhelming impact of hearing loss.

When communication is not working, we can see as a result, anxiety, withdrawal, loneliness, depression, and the list continues. What a waste of human talent!

If I am blind does that affect your eye sight? No.

If I am in a wheelchair does that affect your ability to walk? No.

If I am hard of hearing and saying pardon...pardon...does that affect your ability to communicate? Yes

Communication is a two way-street, thus affecting everyone engaged in the conversation.

People tend to take the passive role of not admitting to hearing loss and withdrawing when communication gets tough. Others do not know what to do to make communication work or even know that it is due to a lack of hearing and instead will wrongly label a diagnosis or characterize a person as not paying attention, non interested, forgetful and so on....

Let me tell you a story about a daughter and her 88-year-old father. Chester and Faye.

Chester was struggling with his hearing loss. He had recently gotten a new pair of hearing aids to help with changes in his hearing needs, but because he found his old pair more comfortable and easier to use, the new pair spent most of the time in his drawer. He was having communication difficulties with his wife and family and he found social gatherings, like church, difficult to hear in and stressful. As a result, he would often simply sit and observe rather than take part in the conversation. To complicate things, he also has a mild cognitive impairment.



Luckily, his daughter, Faye, learned about a workshop, Sound Advice on Hearing Aids hosted by Canadian Hearing Services that was offered at a local senior centre. She found the session very informative and discovered she could learn even more through a home visit and, ultimately, Sound Advice on Hearing Health.

Faye learned during the course that extra effort is taken by someone with hearing loss to communicate and that there's also a sense of shame when miscommunication occurs. She felt she was not sensitive enough to that and realized now that it's not just up to my Dad to ensure proper communication, but all of us need to be there to support him.

Since receiving services from Canadian Hearing Services, Chester says he has gained confidence in social situations and is able to advocate for himself. Even something as simple as asking someone to speak slower so he can hear better. Chester learned strategies on how to prepare himself for a social event. Faye noticed her father is much more engaged in conversations.

Hearing is something we tend to ignore and neglect, but it's very important.

Chester says he is in a better place now: he is less stressed about hearing and communication and more comfortable with his hearing aids.

Faye said "my Dad was very hesitant to receive the service initially, and after the first contact was happy. It made us realize that we're not alone, that there are other people who are struggling as well."

Healthy hearing means healthy aging. If we focus on hearing loss, we will come up with a loss. If we focus on communication, we can make it happen. So, let's focus on communication!



Chester and his daughter, Faye