

# Whisper sweet nothings in my ear, darling

Undiagnosed hearing loss and failure to correctly remedy the condition are major causes of breakdown in relationships.

Valentine's Day is nearly upon us and there's nothing more romantic than spending time with someone special, whispering sweet nothings in their ear. But how often do you find yourself having to repeat yourself? And how many times do you reach a point where you say, "Don't worry about it." The moment is lost and the intention spoilt. Having an undiagnosed and untreated hearing impairment can have a fundamental impact on your personal relationships and if left, lead to a breakdown in communication between your partner and you.

Research shows that hearing aids significantly increase a person's cognition of spoken language, showing a profound improvement of communication in social settings. Just imagine how much more profound the effect will be in your closest relationships with spouses and partners. Research shows that up to 84% of hearing aid users have reported easier communication with loved ones.

## Challenging

"Trying to communicate with a person that is hard of hearing can be challenging at best. In addition to this, hard of hearing or profoundly deaf individuals regularly feel as if they are excluded from conversations. It often becomes the partner's responsibility to interpret for the deaf person in a social setting which creates a delicate balance between both partners actually enjoying the conversation. The difficulties can be further exasperated in an intimate setting and can often lead to an unnecessary breakdown in the relationship," says Lezanie Bakker, corporate manager of audiology at Oticon South Africa.

## Facing Facts

Hearing loss is a disability that experts classify to be worse than blindness. A blind person is isolated from images whereas a deaf person becomes isolated from the world. It has a profound impact on the person's quality of life not to mention the person's loved ones that are adversely affected by it as well.

"We often find that a person that experiences hearing loss shies away from social activities because they don't enjoy it. They often lose friends because it takes the 'fun' out of any activity when you need to shout to be heard. In severe cases this isolation and feeling of being excluded can lead to depression, anxiety and stress in the home, the one place where these feelings should never find a foothold. Research shows that up to 46% of individuals that experience a hearing loss, avoid dealing with it," says Lezanie.

## Hearing aid technology

Say goodbye to big and bulky hearing instruments and hello to smooth and slick technology that allows users an almost invisible hearing aid that is smaller than a paperclip. Today's aids are capable of interacting with Bluetooth devices and deliver superior results, unlocking the full potential of electronic audio devices. The new Oticon ConnectLine system, featuring the ConnectLine TV Adaptor and ConnectLine Phone Adaptor, takes the wireless connectivity of the Oticon Dual, Epoq and Vigo Connect hearing instruments beyond connection to cell phones, music players and PCs by streaming audio from televisions and landline phones directly to a wearer's hearing aid.

“The need for many people with hearing loss to turn the volume of the television so loud that it drives others out of the room is a recurring source of frustration for many families. It is a sterling example where technological advancements in the field of wireless connectivity can make a profound difference in the day to day activities of people experiencing a hearing loss,” explains Lezanie.

Celebrate the season of love by giving yourself or your loved one the gift of hearing this Valentine's Day. For further information contact 0800 OTICON (toll free) or visit [www.oticon.co.za](http://www.oticon.co.za).

## **About Oticon**

Oticon claims to be one of the most innovative hearing aid manufacturers on the market. With more than 100 years of experience, the company is said to have spearheaded a number of technological breakthroughs which have made a significant difference for people with hearing loss. These include the what is reckoned to be the first ear-level digital hearing aid, the first voice-activated hearing instruments, the first hearing system with Artificial Intelligence, the first stylish “fashion” hearing device and the first hearing device to connect wirelessly to modern, Bluetooth-enabled equipment. Oticon is reputedly the only hearing aid manufacturer with its own psycho acoustic research centre, ensuring that the needs of hearing aid users are always put first when developing new solutions. For more information go to [www.oticon.co.za](http://www.oticon.co.za).

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