

# Live Life Learning



It's never too late to learn something new and challenge ourselves to rise to a higher level. Continual learning is beneficial for self-confidence. It supports our overall well-being and aids in improving quality of life. Studies show that when older adults learn a new skill like playing an instrument, taking on a new language or a new technology, it strengthens the connections within the brain, possibly diminishing the potential for dementia or other related illnesses.<sup>1,2</sup>

For adults with cochlear implants, pushing out of your comfort zone to learn something new can be an even bigger challenge. For a new recipient, understanding the new found sounds and appreciating all that the new technology has to offer can be overwhelming in itself. Everyone progresses and learns differently, and the implant is very different from natural hearing. But with time and patience, you can learn to appreciate your hearing with a cochlear implant.

Cochlear understands your challenges and is here to assist you in your quest to continue life learning. Here are a few tips and approaches you might consider for optimizing your learning potential.

## Ideal learning environment checklist:

- Ensure the room is well lit.
- Position yourself so the lights are not glaring in your eyes.
- Eliminate visual distractions within the room such as sitting by a window, etc.
- Sit in the front center of the room to eliminate auditory distractions.
- Use your telecoil or other assistive devices should you have the opportunity.
- Use a room that is carpeted vs. tile or hardwood. Carpeting acts as a buffer for background noise.
- Whenever possible, sit in a room that has furniture. An open room can cause poor acoustics.
- Make sure there is good ventilation in the room, so you are not distracted.
- Make sure you have a clear view if watching a presentation, speaker, etc.
- Ensure the doors and windows are closed to eliminate outside noise interference.

Learning opportunities are all around us! When we have an open mind and an attitude of wonder and curiosity, anything is possible. Think of all the learning opportunities that surround you every day. Strive to learn and enhance your understanding of the world around you, provide yourself with more and better opportunities and improve your quality of life by living life learning!

1. Gidicsin, C. M., Maye, J. E., Locascio, J. J., Pepin, L. C., Phillosaint, M., Becker, J. A., ... Johnson, K. A. (2015). Cognitive activity relates to cognitive performance but not to Alzheimer disease biomarkers. *Neurology*, 85(1), 48 LP-55. <https://doi.org/10.1212/WNL.0000000000001704>

2. Learning-a-New-Skill-Works-Best-To-Keep-Your-Brain-Sharp @ Www.Npr.Org. (9 August 2019). Retrieved from [http://www.npr.org/2014/05/05/309006780/learning-a-new-skill-works-best-to-keep-your-brain-sharp?utm\\_source=npr\\_newsletter&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=20140511&utm\\_campaign=mostemailed&utm\\_term=nprnews](http://www.npr.org/2014/05/05/309006780/learning-a-new-skill-works-best-to-keep-your-brain-sharp?utm_source=npr_newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=20140511&utm_campaign=mostemailed&utm_term=nprnews)

\* SNR-NR, WNR and SCAN are approved for use with any recipient ages 6 years and older who is able to 1) complete objective speech perception testing in quiet and in noise in order to determine and document performance 2) report a preference for different program settings.

\*\* ForwardFocus can only be enabled by a hearing implant specialist. It should only be activated for users 12 years and older who are able to reliably provide feedback on sound quality and understand how to use the feature when moving to different or changing environments. It may be possible to have decreased speech understanding when using ForwardFocus in a quiet environment.

Please seek advice from your health professional about treatments for hearing loss. Outcomes may vary, and your health professional will advise you about the factors which could affect your outcome. Always read the instructions for use. Not all products are available in all countries. Please contact your local Cochlear representative for product information.

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## Tips for establishing the right mindset for learning:

- 1 Ensure you are truly interested in the topic you are trying to learn. This will play a huge factor in your motivation and focus.
- 2 Be self-confident in your pursuit for learning. Doubting yourself and your device could impact your success.
- 3 Be assertive, yet polite, with your requests and needs.
- 4 Use "I" statements about not hearing well and don't blame others.
- 5 Make specific requests if you are struggling to hear and explain why you are struggling to hear.
- 6 As always, be courteous and gracious with your requests.
- 7 Are you feeling ill or tired? Emotionally ready? If not, it might not be the ideal day for taking on something new.
- 8 Speak to your clinician to ensure that your processor mapping is set appropriately for the environment you will be learning in.
- 9 Ask about enabling features such as SCAN\*, ForwardFocus\*\* or utilize wireless accessories such as a Mini Mic or TV Streamer to further support your learning endeavors.