



# Retired police officer discovers a new world through hearing

Meet Jim Cudo, a retired Cleveland police officer who lived for many years with frustrating hearing loss. Now, after having his hearing loss treated, he says it completely changed his family and work life and opened up a new and beautiful world.

## Living with a Hearing Loss

When Jim Cudo retired from the Cleveland Police Department, he knew he had hearing loss. Jim had developed a high-frequency hearing loss from noise exposure at the shooting range. Beginning in his early 20's, Jim had practiced at the range without wearing any kind of hearing protection.

Jim's failing hearing was noticeable to his friends and family. Jim's wife Linda had been urging him to have his hearing checked for years. Wanting to take action, Jim decided to visit a hearing clinic. But after having ear molds made, he became uncomfortable with the idea of wearing something in his ear and decided he was not ready.

Jim simply found his hearing loss too difficult to address. "You get down on yourself," Jim explains.

Two years later, Jim's hearing was worse than it had ever been, and he knew it was affecting his relationships with loved ones, particularly his young granddaughter, Courtney. Jim found it increasingly difficult to hear Courtney's young female voice. He found himself repeating "honey, I can't hear you," making communication a big challenge for both of them.

"She is only a child, but she would get upset or frustrated and I could see it," Jim says.

Difficulty understanding Courtney, whom he doted on, was one of the main reasons Jim decided to revisit the audiologist and have his hearing treated. Jim was tired of missing out on life because he couldn't hear.

"Hearing loss makes you feel isolated because you can't hear. You don't want to ask that question, 'what did you say?' You don't feel good about yourself," Jim says.

Decibels

A Lesson in Hearing Awareness

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## Ready to Change His Life Through Hearing

Finally ready to fully address his hearing loss, Jim consulted his general physician, who put him in contact with an audiologist.

Jim had already made the decision to choose the best hearing instrument available to fit his lifestyle. After retirement, Jim began work as a process server, meaning he serves civil papers for the courts. In that position, Jim has to constantly drive in his car and walk from door to door, making the ability to hear other cars and people in the street critical to his job. "It could be something that saves my life," he says.

In addition, Jim wanted to make sure he could fully enjoy every social situation with friends and family. It was important to him to avoid hearing instruments he had seen in the past that were "big and bulky."

To meet his needs, Jim's audiologist fit him with Siemens Life 700 hearing instruments. The instruments are small, stylish and provide the sound quality Jim required.

Jim says the instruments are so tiny that people don't know he is wearing them at all. In fact, he has to touch the hearing instrument himself to know he is wearing them. Although Jim has never worn a hearing aid, the Siemens Life instruments are so simple to use, he doesn't even need to look in a mirror to put them in.

"I always thought they would be difficult to put on but I found it to be quite easy" he says.

## A New World of Sound

Jim says his hearing instruments have made him a different person. At work, he never has to ask his colleagues to repeat themselves. At home, he can hear his wife from a different room, making his wife very happy.

Everything around him sounds better than before, he says. Water running from the faucet, for example, now makes a completely different sound. His hearing is so crisp and clear that when he goes to the market, he can hear the wheels clicking on the shopping cart behind him.

During his recent 40th wedding anniversary celebration at a restaurant with his family, he could hear his whole family despite the noise around them. "It's a different world in all aspects for me. And it has made me feel good," he says.

Most importantly, Jim can now hear every word that his granddaughter Courtney says. He recounts a recent afternoon when she was reading a story and he didn't have to ask her once to repeat what she said.

"She said 'my papa can hear me better now.' That feeling, for me, is so beautiful," Jim says.

Now, at 62 years old, Jim wishes he had addressed his hearing loss earlier. Nevertheless, he is happy enjoying all the decibels of his life he was missing before.

## Decibels