



Canadian Hard of Hearing Association North Shore Branch

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September and December by CHHA – North Shore Branch,
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Editor: Hugh Hetherington Issue 96 March 2017

Mountain Ear

Pres Mez

by Mike Hocevar

Greetings to everyone; hopefully Spring will bring a marked improvement from the wicked weather which unfortunately caused us to postpone our December directors meeting until the New Year. The directors are pleased to share, that due to a generous bequest that isn't finalized yet that we'll not be applying to the local municipalities for grants to assist our branch operation this year. We do, however, want to express our appreciation to the City of North Vancouver, the District of North Vancouver and the District of West Vancouver for their past generous support to our branch. More details will be reported at this year's Annual General Meeting.

Now I want to talk about something that may or may not have happened to you. That is, being laughed at over a personal disability. How many of us have been in situations where we might have had a little mishap of the sort that another person witnessing might think we were clumsy or stupid by not paying attention. I am not thinking about the childhood teasing or harassment if our disabilities date back that far. I am thinking of it in the perspective of our current times.

People with hearing loss have an invisible disability, most often even when one wears hearing aids. And therefore, it may not be readily apparent to others in some instances. And, there are those of us with some vision issues, as well and wear glasses, or perhaps

have a more pronounced sighted situation, such as myself. My vision is failing, and while I can see ahead, the peripheral field of vision is extremely limited.

I want to mention a recent example that happened while I was on vacation in Mexico. The resort was kept very clean and staff were constantly sweeping

April Meeting

Monday, April 24, 2017

7:00 pm at the Summerhill

135 West 15th Street,

North Vancouver

Guest Speaker

Kenneth Jones

**Former MLA and Secretary of the
Association of Former MLAs of BC
Acting President B.C. Tinnitus Association**

**Facilitator: Greater Vancouver Tinnitus
Self Help Group**

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the floors and mopping. Thus, a lot of two-foot high “caution-wet floor” plastic cones were placed about. With my peripheral vision limitations, I knocked these a couple times in areas where there was a high contrast due to bright sunlight streaming through the halls and creating shadows. On one of these occasions, a (younger) staff member standing nearby laughed out spontaneously and loudly. I had my identification cane signaling that I have a vision issue. My sister immediately dressed down this person and demanded his name and suggested he was in great need of showing respect for people. This fellow was not indicative of the overall demeanor of the rest of the hotel staff; they were polite and accommodating and readily offered aid unsolicited.

The point I am making here is that in spite of the ignorance that some people might have about what we experience with our disability on a day-to-day basis, sometimes it might just be immaturity or even the attitude we might have had when we were children, like about the attitude of never growing old. In the case of commercial and government enterprises we can agree that in our recent lifetimes we have seen lots of progressive recognition that people with disabilities shall be accommodated with the idea of inclusion.

But the incident I mentioned here also highlights the usefulness of sensitivity training for staff. I recall when I worked for the North Vancouver Recreation Commission that I was often assigned brand new workmates. Not only did I orientate them to our work routines and a few words about our union, but I also emphasized things like professional conduct. This entailed no swearing, dirty jokes, sexist or racist comments, leering at patrons or other behaviours that a member of the public might find cause to report. After all, they are paying our wages and deserve our respect and consideration.

But I can’t recall talking about respecting our patrons with disabilities, other than explaining my own hearing and vision issues for them to be aware of in our own personal interactions. My spiel was just an informal initiative on my part with the new staff. Therefore, this was a lack of recognition on my part about not encouraging respect for any patrons with disabilities—not that I expected any of my workmates to laugh at such.

This illustrates the usefulness of Human Resources departments in all workplaces to include such things as sensitivity training in their formal orientation of new staff. This would prevent embarrassing, and in fact, demeaning incidents such as I experienced when I stubbed the “caution” pylon in the hotel lobby. This is yet another education measure for the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association to promote with the public.

While some various pieces of legislation get enacted from time to time in the realm of disabilities, that alone doesn’t solve all the issues or problems. But what it does, it serves as an adjunct to our Charter Rights as citizens to be able to be treated equally, and to set such a tone. The way we view others nowadays is not just because of personal maturity and age, but also due to activism and fostering the attitude of inclusion that has come about in recent years for the issues of disabilities. Human nature is greatly geared to assisting others in various needs, but the needs have to be identified.

CHHA-BC provincial chapter just formally joined a movement to lobby the BC government to enact a British Columbians with Disabilities Act similar to what currently exists in Ontario. The two opening paragraphs contained in the preamble of the act state:

“The people of Ontario support the right of persons of all ages with disabilities to enjoy equal opportunity and to participate fully in the life of the province.”

“Ontarians with disabilities experience barriers to participating in the mainstream of Ontario society. The number of people with disabilities is expected to increase as the population ages, since the incidence of disability increases with aging.”

This initiative CHHA-BC is entering into is with a new organization called Barrier Free BC (website: barrierfreebc.org). With the upcoming provincial election in May, it’s a great time to raise the profile of the need for such legislation, and of our hard of hearing issues, specifically like the high cost of hearing aids, for building codes to be reflective of our needs and more.

Any chance you get to bring these ideas up, we encourage you to do so.

Hearing versus Listening

By Susan Gelinaz

I have always thought of myself as a good listener. But, as I struggle with my hearing loss, I have become very aware of the difference between listening and hearing. When I “listen” to people I take in their tone of voice, their body language, how their hands move, how they sit, their facial expressions, the context of the conversation, and lots of minute things that we all pick up unconsciously about other people, and their words.

I still can easily process all the first stuff, but sometimes I just don’t hear the words or the words don’t make sense in terms of what I am “listening to.” I know I get that confused or blank look on my face. In the past, when I didn’t think of myself as a person with a hearing loss, I thought nothing of asking people to repeat themselves. Now I find myself reluctant to do so and I know I am missing info to make me an effective communicator.

I have heard a number of people talk about being accused of ignoring their partners, of “not listening.” How do we decide if it’s a question of not listening or not hearing (or whether we should call Dr. Phil)? I think we each have to take responsibility whether we are the speaker or the listener. Having regular hearing tests, upgrading our aids and assistive devices are musts for everyone. It is also a must to adopt a kind of communication “protocol.” Both people should be in the same room. Both people should be looking at each other when speaking and listening. Both people should keep their hands away from their mouths when speaking. No one should be chewing gum, etc., when speaking or listening. The number of distracting noises, like TV or music in the background, other conversations around, water running, etc. should be minimized. These all seem like common courtesy things that all people should know and do, regardless of hearing level. But how many people actually do those things? That’s where the individual responsibility comes in.

As speakers we have a responsibility:

- (1) to get the attention of the person we are speaking to,
- (2) to speak clearly,

- (3) to be patient if we have to repeat or rephrase our words,
- (4) to listen to the response, and
- (5) to hear the response.

As listeners we have a responsibility:

- (1) to focus on the person speaking,
- (2) to let the speaker know we have not understood the words,
- (3) to ask for rephrasing as soon as we don’t hear or understand the speaker,
- (4) to be patient when the person doesn’t rephrase in a helpful manner, and
- (5) to make use of assisting tools.

Even in our world with email, twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, etc., we should be able to just talk to each other.

Gotta Love That iPhone (Part 8)

By Hugh Hetherington

In this article I want to talk about Apps that are categorized in the Apple App Store as tinnitus Apps. There are quite a number of them and basically they are sound generators. The intent of the various developers is to generate sounds of various natures that you can listen to in order to mask or remove your attention from your tinnitus. The sounds they provide range from music, sounds of nature, white noise, and pink noise.

The music can be just random musical sounds played on various instruments or your own music selected from your music library. White noise is a type of noise produced by combining sounds of all different frequencies together. It’s called “white” noise because similarly to light, “white light” is a combination of all of the visible colours in the rainbow. White noise generators are often used to mask other disturbing background sounds. It is used in office environments to mask sounds like chatting coworkers, air conditioners, office machines, etc. It can help to induce sleep by taking your attention away from outside noises like traffic, snoring, etc. White noise is also purported to be very good for masking tinnitus. Pink noise is a little bit different in that every octave in the combination carries the same power. It is called “pink” noise because light combined with a similar power spectrum would appear pink. Apparently, pink noise helps to regulate your brain waves and helps to induce a more restful sleep.

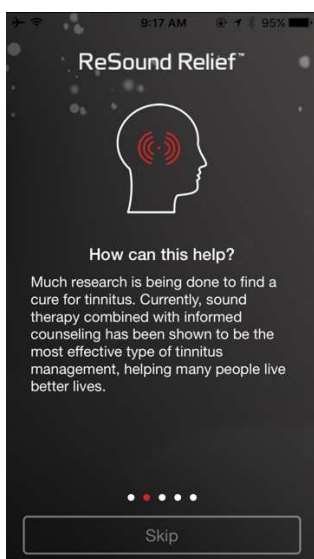
The sounds of nature include sounds like falling rain, waves on the seashore, birds, crickets, crackling fire, chimes, wind, and many others. Most of the Apps allow you to select and play the sounds in various combinations through headphones or your hearing aid either directly or via a streamer. As well as using the Apps for masking tinnitus, they can also be used to induce sleep, relax, or meditate. You can create for yourself such scenarios as walking through a tropical rainforest, lounging on the beach, relaxing in front of an open campfire or fireplace, or indeed any other scene that you would care to imagine.

As mentioned above, there are many of these sound-generating Apps available in the Apple App store. I am sure there are many available for Android devices, as well. The major hearing aid manufacturers put out some of the best ones that I have investigated. They are available by ReSound, Phonak, Oticon, and Starkey. I should also point out that you don't have to have the particular brand of hearing aids to use any of these Apps. They are quite universal and mainly use Bluetooth. Apart from those produced by the various hearing aid manufactures there are many others. One that I particularly like is called "myNoise." It allows you to blend up to 10 different sounds to create your own soundscape.

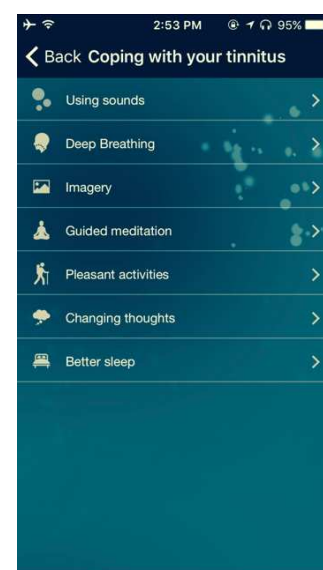
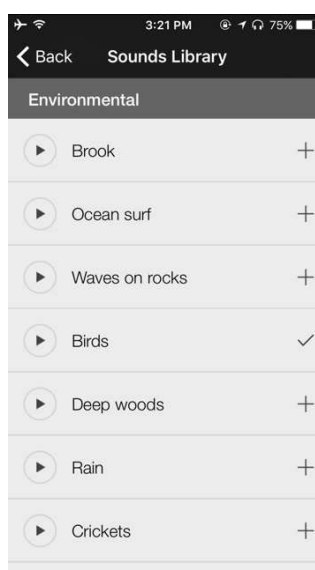
The manufacturer branded Apps can also include other features, such as, guided meditations, information about coping with tinnitus, helpful suggestions and tips, etc.

Rather than describe any individual App in detail I will show some highlights of the ones that I have mentioned and some of the differences.

ReSound "Relief"

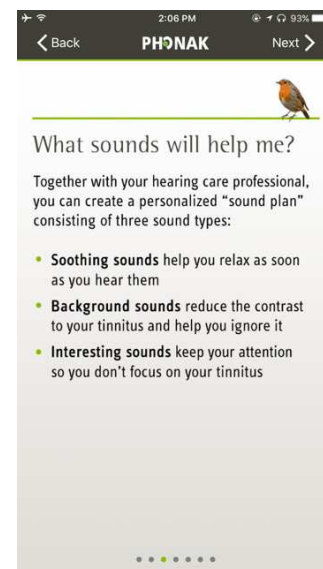


This App has a number of features. You can select a particular sound from a bubble on the screen. You then have the option of mixing 4 other sounds and adjusting their levels to create a personal soundscape. The next screen shows how I have selected "Pure Arctic Wind" and combined 2 other sounds with it. You can also set the screen colour at the bottom of the screen.



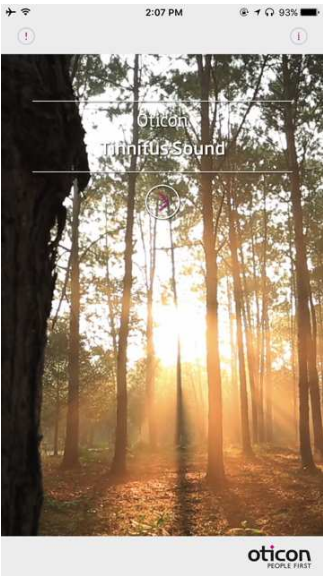
Phonak "Tinnitus Balance"

The Phonak App has a selection of default sounds or you can select music from your music library.

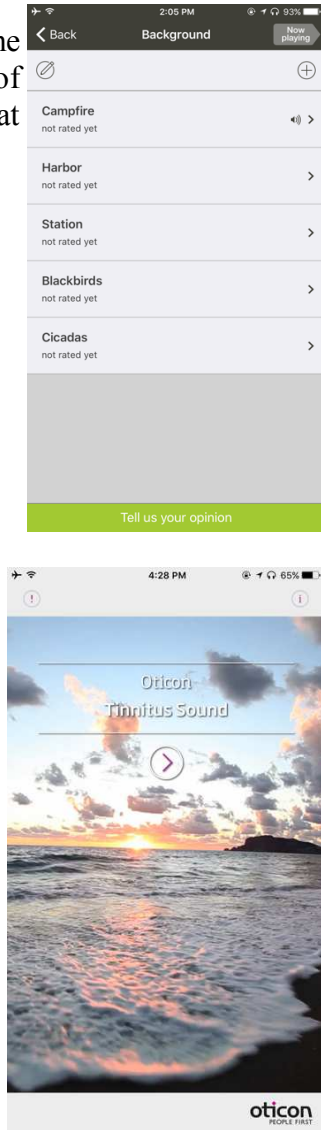


This screen to the right on the Phonak App shows some of the categories of sounds that can be selected.

Oticon “Tinnitus Sound”



The Oticon “Relief “ App has sounds that include beach, birds, campfire, creek, forest, rain, wind, as well as White and Pink sound. You can also import music from your library to mix with the above sounds. It also narrates some breathing and muscle relaxation exercises.



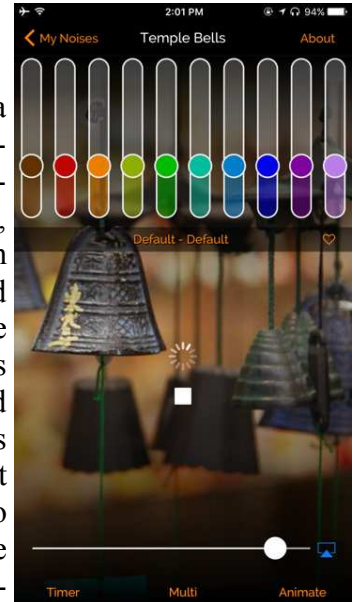
Starkey “Relax”



The Starkey App uses a simple interface. The sounds are selected from pictures like this one of a stream. It can then be adjusted on another screen between loud and soft and treble and bass. To do this you move a circle around a screen up or down to increase the volume, or from left to right to adjust the treble and bass. It also contains a video tutorial to show how the various action are accomplished.

“myNoise” App

The myNoise App has a wide range of sound situations which include scenarios like Spring Walk, Neural Symphony, Rain Noise, Temple Bells and White Noise. There are dozens of other scenarios that can be downloaded for \$1.39 each. The sliders shown in the screen shot allow you to adjust up to 10 sounds to add to the scene. It also features adjustable noise blocking for ambient sounds.



“Take Control of Your Tinnitus— Here’s How” Book Release

by Neil Bauman, Ph.D.

April 4, 2016

If your tinnitus is driving you “up the wall” or “around the bend”, the thought likely uppermost in your mind is, “Hurry up and develop a “magic” pill so I can get rid of this infernal racket in my head before I go crazy.”

Unfortunately, the bad news is that there probably never will be such a magic pill because of the nebulous nature of tinnitus. But don’t be discouraged, I have some good news for you.

The good news is that instead of waiting for your doctor to do something to you to get rid of your tinnitus, you can start to take control of your tinnitus yourself—right now. You see, there are many things you can do to help bring your tinnitus under your control.

My new, much-expanded and revised book, “Take Control of Your Tinnitus—Here’s How” is packed with the same great kinds of information that made its predecessor, the venerable “When Your Ears Ring—Cope with Your Tinnitus—Here’s How” (6th edition), so valuable.

The new dynamic title reflects the fact that dealing with tinnitus is not a passive procedure. Rather, you need to be actively involved in taking control of

your tinnitus. This is what brings the most success.

I've divided this book into 4 logical sections. In Part I you will learn what tinnitus is, and how to evaluate its impact on your life. In Part II you will learn about the many things that are associated with tinnitus, trigger tinnitus or make existing tinnitus worse. Some of these you probably know such as exposing your ears to loud noise. Others you've probably never thought of, such as, your posture causing tinnitus.

Part III is by far the largest section. There you will find the details of the many things you can do to help take control of your tinnitus. Finally, Part IV gives you sources of help for your tinnitus. The Appendix lists the latest update (2016) to my list of drugs, herbals and chemicals that are associated with tinnitus. There are 597 different items in this list now.

Throughout this new edition, I've included the latest research results on tinnitus—right up to the beginning of this year (2016). I've also included a large section on somatosensory tinnitus. This kind of tinnitus has been grossly under-diagnosed in the past so few people take advantage of the specialized help that is available for this kind of tinnitus.

To get this comprehensive, 356 page, yet easy to understand book on tinnitus, visit my website at www.hearinglosshelp.com.

All opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association or CHHA – North Shore Branch.

Sound Advice

Presented by:

The Canadian Hard of Hearing Association

North Shore Branch

The group meets on the First Friday of each month from 10:00 AM to 12 Noon

at the West Vancouver Seniors' Activity Centre's Social Rec Room, 695 21st Street in West Vancouver.

No Meeting in July and August

When we meet, we discuss topics and issues dealing with hearing loss.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Bring a friend, a family member, they are welcome too.

Subjects to be addressed include:

Technology; Speechreading;

Effective Coping Strategies;

Behavioural Issues;

Improving Relationships;

Improving Hearing Environments

For Information call:

604-926-5222



CANADIAN HARD OF HEARING ASSOCIATION

NORTH SHORE BRANCH

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Attention: Treasurer

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North Vancouver, B.C.

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Cheque enclosed

Money Order Enclosed

Charitable Registration No.

BN 89672 3038 RR0001

I wish to support the aims of CHHA and the North Shore Branch and enclose my \$30.00 annual membership fee. Membership is paid annually from 1 October to 30 September.