



## Hearing Wellness Journey #00 Episode

Welcome to the Hearing Wellness Journey Podcast, an exploration of determination, hope, self discovery, and triumph. We'll share the personal experiences of those that are living with hearing loss and provide a haven for their stories to show others that they are not alone in this journey. Please welcome your hosts, Dr. Dawn Heiman and Lindsay Dougherty.

📍 Hey there, Lindsey, how are you?

I'm good, Dawn. How are you?

Good. So I'm super excited that this is our first episode. Technically it's the 00 episode for the Hearing Wellness Journey Podcast.

And the cool thing about this is we're finally making something happen that we've been talking about for a long time. And yeah, and as our listeners don't know, you and I have been working together for this is completing our fourth year. We will be starting our fifth year in about a month and a half, which is crazy.

Yes. And went by really fast.

And we've had a lot of ideas and this year it's happening.

It is. So the point of this podcast is to enable people to tell their stories. The good, the bad, the ugly, the happy, the amazing, the transformative, the triumph of triumphant parts of it, because normally people aren't talking about this and what I would like to do, and we talked about this is how do we let people know it's okay to go get your hearing tested and start this journey.

Do it sooner than the national average, which is seven, eight years, so that they can actually realize they could be happier. There are some positives to this. So I'm hoping that this is something that sticks. We have a lot of people, great, wonderful people with unique stories that are lined up to tell us about their journey with their ears.

And so I know sometimes I will be hosting it and sometimes Lindsay will be hosting it. And we're gonna try. Big hairy, audacious goal. We're going to try to do one a week for an entire year and see if we can just keep going, for years, of bringing these stories to the world because this doesn't exist right now.



And because it needs to because hearing that you are not alone. Is so important. That's what's going to help people not wait those seven or eight years to go help themselves to make their lives more joyful. By hearing these stories and saying, Oh, I'm not alone.

I can do this.

Absolutely. We all need a sense of community, a sense of belonging.

And everybody knows that knows me that like Connor with his, my son's, diabetes, the diabetes isn't going away, the frustrations with the equipment isn't going away. But when I listened to the Juice Box Podcast, it helps me as a mom, as a caregiver. And if I had a sensory neural hearing loss I would hope that this type of platform will help someone else to know.

Yeah, it's bad. Oh yeah. I remember that, but it helps me to psychologically deal with this and not feel like I'm the only person struggling with this.

Definitely. We all love to commiserate or, it's healing to be able to talk to somebody in general, but even better to talk or hear from somebody who's gone through the same challenges and obstacles and knowing that there is light at the end of the tunnel, you aren't just stuck.

There's hope. There's a plan that can be made and you can just continue to go forward.

I agree. Yeah. I really hope that my major, big goal with this. To eliminate the negative stigma with hearing loss actually happens. Because what do you hear? You hear stories of how someone Oh, they have that stupid hearing aid.

It doesn't work. And it's just in a drawer or this person who doesn't hear. And who's telling the positive stories? Who's teaching the tips and tricks of what to do the life hacks for hearing at a restaurant? And the best way to learn that is to talk to others in a non-confrontational, easy, easily accessible platform like a podcast where no one knows you're listening.

Oh, did I mention, you know how we're doing the video format? We're going to have it closed captioned and this will also be on YouTube. Yeah. People don't realize if they're listening to this on Apple podcasts and you're only catching every few words, you can go to Audiology TV and watch it, or just go to Hearing Wellness Journey.com / podcast and you're going to be able to see the video, which is neat. We're trying to be accessible. We're trying to make this easy for everyone.

So do you have or any goals or anything that you want to accomplish over the next year? Anything that, that you're just thinking of going, okay.



This will be great for me to listen to episode 00 a year from now and see how we've evolved. What do you hope to happen? You

check those boxes. I just, I really hope that we get a good a good response from people and people who are reaching out and wanting to tell their unique stories because it.

It isn't cookie cutter. It is different for everybody. Why they have hearing loss, how, it has been affected by maybe an illness or a trauma. It's those stories. That it's just it's real life. And we are all compelled to listen to real life stories. And I am just excited to make those connections with people all over the nation or maybe world where we would not have otherwise had a chance to meet that person.

So though it might not be face to face. It's just, it's. It's wonderful. It's enlightening to hear these stories. So I really just, I'm excited to hear all the different versions that there are and to find out how they found help or how they found that way to maybe even come to terms with it and say, all right.

What's the next step? Because that is what it is. You need to hear the stories of hope and so that you can keep going in everything. So whether it's with hearing loss or just life in general I think that this is going to be great for so many people. Caregivers, family members, those with the hearing loss and educators and physicians, and everybody can just.

Benefit from listening to real life stories.

That's awesome. I never even thought about it that maybe physicians or teachers, educators, like that would benefit from this as well. You're so right. But we really do as a human, you hit the nail on the head, we love to hear stories. We just do and sometimes the stories, a good story, doesn't always have to have a happy ending. It's just it's just continually going progress exactly slowly. So there'll probably be some people we have on multiple times to find out where they're at in their journey. And some people, they. They get a cochlear implant after having a hearing aid, but the hearing change suddenly, something happened or, everyone has their own journey.

When it comes to stories, I think you probably, you definitely hear the stories of why people are coming in to do something about their hearing before I ever meet them.

You've been with me through all of the crazy craziness, including , like the time it was not long after you started working at Advanced Audiology Consultants that I said, Hey, we're going to unbundle.

We're going to do the dentist model and not the regular orthodontist model for correcting people's hearing and for me that was outlandish. That was in 2017. But for you, you had no pre-



conceived notions of what happens in an audiology practice and all of that. And you come from a completely different background.

If you want to tell us about why you're even working with people now and helping people to hear better.

It is so crazy. Our little meet, and, coming from food service, a food service background, in restaurants and baking and pastry where I went to school for all of that, because I liked making people happy.

I liked bringing a moment of joy to them. And so I was doing that and when I was post-college pre-marriage I ended up working at a fire station again, just helping people, and then I was a stay at home mom after working in the food service industry for many years. And this meet between the two of us happened.

And I was like, yeah, I love to it's helping people. And then that was really what it was, it was working moms, supporting moms and just trying to make a difference in this world. But yeah, it's so much more because it really is the same you're giving people joy back into their lives.

You're touching their lives every time that you talked to them on the phone, every time you see them. And so it's just stuck and I'm now #earnerd.

Yeah it's a wild roller coaster of how I got here.

That's right. Yeah. Right now you are helping coordinate. You are the voice, you are the face of the office and you're helping coordinate people's schedules or needs or something's going wrong, you are the person, like I was thinking about it yesterday. At the airport we have air traffic control. That's Lindsey. She's making certain that everybody is navigated where they're going to go. What's going on? What's coming. What's going, who's coming in. Who's leaving. But your role is changing even.

Now. I've been an audiologist for. Gosh now it's, I'm finishing, this is 22 years now, a long time. And I've worked with a lot of people, but I've never met someone who is so driven to change and to help people, which me too, I love to help people and I love to learn things, but to watch you go from, okay, I'll try something new and bringing the food service industry to the audiology world.

And now you're going back to school, have gone back to school To learn, to be a specialist in hearing aids. You're going to be a licensed hearing instrument specialist. So that's exciting.

Is there any particular story that sticks out in your mind? You're like, Holy cow, we need to help this person.



There's really so many people and a lot of times I get to hear, "I have had hearing aids" and this is the consumer client, "I have hearing aids. They never worked for me." And I just, I have to figure out what's going on and they come in and they're like, so then how does this go? And what I love to tell them is that at our practice, we are here to inform, we are here to educate. Arm them with knowledge and it's never our decision.

It is about them and their story and their difficulties. And so I do try and find out what are you missing? And, I do delve in a little bit into their background and what they've been experiencing over these years and what they want to hear. And so it's. It's a lot of laughter usually when I'm getting into their history and everything.

But they love to know that they are a person and I do tell them, we're like, Cheers: everybody has a name. They're not just a patient number, XYZ, but they are they are them and unique and we love that. And so you're coming in and I, the hope that's on the other end of that line, when I say that, that reassurance that, that sounds so good.

That's what makes me so happy to be on that receiving end of their phone calls so that I can put them at ease that we're not going to put, be pushy and make them do anything that they don't want to do. And I think that's one of my most favorite parts is taking somebody who's maybe a little bit on the more frustrated side.

And then by the end of the conversation, they're at peace. And feel really good about having had this phone call with me. And I'm very grateful to have a phone call with them.

And I know everyone can hear it in your voice. Definitely. You're putting them at ease. They're worried. They've heard rumors about places or they've been to, they just had a bad experience, but in the overall, no one wants to struggle with their hearing or their communication.

And they want to know that they're going to a place that's going to help them best to mitigate the circumstances, we can't bring it and restore it back to its normal self, but we can help, boost their abilities to communicate.

But the whole point of this podcast is: somebody on their own secretly or maybe they told their family and friends that they were making this phone call, but behind closed doors and privately, we hear their concerns.

We address their concerns. And then lately we do the kind of virtual hug. We used to give big hugs or now we're like elbow pumping as they're so excited. Leaving. Yeah. Air high five. And as they're leaving, we're so excited for them. And we're like happy hearing and they're like, that's so good, or they're like, you're right. You do save marriages. That kind of stuff happens behind closed doors. And then once they leave it's over.



I really appreciate you, Lindsey, agreeing to go on another crazy adventure. Crazy idea that I come up with and you're my biggest cheerleader. I have to say. On my bad days when I come to work and I'm like, Oh, I'm so tired. And you're like, today's going to be a great day! And I'm like yes, it is.

Especially coming from Disney World and serving people there, and I know you were in the food service industry, we don't just serve the people that are coming in. We're trying to serve each other so that we have that energy to keep showing up.

Yes. And you are like, it's a yin and yang relationship there because when I'm having a struggle day, you, pick me up and do the same thing.

And that's, I think that's why we've had this relationship for almost four years and we just continue to grow because we are aligned and we are just genuinely trying to help and spread the word and make people's lives better. One person at a time, so yes I'm very excited and I've just been thrilled to be a part of the journey thus far, and for what the future holds.

You know what, by the way, before we close, I just want to say.

You just said you love the fact that we get to help people. One person at a time, this podcast could potentially help thousands of people simultaneously. That's the cool part about it? That's the exciting part that we don't close the door and just work with one person at a time. I am so hopeful that this helps because we also, we're going to be referring people to audiologists around the country.

We have a locator practice locator of awesome practices. We have resources like the Hearing Wellness Journey, which is an aural rehab course that people can use if they want to do self-guided rehab. We have the Hearing Wellness Community on Facebook, which I recommend everyone signs up for. Be a part of it.

The more you give, the more you will receive. So if people are actively in there asking questions, giving tips, just saying, hello, you're going to end up benefiting even more and actually meeting people.

Definitely.

So I hope you guys have a wonderful day, Lindsay, thank you for everything. Look forward to episode one in one week.

Thank you.



Thank you. Bye.

📌 📌 Thank you for joining us on this episode of the Hearing Wellness Journey Podcast. For more information about what we do and the services we provide, please visit our website at [hearingwellnessjourney.com/podcast](https://hearingwellnessjourney.com/podcast), where you can find more resources based on today's discussion, as well as request to be a member of our Hearing Wellness Journey Community on Facebook. That's available for our listeners exclusively on [Hearing Wellness Journey.com/podcast](https://hearingwellnessjourney.com/podcast).