

# Because You Care...

## Communicating with someone with hearing loss:

1. Face the hearing impaired person directly. Look directly at the person's face, if possible.
2. If conversing in a vehicle **and** you are the passenger, turn your body towards the person you are speaking to.
3. Speak clearly, enunciate. Often speak in lower pitches, but try not to shout.
4. State the person's name before starting a conversation.
5. Introduce the topic of conversation. When there is a change of subject, therefore, state that you would like to speak about another idea.
6. Keep sentences shorter, or put pauses in between thoughts. Avoid complex lengthy lines with lots of information spoken quickly.
7. Keep hands away from your face, including leaning chin into hand. Do not smoke, and of course, do not chew food while speaking.
8. Minimize background noise, including the sounds from electronics (TV, computer, radio, etc.). Avoid dishes clamoring, silverware sorting, water running, paper and paper bags being folded or shuffled.
9. Do not talk from another room or turn away or walk away while talking.
10. Avoid location of conversation to be near loud noises. Sit in a booth when possible in a restaurant, away from the kitchen or bar or a loud sound system.
11. Rephrase or reword misunderstood statements, instead of repeating. Pay attention to the listener's body language or expression to see if you are being understood. Check for understanding in a patient manner.
12. Write down pertinent information when providing instructions or schedules.

## Be sensitive to:

- A. The possibility of a better hearing ear. Position yourself to that side of the listener more often when possible.
- B. Distortion of sounds; often consonant sounds are more difficult to understand -- Rephrase or reword statements, so that the listener has a possibility of better understanding the context created by different sounding words.
- C. Tiredness or not feeling well --The energy to listen and focus is often greater for the person with hearing loss for most times. It's even harder for anyone to hear well when physically drained.
- D. Facial expression or body language that does not convey understanding -- Ask if you have been understood, or have the listener review what he/she heard, or ask a few leading questions to check understanding.

## KEY:

**Be patient and gracious to re-word what is important to impart again. It will help both of you.**