



Coalition of Hearing-Challenged Communicators



Who we are and What we do:

- We are the Hearing-Challenged people of the world
- We write to each other to give mutual help and support
- We encourage each other in living with hearing loss
- We work to acquaint the Hearing-Challenged worldwide
- We work to gain effective communication in spite of hearing loss
- We work to help the Hearing know how to communicate with us

Meet the Founder & President -

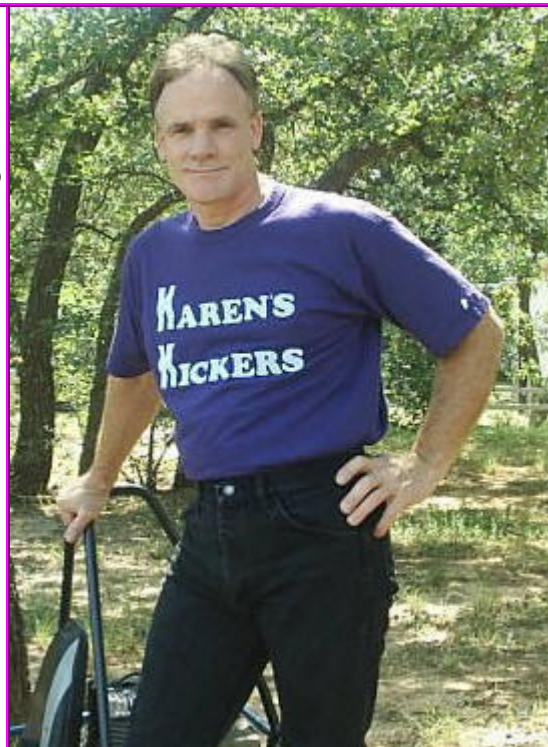
Wesley J. Allen
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Roanoke, Texas 76262

I believe that there are many things hearing-challenged people can do to help each other. We each have some little strategies of our own that we use to make life more enjoyable, to make communication more effective, and to find the help that we need for the moment.

If all hearing-challenged people (worldwide) were acquainted with each other, I'll bet we could share some very helpful information about living with hearing loss.

Some still won't admit that they even have a hearing impairment for fear of the rejection they might experience. That strategy doesn't work. It gets you some labels that are much harder to live with than hearing loss, or rejection.

A hearing loss can be fun to live with, and very beneficial at times. I think we should all get to know each other and share our lives and our experiences. Then we will be living life to the fullest.



You can have your name included on our Private Membership List so you can meet other Hearing-Challenged people.

This is a way to promote communication between Hearing Challenged People worldwide so we can help each other. Support people are welcome to join the list too. You are not required to have a hearing challenge.

Your mailing address or e-mail address will not be given out to anyone without your permission. Your name, contact information, and a photo can be posted in a secure area on the website that requires a pass code to enter. <http://www.TheEarsOfYourHeart.com> We will also have a Private Physical Directory.

Please e-mail MyListeningHeart@aol.com to ask any question, make any comment, or submit any information.

Join this group by sending a letter to the President at the address shown; or sending an e-mail to MyListeningHeart@aol.com

Wesley J. Allen My Profile:



Wesley J. Allen

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I've been hearing impaired for 14 years. It happened suddenly on Sunday January 17 of 1992. My Neurologist said it was an attack of Multiple Sclerosis on the hearing centers of my brain. Therefore I have brain damage. I love my brain damage! If people think I'm crazy, that just gives me more leeway for behavior.

I am Wes Allen. The number of years I have passed through is 51. I am content, and well satisfied with life. As a result of that I am fully retired. My home is paid for. I have no bills except utilities and insurance. And I have a \$ [REDACTED] investment for the future that has already grown to \$ [REDACTED] in two year's time.

I live in Keller, Texas; but as you can see my mailing address is Roanoke. Nothing has ever been normal in my life, Praise God! I live in a wonderful, peaceful place that is much like country living. I love to share all that I have with deserving people.

Though I am retired, I am putting the second half of my life together. It will be the biggest half. Remember how we divided up the cookie when we were kids? I always kept the biggest half for me. And that's what my life will turn out to be. I gave the smallest half to my company, building furniture for 27 years. The biggest half will be doing fun and worthwhile things like writing to you.

I have done many writings over the last 17 years. Most of them were done out of necessity, to boost myself over a hurdle that loomed above my head. Now I share them with others to help them over their hurdles. I am publishing most of them as e-Books and placing them for sale in the <http://www.InternationalEbookLibrary.com>, which is an e-Book library I built for you and for me.

I have been given so many talents; I think I'm more than a ten-talent man. There are many things I like to do, and I don't want to leave anything out. They are the things that make my life enjoyable beyond comparison. I live a stress-free life and I have no fear of what the future will bring. My Heavenly Father holds the future in His hands. He is directing me and leading me to what my life will be in the months and years to come. Every waking moment of my time is spent doing the work that is set before me. And everything is fun; I have trouble calling it work.

Because there are so many things I like to do, I have built 5 websites to put them into practice. If it all works out, I will be so busy I'll have to hire people to carry out the little necessary tasks for me; but that's the plan.

The first website I built is <http://www.TheEarsofYourHeart.com>, this hearing loss support site. I knew I would need you, and you would need my help too. And this site will eventually bring all hearing-challenged people together to help each other.

The second site is the <http://www.InternationalEbookLibrary.com>. I built it because I will need a public bookcase in which to display all my e-Books so that many people can be helped by the struggles I've been through. You might say I pioneered the way for all my friends. I love to be a blessing to people's lives. And I made a way for you to put together e-Books too because I wanted you to share your life with me. So I give step-by-step instructions and the e-Book compiler for your benefit.

The third site is <http://www.ChildrensEbookLibrary.com>. I built that because I have a 13-year old niece who is already a fabulous writer. She has to write on a child's level because she is a child. Your children will need electronic-books to read, and many others will be able to use a place to share their children's stories. Our kids need a boost in life too. Many things we write will benefit them.

The fourth site is <http://www.JoyfulHeartAdvertising.com>, my creative business card site. With all these businesses I had to make so many cards I thought I'd share that with the world too. I will design a card just the way you want it, and put something on the back that will make it travel from hand to hand all across the nation.

The fifth site is for something I have enjoyed doing for the last ten years. I memorize scripture and historical speeches and documents and do dramatic presentations in costume. And I teach Memory Techniques. I call it: <http://www.ArtisticWordCreations.com> because all the documents I memorize are the artistic word-creations that were put together by the greatest men of all time. For ten years I have been speaking memorized presentations; but for 27 years I have been using and teaching Memory Techniques. I can do things with memory others can only dream of doing; but I can show you how you can do it too. I "aced" everything in college and graduated with high honors using Memory Techniques. Professors used to excuse me from taking tests and final exams at times saying, "You'll just get another A and an F wouldn't hurt your grade point average."

There are other things I want to do also; but I would have to have two or three lifetimes to get it all in. I want to relax a little too in my retirement, and maybe find a Darling Companion with whom to share it all. But that's enough about me! I don't want to get you to thinking that I'm anybody; then I might be back in the rat race.

If you have ever had a hearing impairment, or if you have one now would you like to share your story to help and benefit others? Just share with us how that came about, how it developed, and how you live with it.

There are over 500 million hearing-impaired people in the world. Do you think we could help each other by sharing our lives and experiences?

There are 31 million hearing-impaired people in the United States of America. How many of them do you know? Want to get acquainted with a bunch?

I want all hearing-challenged people to become united as one, a worldwide coalition, with the power to help each other live our lives to the fullest. Think that's just a wild dream? Think it's impossible? I love it, because then it's a cause worth living for!

There are some things I do to make my life wonderful, and my hearing-challenge fun. Want to hear about some of them? I want to hear your stories too. We can only share experiences with each other if we become acquainted.

In order to become acquainted all we have to do is enter our names and some information into a directory that will be made available to all hearing-challenged people who become members.

It has to begin somewhere. So why not let it begin with you telling your hearing-challenged friends about the **Coalition of Hearing-Challenged Communicators**? All we're going to do is write to each other and share our experiences. When you write your story, a letter, or an article to someone, save it, copy it, and send it to others.

Here's a plan to get started: I will be open to other suggestions also, so give me your input.

- 1. Write your story.** How did you become deaf or hearing impaired? How long have you struggled with that? How has it developed over time? Do you use hearing aids or other assistive listening devices? How do you communicate effectively with family and friends? What are some of the detrimental effects of hearing loss in your life? What are some of the benefits and joys of your hearing impairment? How has it been fun? What did you do to become comfortable with it? Do you have any suggestions for others? Include your contact information in the story.
- 2. Send your story to the Coalition of Hearing-Challenged Communicators**
MyListeningHeart@aol.com.
- 3. Send your name, contact information, picture and profile, and anything else you'd like to share.**
- 4. Find 10 hearing-challenged people, anywhere in the world, and share with each of them the information about what we're doing by sending them the link to this document or give it to them in hardcopy, which I will provide. Let them know to share it with 10 people each, who will also be admonished to share it with 10 people each.**
- 5. I will be in charge of reading and processing the stories, placing them in Cyberspace, and placing links to the stories in a pdf directory that will be available to all members.**
If you send your story to me online, I will compile it into an e-Book and place its link in the pdf directory. If you're not a very good writer, I will edit your story. When there becomes too much for me to handle, that will be wonderful. That means we are growing. I will build an army of volunteers to help edit stories and compile pdf documents. I will provide the training and tools for doing that. (pdf means portable document format) That is an e-Book – electronic book.

That's it! The first and most important step is **Write your story**. I will distribute this document in print and online to get things rolling. This will be an e-Book so if you are reading it in hardcopy, you can go online and see what an e-Book is. You will find a link to click on the site:

<http://www.TheEarsofYourHeart.com> at the bottom of the Member List page.

<http://www.TheEarsofYourHeart.com/CoalitionofHearingChallengedCommunicators.pdf>.

Now I wrote my profile as an example for you; and I will write my story so you can see how to put yours together. The most important part is to **Write your story**. That will take the most time.

We will find members by sharing this document. And you can share your story. And that is how we are going to help each other.

After putting together your original story you can write anything else you'd like to share with others and freely pass letters back and forth with new friends you make. You can send comments by mail

or e-mail to those whose stories you read. And you will be hearing from others who read your story and profile.

If you write an article that is very good for everyone, I will compile it into a pdf e-Book and place a link in the Private Directory. If some stories are outstanding they can be placed for sale in <http://www.InternationalEbookLibrary.com>. You can make money by writing a good story. On that site I give step-by-step instructions and an e-Book compiler so you can publish your own stories.

Somewhere along the line we will have to think about where the money is going to come from to support this organization. But let's get it started first. I have ways and means, and I know you'll have some ideas too. What if thousands of people write good stories that will sell as e-Books in the Library and 50% of it goes to support the organization? They can still be free to our members. The Library is a totally different site.

Are you willing to give it a shot? Write your profile and story and send them to me. Become a member. This will be the biggest thing hearing-challenged people have ever done. Even the government would be willing to support it.

Wesley J. Allen,
President

Wesley J. Allen My Story

Vicarious Voices

On Sunday January 17 of 1992 my hearing impairment came about all of a sudden. One second I could hear fine, and the next all voices were distorted. For 3 days prior to that I had a headache. That was not uncommon for me. Since age 30 I had suffered from headaches regularly. It was almost a daily thing. It was caused by muscle tension and stress in my life. They were disabling headaches, so intense that I couldn't function efficiently during an episode of pain.

When a headache came about at work, I would be intensely nauseated along with it. At the first break I could get, I would lie down on the floor, or my workbench and relax every muscle in my body. The headache and nauseating feeling would then pass over in 5 or 10 minutes. That strategy worked for about three years, and I could live with my pain. I had been to many doctors and chiropractors and no one could help me.

I was 36 at the moment my hearing impairment came about. I was in Church, sitting right in front of the preacher; but I wasn't listening to him. I was sitting between two girls from my singles group. I was writing a letter to the one on my right because I didn't like the way she was treating me; and she was a little rough on others too who were experiencing emotional problems. It wasn't a

strange thing for us to be experiencing hurting emotions. Most of us in the singles group were going through divorces. And very hurtful things were happening in some cases.

I was telling her about my feelings, and things that were happening in my situation. I was asking for her understanding and sympathy. As soon as I finished the letter the preaching ended; and so did my headache. I don't think there was any connection between the two. So I handed her the letter to read.

That morning I had been experiencing a soupy nose and scratchy throat. I was afraid a cold was coming on. A girl in my Composition class at school had warned me that I might catch a cold talking with her. It was a small consequence for the wonderful social life I had been experiencing since my marriage ended. I had never been able to really communicate with people all my life because I lacked communication skills. Now my emotional state was getting better; and my social life was blooming. But that morning I had taken some Penicillin to nip that cold in the bud before it could get started. I had noticed that the expiration date had passed on that medicine; but I figured that just made it a little weaker, and it would still have some effect on the cold symptoms. And it did. They just left quickly and didn't bother me any further.

When she finished reading the letter, she gave me a hug and responded to my words. But I couldn't understand her response because her voice was distorted. It sounded high-pitched and very rapid, like the Chipmunks. I thought she was whining like that of which she accused me at times. I was amazed and tickled, and laughed with her about that.

I went around talking with others, and their voices were like that too. High-pitched female voices sounded like the Chipmunks and men's low-pitched voices sounded hair-lipped and nasal. I was really tickled with that because for the last year I had been self-conscious about my voice, and I thought it was ugly because I was told that it sounded hair-lipped and nasal. Now all men's voices were like mine. And women were whining like me. What a strange, but delightful, phenomenon!

A week went by before I started becoming concerned about it. My ears were just not functioning like they used to. It wasn't the voices that had changed; it was my perception of them. My head had felt a little groggy and stuffed from the effects of that headache and the expired Penicillin. I was learning that I would be living with aching heart and mind and emotions. It was not so much of a different feeling than other things I was experiencing in my divorce situation. I was a real basket case!

As soon as I discerned that it was my hearing that wasn't functioning properly, I went to see a doctor. He treated me for blockage of the Eustachian tube. I told him, "I don't think there is anything wrong with the Eustachian tube. In fact, I don't think the problem is even in the ears. I can feel what goes on in my body. And I feel like it is in my brain."

He laughed at me and said, "It can't be!" But his medicinal treatment didn't work. I visited him about once a week for a couple months before I gave him up, thinking he's just a Quack. He was not even kind to me. I don't like professionals who can't be kind to their clients. He told me that the problem was my own fault. It was the result of a lifetime of loud music, loud motorcycles, and screaming skill saws. Boy, did he have my life figured wrong!

I had told him that I rode a motorcycle. So he figured it was loud. I told him that it isn't loud; but he wouldn't believe me. He said, "All motorcycles are loud!" I despise loud cars and motorcycles. I would never make one my everyday transportation. I had told him that I attend church regularly, so he figured there was loud music. I'm a member of the Church of Christ. There are no musical instruments but our voices. And I have never liked or listened to loud music. I had told him that I was a Carpenter, so he figured I built houses and used a skill saw. In reality, I built furniture and used shop machinery. It doesn't scream; but it's plenty loud.

I felt bad about not taking care of my ears more effectively; but I felt worse about dealing with a doctor who was such a creep and a jerk. I already had other professionals, counselors, who beat the heck out of my emotions. I want professionals to be professional and treat with some respect the clients who are paying them good money and expecting decent care. So I got a new Primary Care Physician.

Since then I've been to many Doctors, Ear Specialists, a Chiropractor, an Audiologist, and a Neurologist. No one could figure out the problem. One year after the hearing loss incident I got Miracle Ear Hearing Aids. They helped a little in quiet situations where only one person was talking. I was able to continue getting my college education; but I depended more on what I could learn from the books than the teacher. I graduated in May of 1994 with high honors; but my grade point average had dropped from 3.91 to 3.7 in two years because of my hearing loss. Using Memory Techniques still put me at the head of the class. Check out what I do with Memory Techniques at <http://www.ArtisticWordCreations.com>.

Now I had an Associates Degree. I was pursuing a Bachelors Degree in Psychology; but after struggling in school for two years with the hearing loss, I decided a Bachelors Degree wasn't going to make my life any better anyway. I was only hoping to lend credibility to my self-improvement writings by having a degree in Psychology. Now my skill at writing and my devotion to my life-change strategies would have to speak for themselves. But the main reason I stopped taking classes was to devote my time to developing my newfound public speaking ability. Since I couldn't hear, God had given me the ability to speak. I was delighted! I had always wanted to be a public speaker. That ability came about as suddenly as the hearing impairment had. I can't tell you that story right now. If I write about everything this article will end up 80 pages long.

In August of 1994 I became a Toastmaster, and began public speaking. For the next four years I wrote and presented many speeches, all without using notes. I won many awards for my speaking, and won several speaking contests. In 1996 I began memorizing long documents of scripture and history and doing dramatic presentations in costume.

The hearing loss continued developing and changing over the years. My Neurologist kept looking for the cause and treating my headaches with one medication after another. He was impatient with me because his pills wouldn't work for my pain, and I couldn't understand his voice very well, and made him repeat often. His name is Chrishnababu Chunduri from India. Can you imagine the accent? I had to drop my Spanish class because I can't understand the strange sounds any more; and an accent from India is worse than Spanish.

In September of 1995 Chrishnababu Chunduri diagnosed me with Multiple Sclerosis. He said, "Do you know that your hearing impairment isn't in your ears? It's in your brain, caused by an attack of Multiple Sclerosis on the hearing centers of the brain."

I said, "Nooo, it can't be, mocking the doctor who had laughed at me!" I didn't believe I had Multiple Sclerosis either. I said, "You are just eager to give it a name because it's a brain-stumping problem and you can't figure it out." He didn't appreciate that. He kept prescribing medicine for the head and musculo-skeletal pain. But they never worked. I eventually got a new Neurologist.

After he gave me that diagnosis, I researched Multiple Sclerosis to find out what it is. Then I started having symptoms! Chunduri kept telling me that the pain wasn't a part of the MS. Let me just say this: I know beyond a shadow of a doubt that all the symptoms in my body, including the hearing impairment, originate from the same source. When I whip the problem, it's all going to be gone. My health will be perfect, like it never was before.

My health was somewhat okay up to age twelve. Then it was pretty good between ages twenty-five and thirty. And for little spurts during the rest of my life I was pain free. But there is never any lasting freedom from the pain of hurting emotions until the emotions are fixed. A man has to learn a different way of thinking. And that isn't easy!

I study the psychological aspects of the man. That's my specialty. That's what I have come to know best. I know all that I have been through all my life. I'm putting all that into writing too. I am age seventeen in my autobiography right now. It's lots of work, and it causes lots of pain even now to write it. But it's going to be eye opening to Psychologists and Counselors and Doctors.

It's not going to be anything totally new. Psychologists have talked about it for years. But it's going to be genuine experience coming from a man who has been made to learn some self-awareness. The mind can tear up the body; and the mind can heal the body. Poisonous thinking and emotions will do you in. We have to give up fear-based thinking and adopt love-based.

In 1998 I lost my Miracle Ear hearing aids. I had to take them out of my ears to speak. I would put them in my shirt pocket. One time I forgot to return them to my ears; and I lost them out of my pocket. They didn't help much anyway.

Now Doctors and Audiologists only tell me that I'm going deaf and there's nothing that can be done about it. They say my hearing is so bad that there are no hearing aids that can help me. I don't believe them! It's only a matter of time. I didn't deny that I had a hearing problem over the years; but I didn't give up hope either that there is something better awaiting me in the future.

I do whatever it takes to communicate with people. When I can't listen with the ears of my head, I can listen with the ears of my heart. I read more from people's actions, mannerisms, tone, and body language than can sometimes be discovered from their words. We can discover the things that are hard to talk about by listening with our hearts. You don't have to know the specifics to know when someone needs love, kindness, and help.

I have a pocket talker from Radio Shack that cost \$35.00 that is better than any I have test driven in a hearing clinic or assistive device store. I use that sometimes when it is necessary for me to get most every word in a quiet situation. And I use special hearing devices at Church. There are very low cost hearing aids on the Internet. I might try digitals some day. You can find those sites listed on my Hearing Loss Support site <http://www.TheEarsofYourHeart.com>.

I have learned to lip read during 14 years with hearing loss. I'm a long way from being efficient at that. All lips move differently. Some people speak so fast I had to take a speed-reading course. Sometimes the breath is so bad I want to read lips from a distance through a pair of binoculars. Humor eases the stress of tough situations. Hearing loss can be fun. You can find lip reading learning resources on <http://www.TheEarsofYourHeart.com>.

I have a very unique hearing impairment. It's like, I'm not deaf, I'm just ignoring you. Some people tell me I have selective hearing. Some get very impatient and walk away. It's okay. I understand how difficult it is for them. A hearing impairment is harder on the talker than the hearing-challenged listener sometimes. It takes time to be patient. It requires our understanding too. In a fast moving world we have been forced to slow down. And that is much better for the health anyway. I have no stress. I took myself out of the rat race, eight years ago in 1998, and decided to have patience and peace no matter what. If I allow any stress to enter in, it tears me up quick; and there are dier consequences in my body. I can show you many things about living without stress. Go to my bookstore for some <http://www.InternationalEbookLibrary.com>.

I'm taking sign language classes; but I don't learn as fast as I used to. Everybody else seems to catch on quicker than I do. I have brain damage. I love my brain damage. I make everything fun so others can accept it easier. If people think I'm crazy, that just gives me more leeway for behavior. You can find sign language learning resources at <http://www.TheEarsofYourHeart.com>. At Christmas time last year I did a presentation of The Night Before Christmas in sign language for the Hearing Loss Support group Fort Worth HLAA.

I have a little card I hand to people in public places that gives hearing people the instructions about how to speak so I can hear. That information is on the back of the business card for the Hearing Loss Support site. Can you think of a better way to legitimately give out your business cards? Some people are delighted to keep the card. Some hand it back. All of them are eager to know how to speak so I can hear. They are saying, "All right, I can do this!" And they give it their best shot. You can get some of those cards on the support site; and you can have your own business card made with that information on it at <http://www.JoyfulHeartAdvertising.com>.

There is probably more I can tell you about living with hearing loss; but I want to learn from you by reading your story too. And I know we can help each other in this manner. One of the biggest blessings of hearing loss is: There are some people we don't even have to listen to. So write your story and share it with MyListeningHeart@aol.com. Let's listen to each other with the ears of our hearts.

Wes Allen 1149 Blackwood Dr. Roanoke, Texas 76262