

LOST MY HEARING . . .

Issues & Challenges for
Late Deafened Adults

Today I will

- Introduce late deafened adults
- Present some case studies
- Summarize issues and challenges for this group
- Describe a major resource for LDAs
- Answer your questions

LATE DEAFENED ADULTS

A very diverse group!

Who are late-deafened adults?

- Post-lingual deafness, after development of speech and language
- Often after adolescence – 13 years or older
 - Difficult to define this group; definitions inconsistent
 - Studies are old
 - Samples skewed
- Unable to understand speech without visual cues
- Identify with the hearing world
 - School
 - Social connections
 - Primary communication is speaking/listening

Causes of late-onset deafness

- Pre-existing condition or slowly progressive
- Heredity
- Illness
- Part of another condition, e.g. NF2
- Toxic substances, e.g. medications
- Noise induced, military veterans
- Head injury
- Idiopathic: no known cause

Communication

- Struggle to understand spoken language often with hearing instruments
- Sign language
 - Visual vs. spoken language
 - Takes a long time to be proficient
 - More separation from their native hearing culture
- Speechreading
 - At best about 33% comprehension
 - Some simply cannot speechread
- Rely on written materials & captions when available

Communication Accommodations

- Cochlear implants
- Hearing aids
- Listening systems
 - FM
 - Infrared
 - Electromagnetic loop systems
- Captioned phones
- Amplified phones
- Hearing dogs
- Pencil & paper
- Whatever works

What you might see at our socials

- People with hearing aids, cochlear implants, or nothing
- People signing, talking, speechreading, gesturing, offering pencil and paper or boogie boards. Maybe a laptop . . .
- Assistive listening devices
- Hearing dogs
- Karaoke party



UP CLOSE & PERSONAL

Some personal journeys into deafness

Jack



- Dealing with NF2 and health issues
- Constantly changing landscape of hearing loss
- Maintaining his job as technology manager for a global company
- Identifying & securing appropriate reasonable accommodations
- Functioning safely at home
- “Finding my way” as a deaf individual at home, at work, & socially
- Losing ability to enjoy music

Susan



- Dealing with changing hearing loss over time
- Could no longer enjoy music, theater, even quiet conversation
- Became more isolated, separated from hearing culture
- Felt less safe in her environment
- Benefits from CI technology, but still searching for improvements

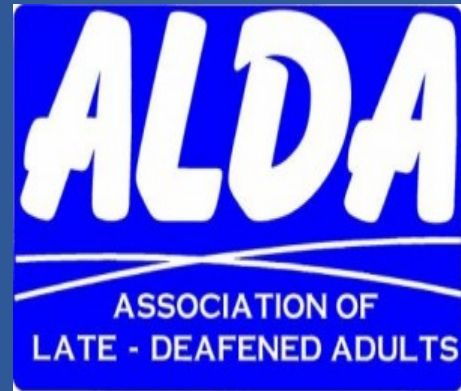
Heidi



- Lost established profession
- Scrambled to find new career to support herself & children
- Struggled with hearing community for understanding of hearing loss
- Telephone access; better technology
- Loss of cultural activities: music, theater, films
- Communication access in the community: loops, signage, alerts

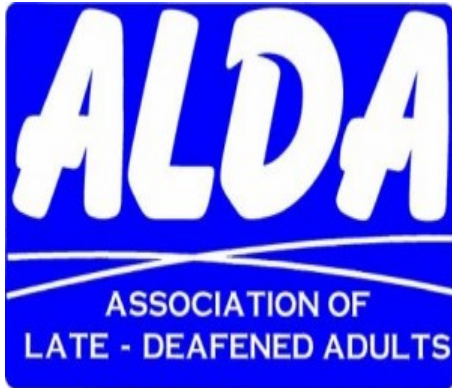
Are there some common themes here?

- Loss and isolation
- Employment barriers
- Personal safety
- Communication access in the community
- Educating others about hearing loss



ALDA

Mission Statement: To Support the Empowerment of Deafened People

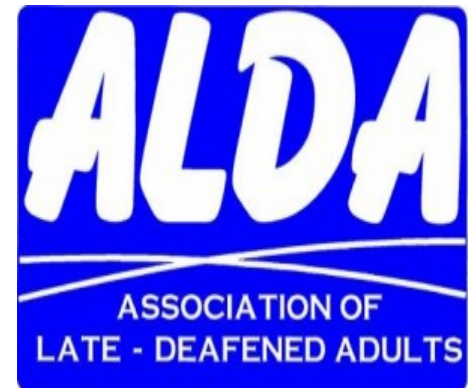


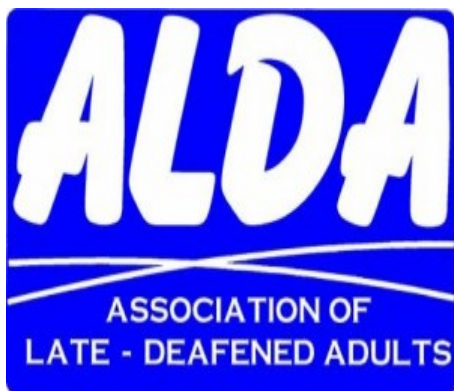
A Short History:

- 1987
 - Bill Graham meets Kathie Hering
 - Bill Graham has a party
 - Bill G writes a letter
- 1989 - First ALDAcon – in retrospect
- 1993 – Hearing Loss Link founded
- ALDA Crude – early captioning for support group

ALDA TODAY

- Communication Philosophy is “Whatever Works”
 - Hearing aids
 - Cochlear implants
 - ALDs
 - Speechreading
 - Sign language
 - Writing: paper & pencil, boogie boards
- No membership restrictions
 - Late deafened
 - Hard of hearing
 - Deaf
 - Oral deaf
 - Central auditory disorders





Benefits

- Annual Conference – 2016
Brookfield, WI
- Newsletters – national & local
- Chicago area social activities
- Special workshops in the
Chicago area

ALDA

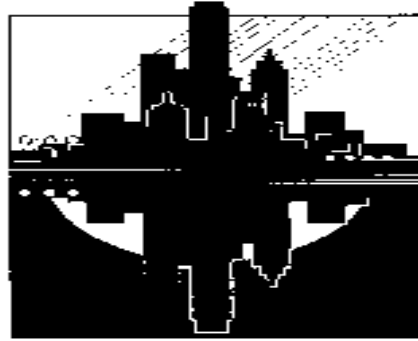
Association of
Late Deafened Adults

Lost: My Hearing
Found: A Family



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Where do we go from here?

Thank you for this opportunity to share our experience with all of you today.

ALDA-Chicago would appreciate the chance to collaborate with IDHHC on future initiatives.