

*Jan Burgess
Mile End, SA
(Age 55)*



Dear Hearing Life,

I wish to tell you about my wonderful experience and eternal gratitude for a life restored...

“Is my hearing bad enough to warrant hearing aids?” I asked Katrina, Hearing Life Audiometrist in December 2003. She replied, “Jan, anyone has to be ready for aids. Try them and see what a difference they make in your life. Then you’ll make your decision.”

Well, here I am just over 12 months later. I wear my aids almost every waking hour, and if I forget someone reminds me. What has changed? Me! The most noticeable, visual change can be seen from the photographs; one just after I began wearing the aids, and the others are very recent. What have hearing aids got to do with weight loss? Having confidence to change is the most vital factor in making things happen in your life. I needed to lose weight, but didn’t feel good enough about myself to maintain a sensible eating program.

Wearing aids brought about so many changes at work, with family and in social situations, that I wanted a new physical shape to match the new, confident me. At work I now attend a training day and concentrate for the duration, instead of losing the plot and yawning by 2pm through the effort needed to hear. I take part in discussions assertively, speaking clearly, as I have kept pace with the information exchanges, and will not misunderstand through guessing. I am a more active listener, and give supportive body language. My relationships have also improved.

P.T.O.

I can participate in family and social gatherings; have more fun playing games; and laugh at jokes, as well as holding my own with social banter. No longer do I feel too out of touch to join in. I have not dozed off in a movie since I got my aids, and am able to enjoy television once more.

Someone asked me if I intended to grow out my short hair to cover my aids. They are rarely visible anyway, and I actually find referring to them very useful as a prompt to people to speak more clearly. I feel confident in saying, if necessary, "I'm sorry, even though I wear hearing aids, I didn't quite hear you." People respond openly to this.

I enjoy walking and listening to the sounds around me. The other day I was aware of the chink of dried leaves as they rolled across the footpath. I am also much safer now, as I'm more likely to hear a vehicle approaching!

All in all, improved hearing has led to me feeling deserving, capable, invigorated, younger and more attractive – the lack of which I hadn't associated with my reduced hearing until Katrina encouraged me to "have a try".

If you feel good, you act brightly and people respond positively. This in turn builds your confidence, and you want to look attractive, dress well and have a spring in your step. Being thinner reflects the way I feel. I am now making other major decisions for an exciting future, and look forward to an energetic life. A life in which my hearing aids will continue to be most valued.

Yours Sincerely,

Jan Burgess.