

# *My Story...* by Ben Sheroan

## Do you hear what I hear?

In the past few days, I have made some personal discoveries.

Car keys in my pants' pocket jingle as I walk. Turning the ringer on my cellphone to the highest setting is alarming. Removing wrapping from a Reese's Cup mini produces an audible sound.

Probably the most startling of all was the realization that flipping through pages of the newspaper creates a rustling noise.

If those details seem common to you: Congratulations! You probably hear well!

I don't... or at least I didn't until acquiring a pair of electronic hearing aids.

My hearing loss was not a sudden thing. It silently snuck up on me.

I could blame youthful experiences with motorcycles and stereo headphones or time spent around the roar of pressrooms, but it probably has more to do with aging and heredity.

Regardless, I reacted to this change in a normal manner: **Denial**.

No, the television doesn't seem loud.

No, I can't hear the turn signal dinging.

Yes, I'm listening. You should speak up.

After realizing the problem was me and not the rest of the world, I took steps to compensate such as cranking up the volume of my office phone and trying to read lips for a clue to words I was missing.

I don't like to think of myself as vain. After all, a vain person would dress better and weigh less than I do and surely vanity would have demanded hair color.

But I resisted the growing evidence of hearing loss because I didn't want to be that guy with an ear trumpet shouting "ehhh" to anyone trying to communicate.

Some of the wait gave me time to save. These things are not a cheap, impulse purchase. Kentucky sales tax does not apply to hearing aids, but neither does health insurance. All the costs are out of pocket.

But now, after less than a week in use, I can assure you that I never will go back.

I lowered the volume on every television in my house. I heard birds chirping one sunny morning last week. And I'm getting used to paper making a sound!!

A world of sound is a nice place to be!

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