# Hear It Is! Oregon



Autumn 2010 Issue 43

# **Meditation for Hearing Loss?**

## By Marc Zola

In past columns I've discussed a number of methods for managing the emotional impact of hearing loss. Among them have been Solution Focused Therapy -- training yourself to notice what is 'working' in your life instead of noticing what is 'not working'; Cognitive Behavioral Therapy -- which can be used to challenge and restructure your negative, skewed or distorted thoughts about your hearing loss (for instance by learning to change your internal dialogue from "this is terrible" to "this is disappointing" you can have a profound impact on how you feel); Narrative Therapy -- an approach that encourages you to 'restory' or 'externalize' you hearing loss to help you see that YOU are not 'a problem', hearing loss is a problem. These are all therapeutic models used by trained psychotherapists to help people manage depression, anxiety and a host of other mental health conditions. But they all have something in common. They all require a level of self-awareness that is generally not a part of mainstream, North American education. I'm not talking about self-consciousness, where we ruminate or otherwise engage with our ego-driven thoughts of self-doubt and worry. I'm talking about learning how to notice your thoughts, feelings and inner experiences without judging them.

One of the most effective ways of achieving this is through meditation practice. In fact, there is growing evidence that meditation helps relieve the symptoms of tinnitus and that it aids in the management of the emotional stress experienced by people with hearing loss. Meditation is quite different from relaxation therapy because the goal is not to relax. Rather, the goal of meditation is to learn to accept how things are. Our brains work hard to evaluate sounds in order to determine which are significant, or threatening, which ones need to be reevaluated and which ones can be ignored. Under stress, it is more likely to evaluate unheard or misheard sounds as threatening. By learning to accept that it's completely normal to have disturbing thoughts about hearing loss, the theory is that the brain actually learns, to experience hearing loss rather than feel threatened by it. It is a form of re-learning or reconditioning to accept hearing loss as normal.

In fact, this is the natural process that occurs when people with hearing loss learn to adjust to the loss. The point of this article is that perhaps practices such as consistent meditation (20 minutes per day) may accelerate this process. If you've never meditated before, here's a simple breathing exercise that anyone can use:

Find a comfortable chair (preferably a standard upright chair rather than a recliner that might induce sleep), sit upright (but not too rigid) with feet on the floor (and uncrossed). You may want to place a pillow behind your lower back if you need extra support. Place your hands either palms down on your thighs, or in a handshake on your lap. You may do the exercise with your eyes open or closed. If you prefer to keep them open, try to maintain a gaze or blank stare that is focused on a point directly across from you (such as a nail hole or smudge on a wall). Then begin to breathe full breaths where you breathe in through your nose and out through either your nose or mouth. As you do this, try to lengthen the breath -- breathing in until your lungs are full and breathing out until your lungs are empty. These breaths should be 'belly breaths' where your belly rises with each inhale and falls with each exhale (as opposed to shallow 'chest breathing' where your chest rises with inhale and falls with exhale). [continued on page 5]

# From My Lips to Your Ears

Editorial by Chuck Vlcek

Leone Miller poses a challenging question on page 10: why aren't telecoils and audio loops used more? She invites readers to respond to that question, and I'll take a stab at it here.

I was born with a hearing loss and wore a hearing aid most of my life until I "graduated" to cochlear implants. But no audiologist told my parents or me anything about telecoils. I was 25 when I had to have my hearing aid (sans telecoil) serviced and got a "loaner" that did have a telecoil. The "audiologist" (hearing aid dispenser) may have said "T" was for use with the telephone but didn't explain how it worked. When I tried it, I was totally confused, since I couldn't hear ambient sound and thought maybe it wasn't working, then could hear on the phone but didn't really know how to hold it.

Later I got a phone with a volume boost and with some people I could converse without using my hearing aid. That worked for awhile, but as my hearing got a bit worse I needed more.

I joined the Washington Area Group for the Hard of Hearing in 1975 when I was 30 and finally learned about telecoils, audio loops, and neckloops. Audio loops had already been used extensively in Europe for a few years.

I embraced the technology wholeheartedly, but most people are less tech savvy. Most people with hearing loss lose it later in life and have to deal with that as well – it can be a bit overwhelming. Phones and hearing aids are better, but more sophisticated with bells and whistles, and compatibility can be an issue. Perhaps there is something about teaching old dogs new tricks?

#### **Board Election Notice**

This year there will be four Board positions available with elections in March for those seats on the Board. If there is anyone out there with an interest in serving on the State Board please let us know. We meet formally each quarter (see schedule on page 4). There may also be committee meetings. We are a fun group with lots of work to do. Should you be interested or have questions, please contact Kathy Eckert-Mason, Chair of Nominating Committee for 2011 at k eckertmason@yahoo.com or kathryn.e.eckertmason@state.or.us

## **Hearing Loss Association of Oregon**

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Hear it is! will regularly print your hearing loss-related stories – personal experiences, coping strategies, and evaluations of technology are welcomed. Maximum word count is 500 words. Article contributions should be made to the editor at <a href="mailto:info@hearinglossOR.org">info@hearinglossOR.org</a>.

For advertising information and rates, contact Karen Swezey at info@hearinglossOR.org.

Deadline for Winter 2011 edition: Dec. 15, 2010.

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For questions or comments, contact the OTRS Account Manager: damara.g.paris@sprint.com



Convention 2011 is coming to the nation's capital!

Don't miss Convention 2011,

June 16-19 at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City

#### **Highlights of the HLAA Convention**

Reading the printed version? Just type in www.hearingloss.org and follow the links.

## **Registration Opening Soon!**

Registration for Convention 2011 and the **2nd International Hearing Loop Conference** will be opening soon. HLAA members who register for the Full Activity Package and/or the 2nd International Hearing Loop Conference by December 31 will be eligible to win a **Kindle 3G!** The complete registration form will be available here (on the website) very soon and in the November /December issue of Hearing Loss Magazine. Online registration will open at the end of October, but in the meantime, take a look at the **Schedule-at-a-Glance**.

#### **HLA-OR Quarterly Meeting Dates**

December 11, 2010 March 12, 2011 June 11, 2011 October 8, 2011

To confirm, contact President Bob Russell at <a href="mailto:bhrussell@verizon.net">bhrussell@verizon.net</a> or call him at (503) 614-9730. Meetings will be held at Albany General Hospital. Guests are invited to attend but should first contact President Bob Russell. Note: These are revised dates.

#### NOTICE TO AUDIOLOGISTS AND HEARING AID SPECIALISTS

Want to keep your clients happy? Want to make them feel special? Want to help them face the world? What better way than to provide a gift membership to the Hearing Loss Association of America? It's easy. Just go to <a href="http://www.hearingloss.org/">http://www.hearingloss.org/</a> and select Membership from the menu, then Gift Membership (or Benefits opposite Gift Membership) and follow instructions.

# **Complaints Pay Off for Viewers Who Depend on Captions**

A station from a small TV market in another state used a crawl at the bottom of its screen during a major snow storm last winter. The station's lawyer told the station that was sufficient to meet the FCC requirements for emergency information given during a television broadcast.

Viewers complained to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The FCC told the station live captions were the appropriate way to provide information to viewers during emergency broadcasts. The station will now use live captioning for all its emergency broadcasts, and is even adding live captioning to one news show each night.

In early September, the station aired a preseason NFL football game that was being captioned. Somehow the station inadvertently stripped out the captions in the process of taking the broadcast from the satellite. Once the station realized they were stripping the captions, they pulled the football game from the air and replaced it with a program with captions. It is obvious this station now gets it when it comes to captioning.

Making a complaint about captioning to the FCC has never been easier. All you need to do is go to <a href="https://www.FCC.gov">www.FCC.gov</a>, go to the Closed Captioning page, and scroll to the bottom of the page. Once you find "File a Complaint," you click and begin the complaint process. You will need to know the call letters of the station and what channel it is, the station's address, and the date, time, and name of the program about which you are complaining. Here is the website: <a href="http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/dro/caption.html">http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/dro/caption.html</a>

Each station must display contact information for making a complaint directly to the station on its website. Go to the "contact us" link on the station's website to find this information. You no longer have to contact the station first to resolve a captioning issue before contacting the FCC. But you can if you choose to. That's a nice change in the process. Your voice matters to the FCC.

## **Meditation for Hearing Loss?** (from page 1)

As you breathe focus your attention on the process of breathing, and visualize the path of air through your nostrils, down your wind pipe into your lungs and then back out. Feel the temperature of the breath; notice smells and the whole experience. As you try to increase your focus on the breath you are likely to be 'interrupted' by intrusive thoughts like, "This is silly" or, "I have to do my taxes" or "I have an itch". Rather than fight with or attempt to stop these thoughts, try to accept them as a normal part of the process. Understand that these intrusive thoughts are likely to leave your mind as quickly as they entered your mind (paradoxically, when you stop trying to make them stop). This is a simple concept but takes time to master. It is important to be kind to yourself and even accept any frustration that comes up as a normal part of the process. The idea here is that if you meditate consistently, the practice of self-acceptance will eventually generalize to your thoughts and experience about hearing loss. While you can't cure hearing loss, you can lessen its impact by learning to judge it (and yourself) less harshly.

Marc Zola, MEd, LMFT & LPC is a Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist and Licensed Professional Counselor in private practice in Eugene Oregon. Much of Marc's practice is dedicated to helping clients manage the emotional impact of hearing loss. Marc may be reached via email at <a href="marc@eugenetherapy.com">marc@eugenetherapy.com</a>.

This is his last article. He is still available to answer your questions, which will be published here with your consent.

# Need Help Paying Your Monthly Phone Bill? OTAP

Oregon Telephone Assistance Program (OTAP) may provide a reduction in the monthly telephone bill for Oregonians who receive qualifying benefits.

E-MAIL: puc.otap@state.or.us



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(800) 648-3458 - TTY

(877) 567-1977 - Fax

(971) 239-5845 - Videophone

Monday - Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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Telecommunication Devices Access Program (TDAP) loans adaptive telephone equipment at no cost and with no income restrictions to eligible Oregonians who are hearing, cognitive, vision, speech or mobility impaired.

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# Within Earshot: News You Need to Know

#### Survivor's Manual Revision

Hearing loss is traumatic and affects not only the person with the loss but their family and friends. It affects jobs, relationships, social life, and our physical and mental health. Our booklet "Facing the Challenge: A Survivor's Guide for Hard of Hearing People" has helped thousands of people all over Oregon and we are about to print a new improved edition. They are full of helpful information and we've added some new sections to make them even better!

Would you help us by your donation? HLA Oregon is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization so your donation is tax deductible. And every penny of your contribution will be used for outreach and support to people with hearing loss.

To help us pay for this new printing of the Survivor's Manual, we are also looking for sponsors who'd like to reach out to hard of hearing people by placing an ad in this popular and educational book. We've had wonderful comments from consumers and professionals from all over Oregon about previous issues, and this new edition will be better than ever! We plan to print 20,000 books and need your support. Please contact Karen Swezey (kswezey@efn.org) by December 10th for information about rates for sponsoring.

Distributing Survivor's Manuals in your office is a great way to help your patients or clients by linking them to additional education and resources. The cost is only \$4 each or \$35 for 20 books. This includes postage and handling. To place your order, send your check to the address above and we'll get your copies to you right off the press. Questions? Contact Karen Swezey (kswezey@efn.org or call 541.689.7242)

#### Realtime Advocacy and the Consumer

Hearing Loss Association of Oregon formed a Realtime Advocacy Committee in 2009, and part of its task is to educate Oregonians about the existence of realtime captioning and its availability as an access tool under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The Committee is also compiling a list of court reporters/CART reporters available to provide realtime captioning to consumers. This list will reside on HLA-Oregon's website: www.hearinglossOR.org.

If you have an interest in assisting Oregon's hard-of-hearing, late-deafened or deaf community (on paid or unpaid basis), please request a data sheet from Mary Fagan (fagan56@hotmail.com) and return it to info@hearinglossOR.org so you can be added to our data base of available Captioners. Thank you!

### What's the real price of hearing aids?

"Did your hearing aids cost much?" inquired a friend."Well," said the hearing aid user as he drew a deep breath, "They cost me three lost friendships that I know of, a strained relationship with my wife, two grandchildren who think I don't love them, early retirement without the gold watch and a going away party, eons of boredom at church and lost interest in bingo, dances, and get-togethers."

After a reflective pause, he added, "Sure I invested some money to get these hearing aids but it doesn't compare to what I spent BEFORE I got them."

## **Chapter Capers**

<u>Lane County chapter:</u> This chapter is having a potluck Christmas party in December.

<u>Douglas County chapter</u>: The chapter welcomed a couple from Riddle. Dolores had a gradual hearing loss in one ear followed by a sudden loss in her other ear, and just got a cochlear implant. A Christmas potluck is planned for the December meeting. The chapter is investigating the possibility of changing its meeting time to the middle of the day in an effort to improve attendance and attract new members.

<u>Salem Chapter:</u> Twenty people attended its October meeting for the CapTel 800i demo by Cindy Campbell. In November they will have the Telecommunication Devices Access Program (TDAP) update, and a Christmas potluck in December. They are spreading the word by flyers and post card reminders.

HLA-Oregon: The Walk4Hearing scheduled for September 17, 2011 at the World Trade Center in Portland. Most of the real planning will begin in January, but members are encouraged to spread the word now and come up with creative ideas for team names and sponsorships. Contact Karen Swezev at info@hearinglossOR.org for sponsorship information. We already have an alliance with the Oregon Court Reporter Association. The local Lions clubs in the Portland metro area and the Oregon Lions Sight and Hearing Foundation will also help with the walk.

What is your chapter doing? Send your story to the editor at cvlcek@centurytel.net.

See pages 14-15 for contact information for these chapters and events.

#### **CI Corner**

#### **New CI Audiologist to Serve Eugene**

We welcome Amy Shuey, the new Cochlear Implant Audiologist to Eugene. Dr. Shuev comes to Eugene from Maryland and has been working at the Eugene Hearing & Speech Center since June 2010. She recently received Au.D. from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN in May 2010, where her primary focus was on pediatrics and cochlear implants. Amy had the opportunity to complete her year long externship at the largest cochlear implant center in the United States, The Listening Center at Johns Hopkins University, and has extensive experience with all three device manufacturers. Amy will serve as the primary pediatric and cochlear implant audiologist at the Eugene Hearing & Speech Center.

Amy says, "I was drawn to audiology as a way to help others, as I have seen people in my own life benefit from the caring and expertise of hearing professionals.

Welcome Amy!

### **Double Your Giving**

The Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) is the world's largest and most successful annual workplace charity campaign. The season runs from September 1 to December 15. Pledges made by federal civilian, postal, and military donors during the campaign season support eligible non-profit organizations that provide health and human service benefits throughout the world. If you or people you know work for the Federal government, the number to designate for HLAA is 11376.

#### Here It Is! Oregon Autumn 2010 Newsletter

#### Letter to the editor:

"The American Academy of Audiology, on behalf of hearing professionals, and the Hearing Loss Association of America on behalf of people with hearing loss announce a collaborative public education campaign 'Get in the Hearing Loop.' "

It seems that more and more often, I talk to people about getting their hearing checked and about the programs to be sure to get on their aids. I ALWAYS impress on them to get a directional mike and a telecoil (which I explain to them thoroughly) I also urge them to get a behind-the-ear model because it's most adaptable (such as being able to remove the aid and get a loaner when needed) and that it can be programmed. And of course, I tell them to talk to their dispenser about all this.

When I see those people again I ask, "Did you get a directional mike? Or did you get a t-coil?" Their answer often is "Oh I forgot." Or "My audiologist said I didn't need one."

I happen to attend a church which has a loop system. I would be totally lost without the use of it and the telecoil in my aid. **Why** isn't this being stressed to people? As more and more venues (such as sports arenas, taxis and airports), now have loop systems or other Assistive Listening Devices (ALD's) available why aren't audiologists encouraging people to have a t-coil and teaching them how to use it for better hearing on the phone and with ALD's?

#### Being in the Loop has a double meaning.

- 1. Having the ability to use a loop or other assistive hearing system because of a t-coil in their hearing aid or cochlear implant;
- 2. Being able to communicate with others which is SO important for each of us.

Anyone have an answer for me?

Leone Miller HLA of Lane County Eugene Oregon

# Important Notice about our Website and Electronic Newsletter

Those who have opted to read the electronic version rather than have a printed copy mailed to them will receive an e-mail notifying them that a new issue has been posted on the HLA-OR website, along with a link to the specific web page, http://www.hearinglossor.org/news.htm . Those who have not yet made the change are encouraged to do so by e-mailing your request to <a href="info@hearinglossOR.org">info@hearinglossOR.org</a>

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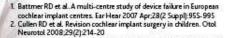
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Battmer RD et al. A review of device failure in more than 23 years of circical experience of a cochlear implant program with more than 3,400 implantees. Otol Neurotol 2009 Jun;30(4):455-63



"Commitment isn't something that happens to us. It's something that happens because of us, because of a decision we make. When we commit to a person, a task, and to God, we pledge to show up and do our part, no matter what. How will you demonstrate commitment today?" - Rev. Mary Manin Morrissey

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Dr. Mehr has over 27 years experience working with individuals with hearing loss. He has served on the Oregon Speech and Hearing Association and Oregon Academy of Audiology Boards and as chairman of the Oregon Board of Examiners for Speech Pathology and Audiology.

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# **Thanks for Your Support!**

During these difficult economic times, we are more grateful than ever for your commitment to support Hearing Loss Association of Oregon. With your help, we can continue to reach out and educate Oregonians about hearing loss and the many ways to cope with it. *Knowledge is power.* We love sharing helpful information.

(*Please note: This is different and separate from any local chapter fee you may pay.*) Using the form on the back of the newsletter, please mail your tax-deductible gift to:

HLA-Oregon PO Box 22501 Eugene, OR 97402

We thank the following folks who have sent donations since the last issue:

4 Anonymous Jo D'Antonio Jane Anderson Joni Rio

Vivian Olheiser Ann Cushman Frank & Dorothy Elias



The Bionic Ear Association (BEA), by Advanced Bionics, is a FREE support network for cochlear implant recipients, candidates and their families. Our mission is to improve the quality of life of those impacted by hearing loss by providing valuable information and services related to cochlear implants, including:

- Connecting you with a mentor, a cochlear implant recipient, who helps you navigate the CI process
- Welcoming you to the practice listening activities and exercises in The Listening Room
- Providing technical and personalized support throughout your hearing journey
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Get Connected. Contact the BEA Today. Call 866.844.HEAR (4327) or visit us online at www.BionicEar.com.

# **HLAA Happenings**

Almost all of this year's 18 Walk4Hearing events have met or exceeded their goals. We have learned that entertainment is an important component of the walks as there are so many families with children. Communication access for large crowds has been difficult, but NYC found a solution by sending CART to individual walkers with Blackberrys and iPhones. HLAA is now exploring offering this feature at every walk next year, as an addition to the other resources that the national office provides to support the local walks.

The Better Hearing Institute has granted HLAA funds for the reproduction and dissemination of the Hearing Loss 101 series of seven videos. The DVDs will be disseminated to hearing health professionals, HLAA chapters, AARP chapters, and other groups that can show the DVDs in their waiting rooms, at programs and health fairs. The purpose of the DVD is to encourage people who have been diagnosed with hearing loss or think they may have a hearing loss to seek help. Currently 80% of the people who could benefit from hearing aids do not get them.

Membership in HLAA is \$20 -- student, \$35 -- individual, \$45 -- couple/family, \$50 -- professional.

Membership includes the award-winning bi-monthly magazine, Hearing Loss. Write to HLAA, 7910 Woodmont Ave., Ste. 1200, Bethesda, MD 20814; 301-657-2248 (Voice); 301-657-224 (TTY); 301-913-9413 (Fax) or www.hearingloss.org.

# Chapters in Oregon

Local chapter meetings are open to all. Family, friends, and professionals are encouraged to attend and become involved. Through chapter meetings and newsletters you'll find:

- Insights into effectively living with hearing loss
- Support/Referrals/Information
- Information about the latest technology
- Coping strategies & tips
- An opportunity to make a difference
- Diminished feelings of isolation and aloneness
- Opportunities to share concerns and hear from others



We believe in education - for those who hear well and those who cannot - so that both may understand the causes, challenges and possible remedies for hearing loss. At our meetings, you'll find a comfortable place where hearing loss is accepted and not a problem. Many people report that being a part of a Hearing Loss Assoc. group has made a major difference in their lives. Your participation benefits not only you, but others who attend as well. Following is a list of the current chapters and contact people in Oregon.

Hearing Loss Association of Central Oregon (HLACO) meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month (except August) – 6:00PM at the St. Charles Medical Center, 2500 NE Neff Road, Bend, in Conference Room A (by the front entrance).

Contact: Dave Merryfield 1001 SE 15<sup>th</sup> Street

Bend, OR 97702

e-mail: Seacook286@yahoo.com

(541) 848-2806

# No internet access?

Use a computer at school or a library, or ask a friend or relative to download and print information for you.

## Denial is for crocodiles!

Hearing Loss Assoc. of Lane County meets 2nd Thursday each month - 7 PM at the Hilyard Community Center, 2580 Hilyard Street - Eugene.

Contacts: Andrea Cabral e-mail: angora@comcast.net

(541) 345-9432 voice

PO Box 22501 OR Clark Anderson Eugene, OR 97402 e-mail:clarkoa@msn.com Group of Salem Hearing Loss Assoc. meets the 2nd Wednesday each month (except July and August) - 6:30 PM at the Salem Rehabilitation Hospital – Room 2A (2<sup>nd</sup> floor) 2561 Center St. NE

Contact: Donald Ladd

e-mail: SHHHSalem@aol.com

(503) 394-3863

38427 Shelburn Dr. Scio, OR 97374

Hearing Loss Assoc. of Portland & Clackamas County meets the 3rd Tuesday each month (except July and August) - 7 PM at the Northrup Building in the 1<sup>st</sup> floor conference room - 2282 NW Northrup Street, Portland

Contact: Mark Foster

e-mail: <a href="mailto:hlaportland@gmail.com">hlaportland@gmail.com</a> (503) 413-7348 - voice or TTY

PO Box 2112 Portland, OR 97208

www.hearinglossor.org/portland/

Hearing Loss Assoc. of Douglas County meets the 2nd Monday each month - 7 PM at the Mercy Hospital Community Education Room - 2459 Stewart Parkway -Roseburg (between Parkway Pharmacy & OfficeMax)

Contact: Chuck Vlcek OR Barb Stoner e-mail: cvlcek@centurytel.net (541) 496-0060

(541) 496-4541 P.O. Box 175

Idleyld Park OR 97447

Hearing Loss Assoc. of Linn and Benton Counties meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month (except July and August) – 6:30 PM at the Senior Center – 65 "B" Academy Square – Lebanon

Contact: Bob Williams

e-mail: robertiw@comcast.net

541) 258-5818

2020 South 12<sup>th</sup> #111 Lebanon, OR 97355

Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.

Barack Obama

If you are interested in starting a chapter in your area, contact:

Cathy Sanders

Oregon Chapter Coordinator e-mail: <a href="mailto:catsindallas@q.com">catsindallas@q.com</a> (503) 881-1642 (cell) or (503) 623-4662 (home) 1131 SW Marietta Lane

Dallas, OR 97338

or

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