

Hearing Loss Exercise

The following exercise was created by Richard Carmen, Au.D., in the book, *The Consumer Handbook on Hearing Loss and Hearing Aids: A Bridge to Healing*, 2nd Edition, 2004.

If the statements feel mostly accurate, write True; if they feel mostly inaccurate, write False:

1. _____ I don't hear well because other people mumble, don't enunciate clearly enough, or talk too low or softly for me to hear.
2. _____ Since I've had this hearing loss, I can't do all the things I'd like to do.
3. _____ People don't dare make jokes about my hearing trouble in my presence.
4. _____ I don't mingle with as many people (old and/or new acquaintances) as I used to because I don't hear well.
5. _____ I just can't be seen wearing a hearing aid.
6. _____ If I'm left alone in a conversation, I don't understand or trust what I hear.
7. _____ I know people think I'm not as sharp as I used to be because I don't hear as well as I once did.
8. _____ If I don't want to hear what someone says the first time, I'll remain quiet; it's a waste of my time trying to hear.
9. _____ I just can't seem to assert myself the way I used to (or as others do) since I lost my ability to hear well.
10. _____ It's difficult for me to accept that I actually have a hearing loss.

11. _____ I recognize that I'm the source of the problem because of my hearing loss; when I miss what somebody says to me, it's not their fault.
12. _____ Even though I have a hearing loss, I still do all the things I used to do.
13. _____ I have humorous things happen to me as a result of my not hearing well.
14. _____ In spite of my hearing loss, I'm careful not to give up any relationships I have in my life, or lose out on any potential relationships, by staying home too much.
15. _____ I would not think of hiding the fact that I was wearing a hearing aid.
16. _____ I feel completely at ease communicating with anyone in most environments even though I have a hearing loss.
17. _____ Despite my hearing loss, other people do not think less of me than before my loss developed.
18. _____ I don't mind asking people to repeat what was said if I haven't heard it.
19. _____ As my hearing loss has developed, I have made a systematic effort to compensate for it by being more outgoing.
20. _____ It's easy for me to think of myself as having a hearing loss.

Good! You may now want to read this list to someone who knows you well. Ask this person to respond how he or she believes you operate in the world and record their responses next to yours. Do not read below until you have completed this.

Interpretation

Hold the pages side by side and compare your answers to items 1-10 and 11-20. If you have been honest with yourself, your responses should be different for each pair of items (e.g. 1 and 11, 2, and 12, 3 and 13. . .). If you are being honest with others, your spouse's responses should be similar to yours. Think about items where your responses were the same for the paired items, or were different from your spouse's.