

# BETWEEN THE NOTES

Volume 1 | Issue 1

## About AAMHL



The Association of Adult Musicians with Hearing Loss (AAMHL) provides resources for amateur and professional musicians with hearing loss. More can be found at: [www.musicianswithhearingloss.org](http://www.musicianswithhearingloss.org)

## Editorial Information

"Between the Notes" is produced by the AAMHL Editorial Board with contributions by AAMHL Members. Please send any article submissions to: [newsletter@musicianswithhearingloss.org](mailto:newsletter@musicianswithhearingloss.org)

For January:

Submit by November 15

For June:

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## A Note from Our Founder

by Wendy Cheng

A new year often brings new ideas and experiences. In 2018, as we begin our 17<sup>th</sup> year, we are trying out several new ideas to bring our community together . . . and one idea is the newsletter which you are reading right now. With this newsletter, we hope to share the work of the many talented musician-writers we have in our midst who take the time to describe their journeys as adult musicians with hearing loss. Our newsletter will not only feature personal stories, but will also discuss technology useful in our musical journeys, and feature interviews with interesting and passionate musicians who begin and continue to pursue this musical journey despite skepticism from the larger, typically-hearing community.

We hope you enjoy the articles in this inaugural issue and hope you find it both useful and inspirational. We especially welcome your suggestions for improving the newsletter for the June 2018 issue. Please send all suggestions and article submissions to: [newsletter@musicianswithhearingloss.org](mailto:newsletter@musicianswithhearingloss.org)

## Beats of Cochlea 2017

by Felicity Bleckly

The [Beats of Cochlea music festival for Children, Youths and Adults with Hearing Disorders](#) is a music festival for cochlear implant musicians held every July in Poland. Going deaf challenges our identity as musicians and learning to hear again challenges it once again. Recent research shows us that music changes the way our brains function and using music can help us learn to hear after deafness. This is the reason for the existence of the Beats of Cochlea Festival – to showcase the talents of people who have gone deaf and returned to hearing and is the culmination of research conducted by the World Hearing Centre.

In March 2017, I was emailed by the Beats of Cochlea team and invited to submit an application to attend the 3rd Beats of Cochlea Festival to be held in Poland during July 2017. I received this email because I had been part of the inaugural Beats of Cochlea festival in 2015. I also remained in contact with the team providing them with copies of publicity I received for being a laureate of the festival. However, the rules stated that in 2017 I would not be eligible to play in the Gala Concert but could participate in the Master Classes and play in mini-concerts throughout the period.

*“Laureates of previous editions of the Festival cannot participate in a current edition of the Festival but they can attend Master Classes” “As part of the Festival, both Participants and professional artists have the opportunity to give mini accompanying concerts.” <http://festiwal.ifps.org.pl/en/bylaws/>*

I was quite happy to participate even though I knew I wouldn't play in the final concert. I saw it as an opportunity to learn from the best and gain experience in playing in front of people. (I had performed in public only twice in the past 45 years).

Following the instructions in the invitation, I sent a video of me playing the piano. I chose the piece titled *Frangipani*, by Ross Edwards, an Australian contemporary composer. The piece has incredible harmonies which I'm able to hear and really enjoy. I could also play it well, probably no one would have heard it before and it is part of the repertoire for my



Australian Music Examinations Board (AMEB) Grade 8 piano exam. My husband recorded it for me on his ordinary camera. I simply played it in one session and we did not spend time trying to get a good sound (it was really bad!) or make sure I made no mistakes. I just sent in a very amateur video. I received acknowledgement of my entry from the festival shortly after but heard nothing for about 3 months.

Two weeks before the festival I received an email asking me if I would attend. There had been 150 entries and just 24 people chosen to go to Poland. Cochlear Limited Australia would not sponsor anyone but Cochlear Europe would cover all costs in Poland if I paid my airfare. Since I am studying towards the Australian Music Examinations Board (AMEB)

**“Going deaf challenges our identity as musicians and learning to hear again challenges it once again. . . . This is the reason for the existence of the Beats of Cochlea Festival.”**

Grade 8 piano level with the qualifying exam in a few months, this festival and Master Class was an opportunity for me to improve my skills and overcome nerves by playing in front of other musicians, in the professional workshops and in the concerts.

It was a rush to get travel (at a really good price) and other issues organized in the two weeks. Despite having bilateral cochlear implants, I was not prepared to travel alone because there are many times when I can't hear alarms, public announcements and other communications, so my husband accompanied me.

The Festival was held at the World Hearing Centre in Kajetany, a town about 20 minutes south of Warsaw. This complex includes a 4-star hotel, hospital, pharmacy, cafeteria, café, and sports facility, as well as extensive parks and gardens, including a mini zoo. For the next five days I met with other implantees and professional musicians, and attended workshops and presentations on how music can help rehabilitate hearing. People

from 18 countries were represented so there was much interpretation from English into Polish and back, and also some of the other languages.

My Master Classmate, a young lady from Austria, and I fronted up for the first day where we met our Master Class teacher, Ewa Bogucka. Ewa is a music teacher, since 1969, and has been awarded for her outstanding education and artistic achievements. It was challenging to play an electronic piano, something I had never done, in front of her and other implantees. But once I got used to it, I really enjoyed the experience (and may even buy one to give my husband a rest from my never ending practice!). Ewa helped raise our skills from good to great by concentrating on the dynamics to bring out the quality of the music.

Later on that first day, despite the rules stating I couldn't play in the final concert, we were all required to audition in front of 12 professional musicians for the chance to play in the Gala Concert, the culmination of the Festival. I said “ok” and just smiled, waved as I walked in, sat down and played my piece. I was pleasantly surprised (and confused) when I was chosen as one of the 10 people (out of 24) asked to perform in the Gala Concert. There were at least three others chosen who had been in the 1st Beats of Cochlea. Of the 10 chosen six were Cochlear Limited implantees and the other four were Med-EI users.

Those students not chosen to perform in the final concert all played in mini concerts on the next two nights. Each concert was attended by a couple of hundred people which included professional musicians, dignitaries and educationalists. During these concerts, presentations were made by the research teams on how music affects our lives and specifically our hearing. Each evening we were given an FM system which linked to a booth at the back of the auditorium where translators translated the Polish into our preferred language. I was able to plug my audio cord into the device and directly hear. The translation was excellent – almost instant and totally clear.

The Gala concert was held on the final night of the Festival. It was professionally set up in the auditorium of the Hearing Centre. The Masters of Ceremonies were Maciej Miecznikowski and Anna Adamowska. Maciej is a Polish actor, musician and singer/songwriter who has had five operations to fix his hearing loss. Anna is a Polish violinist and singer who was born with microtia and atresia and has a bone conduction implant. Anna has her own folkgroup, which came second in “2013 Got Talent” and tours the world. She will be touring Australia in Melbourne and Sydney during November this year. During the Festival I spent considerable time on line, on a Samsung tablet provided by Cochlear Europe, keeping friends and family in many countries up to date on what was going on. Since returning from Poland I have submitted information and photos to local media.

Having been part of a previous Beats of Cochlea Music Festival, I found the 2017 program an improvement. First of all we stayed in the hotel where all the activities took place. We didn't have to rely on buses to take us anywhere. We didn't have to sit around waiting for a bus to take us back to our hotel. We could go to our room whenever we wanted. We could walk around and enjoy the extensive grounds and relax between sessions. The five days gave us time to meet and enjoy the company of other participants. Even when we couldn't speak the same language we found a way – sometimes using Google Translate. I have come away with many friends and keep up to date with them on social media. More concerts meant hearing everyone perform and these performances were just as professional as those in the Gala concert. Hearing the presentations by the World Hearing Centre team and understanding through translation meant I returned with a greater understanding of why this Festival exists.

**“During these concerts, presentations were made by the research teams on how music affects our lives and specifically our hearing.”**

The Beats of Cochlea Music Festival is an important milestone in the Cochlear Implant development. It would be wonderful to set up a similar music program and strategy in Australia and I would love to be involved in that.

Felicity Bleckly studied piano for 13 years and worked in the music industry but changed careers due to her hearing loss. By 1989 she was totally deaf until her first Cochlear implant in 2002/2003. She now wears bilateral Nucleus N6 Cochlear processors. She is currently studying for Grade 8 level exams from the Australian Music Examinations Board. She lives in rural South Australia, about an hour out of Adelaide.

## My Love for Music

by Terry Bruton

Like most people with hearing loss, I struggle at times when hearing or playing music. My hearing loss, which began at about age 58 (I am now 71), is a loss of highs commonly called “ski slope”. The loss is very similar in both ears, which is mostly mild in the lower ranges but becomes moderate around 500 Hz, with a steady decline into the severe range in the higher frequencies. My left ear is better for hearing lower frequencies up to lower midrange while I have better higher frequency response with my right ear. This is compensated pretty well with my hearing aids. I sometimes have trouble determining whether or not I hit the



right note, usually on the lower strings and a step or two apart when the guitar is in heavy distortion mode. Too much distortion is like a blur, in my opinion, and grates on my ears. I prefer more of a clean sound, with a little “grit” or “guts” at times for flavor and sustained tone.

The simpler the music, the better I can hear it and enjoy it. Lots of songs, especially those recorded in modern times, have way too much going on and too many

effects or loss of dynamics for my taste. Many of the songs recorded in the 60’s like those of Phil Spector and his “wall of sound”, are not very pleasing to me today. Maybe they were in my younger years, I’m not sure. I prefer to keep music simple, focused, and properly balanced with as little instrumentation as possible. The more complex the music, the higher the likelihood I will enjoy it less--unless, of course, it’s well recorded like some symphonic music and such. I still enjoy listening to an orchestra with lots of horns.

I love music, always have, and fortunately I’ve enjoyed a little of most all music around the world. I jokingly say to people sometimes that if my maker should come and take my music, said maker may as well take me with it! I’d be lost without music. I like to write songs, more now than ever since I retired fully in Dec 2015. I have some from back in the late 70’s on through the years that I want to finish and record while I am still able. I figure if others can do it, why not me? Through the years, some of the lyrics that I’ve heard or have had to search for and read when I couldn’t understand them in a song, have left me shaking my head in almost disbelief. Of course, there are a lot of beautiful and well-written lyrics out

there, no doubt, but there are some that if they were based on lyric alone, they probably wouldn't make it. So, the way I see it, is even if the lyrics are a bit weak or do not always make sense, the music plays a huge part in pushing a song into the "hit" territory.

Soon I will begin the recording process. I plan to keep it all simple as possible, yet hopefully make the recordings interesting and enjoyable. That's subjective for sure. One of the role models I've always looked up to has been George Martin who produced the much of the

**“Hearing loss requires me to constantly be aware of the surroundings and what all is going on. It's not one size shoe fits all that I can see.”**

Beatles' music. Now, my songs probably won't be anything like the Beatles and that's not my intent, but the resourcefulness, the experimentation and willingness to try something new or untried is worth keeping in mind. I don't want my recording to be blah, blah, blah. George Martin, ended up losing much of his hearing as he aged. He is no longer with us but his one son has followed in his dad's footsteps.

Some of the challenges I will have is to practice each part, both instrumentals and vocals, to as near to perfection as I'm capable of before recording. That's just a matter of putting forth the effort and time to make sure all instruments are set up and tuned and all recording devices are in good working order and ready to record. I have a Tascam 788 8-track digital recorder. I don't care much for computer recording, cut and paste and plugins. I prefer to use good recording techniques and as live a sound as possible. I will need to work towards the mixing stage, adding minimal effects and a few things to spice up the sound if needed. There is a lot to think about in capturing sounds but once organized it pretty much flows pretty smooth sailing. I won't be stressing over any balance or eq, effects during this stage but rather just capture as good as sound as possible. Afterwards, this begins the work towards the mixing stage, adding minimal effects and a few things to spice up the sound if needed. So how will my hearing treat me during all this? Well . . . .

I'm very lucky to have a friend who writes music for a hit TV show and I can always rely on him to double check my mixes and make any adjustments. I trust his ears completely. He's a real pro, a Berkley College of Music graduate and a very good friend. It is always good to have someone with good hearing that you can count on to give feedback and help keep you focused.

Whenever I've gotten together with others to play, it's mostly been a very pleasurable experience, where the area is relatively quiet and it's just us musicians or a small gathering of friends. I don't like playing out in busy, noisy places because then I have a bit of a problem and feel a bit uncertain if too much else is going on. Some indoor venues also have terrible or at least, less than desirable, acoustics. Hearing loss requires me to constantly be aware of the surroundings and what all is going on. It's not one size shoe fits all that I can see.

My main instruments are acoustic and electric guitar. I dabble with a keyboard from time to time. I have an old Korg O1W-pro that has some sounds I may use and a couple of old Casio's that surprisingly may have some useful sounds. I also work on and build tube guitar amps mostly as a hobby but am almost complete with one for my musician friend mentioned above. That's another area that requires good hearing – the sounds of a guitar amp.

Before I realized I had hearing problems several years back, I couldn't understand why the guitar amps all sounded too "bassy" and if I turned the treble up, it wasn't pleasing. Sometimes just turning the mid-range up helped. And my stereo system was a problem, too. I couldn't get anything to sound right like I remembered it used to. I was amazed after I got my hearing aids – still using the one and only pair I've ever owned, Siemens Pure 700. I will look into a Siemens upgrade or Oticon OPN sometime after the first of the year. If it were not for hearing aids, I simply would not be able to enjoy or play music.

**“Music will always be a part of my life, as long as I have anything to say about it.”**

I'll be looking for someone to team up with as a duo or trio in the near future to do a variety of songs. I wouldn't mind getting together with someone and playing at nursing homes. Elderly people really need all the entertainment and songs that they can get. It doesn't take a whole lot to make them happy. Maybe I will play at some community events or even set up at one of many parks we have and have a cookout or whatever. First, though, I need to finish my own projects and move on from there. Music will always be a part of my life, as long as I have anything to say about it. I'm excited – let's see what my hearing has to say!

*Terry Bruton lives in Port St. Lucie, Florida and is a retired electrical inspector. He plays acoustic and electric guitar. He wears Siemens Pure 700 hearing aids, his first and only pair. Terry enjoys writing, recording songs, and working on tube guitar amplifiers.*

## Musician Spotlight

Interview by Wendy Cheng

**Member name:** Sebastian Fehr

**Hearing device:** Advanced Bionics Q90 cochlear implant (both ears)

**Instrument:** Flugelhorn, Trumpet, Voice

Note: The following interview was done via email with Sebastian. It has been lightly edited for clarity. --- Wendy Cheng

1. *Please tell us a little about the Tyrol region of Austria where you live. Where is the nearest major city?*

The biggest city in Tyrol is Innsbruck (site of the 1976 Winter Olympic Games). While Germans and Austrians speak the same language, it's important to notice that the German

used in both countries is not exactly the same . . . it is similar to the differences between American English and the Queen's English spoken in Canada.

2. *Your father played the euphonium. How did you decide to focus on flugelhorn and trumpet? Did you already know how to play both instruments before you completely lost your hearing?*

I started playing trumpet at age of 4. The euphonium was too big for me to handle that time. But I always liked the sound of trumpet and flugelhorn so I remained with both instruments as I became older.

My hearing loss was discovered in my preadolescent years (around age 11). At that time, it was discovered that I was profoundly deaf in one ear. Several acute hearing losses in my normal hearing ear brought me closer and closer to the decision to ask for a CI. In October 2016, I finally received bilateral cochlear implants.



3. *It looks like you also sing! Do you sing with a vocal choir? How did you become interested in vocal music? Did you learn to sing before you become completely deaf?*

I loved to sing when I was a child. Unfortunately, after my first hearing loss at the age of 11, I lost the ability to hit the right notes. I never found out why this was the case. Now with the two CI's I have I will try to learn singing again with a professional teacher.

4. *You dreamed of going into the music industry. If you did not have a hearing loss, what kind of job in the music industry would you want? Why do you think you cannot do this job now?*

Music is the best thing in the world. 90% of the most beautiful moments in my life are related to music, even with my hearing problems. Who would not love having the privilege working in the music industry? I cannot do this job now because in Austria you can't become a musician with hearing loss. In fact you can't even teach in a regular public school if you have a significant hearing loss. I know it's unfair but these are the rules and I have to deal with it. If I could choose, I'd love to work in an orchestra as a trumpeter. I also would love to teach children how to play the trumpet.

5. *You did a lot of music therapy to get back to playing brass instruments. Did you use an online resource for the music rehabilitation exercises, or did you work with a real individual?*



Mostly I worked on my own and with a therapist. The music therapist, Dr. Ulrike Stelzhammer, helped me and showed me exercises on how to enjoy the sound of the trumpet again. It works for me now, even if it still sounds different than before. But I can enjoy playing trumpet again.



6. *Name a favorite piece of music you never get tired of playing on the trumpet or flugelhorn.*

There are so many beautiful pieces out there, it's really hard to choose. I like playing both classical and jazz music.. While listening to big orchestras like the Vienna Philharmonic is still a work in progress for my bionic ears, I currently enjoy listening to small ensembles like brass quintets or jazz combos.

I enjoy playing ballads on the flugelhorn the most because it is an efficient way of expressing my innermost feelings. So if I have to choose, I really like "Misty" by Errol Garner. It's known as a jazz standard for a female singer, but it also sounds magnificent on the flugelhorn.

Unfortunately, there is no good sound sample with flugelhorn on YouTube, so you have to listen to the original with Ella Fitzgerald: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6XI-mZmUb0I>

I also want to mention an arrangement of "Share my Yoke" for brass ensemble: I played this piece at my sisters wedding a few years ago: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r9UmCSc3W2s>

You can learn more about Sebastian at his website <http://www.fehrhoert.com/> where he blogs frequently about music and hearing loss. It is written in German, but you can click on the language widget on the left side of the screen to get the English translation.

# Technology Corner

## New Companion Mic System: A Review

by Wendy Cheng

As an adult viola student with significant hearing loss, I've known my ability to hear music in an ensemble (orchestra or chamber music) environment using my bilateral implants alone was not always feasible. Many hearing devices have a limited range of 5-6 feet and orchestra conductors/other musicians in chamber ensembles do not always stand or sit within that limited range. Back in 2008, I started using Etymotic Research's (ER) Companion Mic system. I loved this system for three reasons: It came with 3 transmitters and one receiver; it was wireless; and the sound quality was good in my opinion. I took them to all my musical activities, such as handbell festivals, an adult string workshop, and my private viola lessons. I even used the system when I tried voice lessons for one year and took it with me to an aural skills exam in music theory. I'd wear the receiver unit and my instructors and fellow chamber music partners would wear the transmitter units. For the aural exam, the instructor wore one transmitter and put another transmitter unit near the small speaker that was connected to the piano in the meeting room.

But last year the Companion Mic system I was using began to fail. Even after charging all transmitter units overnight, some of the transmitters were no longer working. And I had heard that ER was now working on a new version of the Companion Mic system. In June 2017, they contacted me and asked if I would be interested in purchasing a beta version of the newer generation of the Companion Mic system (CM4). In exchange for answering a questionnaire, I could purchase the beta version at a reduced price (4 units would be \$960 and 2 units would be \$512).

Etymotic Research said the newer generation had the following features:

- All CM4 units function as *both* "Listener" (receiver) and "Talker," (transmitter) so up to four people with hearing loss can simultaneously benefit from the improvement in noise these units provided
- The units themselves are significantly smaller and lighter, yet have up to 7 hours' battery life between charges. Charge time is 1 hour to 80% and 2 hours to full charge.
- The units are clipped to clothing, rather than worn around the neck, using a lanyard.

I decide to purchase the 4-unit beta version. By this time, my cochlear implants had been upgraded to Advanced Bionics' behind-the-ear [Naida](#) sound processors. However, the new generation CM4 did not offer Bluetooth capability (more on that later) but still used telecoil for the hearing device to connect to them. I had a [ComPilot streamer](#) that allows me to use both Bluetooth and telecoil. I had been struggling to find a reliable audio cable to connect my ComPilot to the Companion Mic system via telecoil and have started using an [audio cable from Five Below](#). (So far I'm relieved that the new audio cable has not shorted out after using them several times a week for the last 2 months.)

I was impressed by how much smaller and lighter the newer generation was when compared to the older Companion Mic system. (See photo for comparison).

There are two buttons on each unit: the button with three dots turns it on and also you can use it to increase the volume. The other button can be used to turn it off and to decrease the volume. To get the Master unit (which has blue buttons) and transmitter units (which have gray buttons) communicating with each other, you press down the on button for all units until all units have a solid green light.

The sound quality is still good in my opinion. So far I have used it in viola lessons and handbell rehearsals. It is more convenient to be able to clip the transmitter units instead of using a lanyard. I have clipped the transmitter to the music notebooks of my fellow ringers who ring the high treble bells during rehearsal and am doing a better job of staying together. The range of the between the receiver and transmitter unit appear to be about 30 feet. The units do not have to be in the line of sight for them to work with each other. The one concern I have is that in transmitter mode, you have to be careful how they are positioned--- the microphones do not appear to be omnidirectional. If the speaker turns away from the microphone, speech may not sound as clear.



The system came with a small card explaining how to turn it on and off. There didn't seem to be any instruction on the card on how to charge or how long it would take to fully charge it. Etymotic Research told me the reason I did not get a user manual is that that the CM4 product has not been released because it's still in beta-test version and they have not yet determined when the final product will be ready for release.\*

With regard to charging details, the units go from zero charge to 100% charge in 90 minutes. When units are plugged into the charging cable, an amber light on the units comes on. When the unit is fully charged, the amber light goes off. When the units are in use (powered on and actively engaged with the MASTER listener unit) their green light will stay on.

I have not yet tried having another person with hearing loss use the system with me. Perhaps the opportunity will present itself sometime in 2018!

\*Etymotic Research is still conducting beta testing. If you are interested in purchasing one of these beta units, please contact Patty Johnson at [p\\_johnson@etymotic.com](mailto:p_johnson@etymotic.com)."

I also asked Etymotic Research about their warranty policies and why Bluetooth capability was not available. The warranty will be one year from date of purchase for both the beta-test and the final product. Users should contact ER's customer service if they have a problem with the Companion Mic system. With regard to Bluetooth capability, they said: "In our tests, we found that Bluetooth added an unacceptable time delay in the response that negatively impacted sound quality. Bluetooth also adds to the complexity and cost, and decreases battery life. For these reasons, the CM-4 does not use Bluetooth technology."

Overall, I am happy with the new generation of the CM4 system. It is great to have the lighter and more discreet microphones to help me thrive in my musical journeys.

*Wendy Cheng lives in Gaithersburg, Maryland and is an avid viola student and handbell enthusiast. She is also the proud owner of two Advanced Bionic Naida cochlear implants.*

## The Music of Life

### Hearing Loss Perspectives

by Shirley Allott

The world is musical with the calling of birds, frogs, creeks trickling and the sea rushing, music that is rhythmic and melodic. Hearing loss is far more than the loss of connectedness



to others through speech and music. It is also the loss of a musical world. In the background, heard unconsciously, are birds, frogs, animals, and insects calling, the sounds of sugar gliders and trees frogs. As I struggled to hear speech, I realised I had hearing loss, but it was not until I understood I had lost the musical world that I finally got hearing aids. I am looking at my own delay in getting hearing aids in the light of the research of Jason Ridgway (2017) on motivation.

only 1/3 of people with measured hearing loss in Australia have hearing aids, and many people choose communications programs, or take no action. His research looked at self-determination theory, which is a theory of motivation. In particular, he looked at how motivation relates to the ways that people make decisions about seeking help for their hearing, and their acceptance and use of hearing aids. His findings suggest that people who are motivated to accept hearing aids are more likely to be successful in using aids than those who perceive that having hearing aids will be difficult. He also suggests that people who experience frustration

Jason Ridgway's research suggests that



and difficulty with communication are more likely to accept hearing aids than people who do not report frustration and difficulty with communication. People who are under pressure from family members or audiologists to accept hearing aids, but do not want them, are less likely to accept hearing aids. Ridgway adds that there needs to be a range of options and rehabilitation for people with hearing loss who do not accept hearing aids.

Hearing loss is complex, and Ridgway suggests practitioner support and building trust is very important. Building a supportive atmosphere in which a client can tell their story and explore options is helpful. I wonder now if the practitioners I saw over 20 years ago were frustrated that I chose not to have hearing aids, but this was never communicated to me in any way. I was assisted to find hearing support education that would help me develop communication strategies without hearing aids.

Communication had become difficult and I knew I was becoming socially withdrawn although I was continuing to work. I saw hearing aids as an unnecessary expense, and unimportant. One day, I realised I could not hear the sounds of the musical world and I asked my husband where the birds, animals and frogs had gone. He told me they were still there but I couldn't hear them. This is when I knew I had to get hearing aids. This aspect of hearing loss is not discussed in Ridgway's research and I do not know if it is as important to others as it is to me. Perhaps

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research into the lived experience of hearing loss may find this to be important to others. Once I decided to get hearing aids, I had excellent support and felt comfortable both with the audiologist and my decision to have hearing aids.

I live in the musical world again. With my latest set of hearing aids, Oticon Opn's, I have an amazing musical sound palette; an enormous range of frogs, some of them I haven't heard for a long time. It is a joy to walk in the early morning or evening and hear the chorus of birds, frogs, animals and insects.

Reference:

Ridgway, Jason (2017). Self-determination theory and hearing rehabilitation: The role of motivation in help-seeking, hearing aid adoption and hearing aid fitting outcomes School Of Health And Rehabilitation Sciences The University of Queensland [https://](https://espace.library.uq.edu.au/view/UQ:530503)

[espace.library.uq.edu.au/view/UQ:530503](https://espace.library.uq.edu.au/view/UQ:530503)

*Shirley Allott plays harp and wears Oticon Opn hearing aids in both ears. She lives in Victoria, Australia with her husband and is soon to be a grandmother. She is passionate about music and playing music with others.*