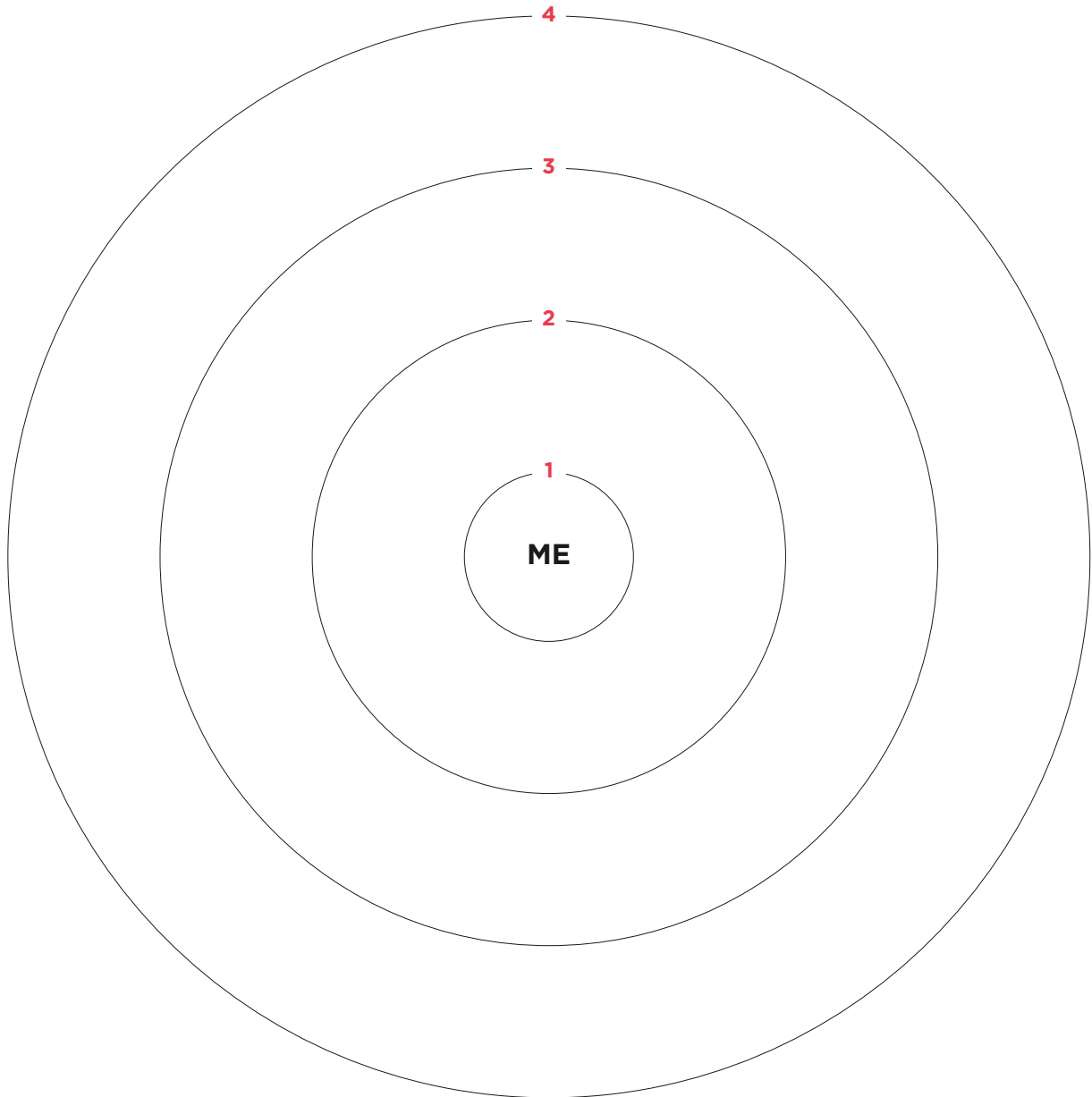


## COMMUNICATION RINGS



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## COMMUNICATION RINGS

### THE SOCIAL NETWORK EXERCISE

Individuals with hearing loss are surrounded by multiple communication partners who make up their social networks. The size and scope of social networks vary from person to person. Some may be limited to a select few while others may expand broadly through multiple communication environments. The Communication Rings is an exercise that will allow individuals to think about the people who make up their social networks and to identify the frequency and potential challenges to communication with these individuals.

### PURPOSE OF THE EXERCISE

The Communication Rings tool encourages individuals to think of the people who are parts of their lives and consider how their hearing loss might impact their relationships with them. Once a person has identified individuals in their social networks, a discussion can follow about their communication situations. How and where communication occurs (e.g., over the telephone, at home, at the shopping center) and the effectiveness of that communication (e.g., very successful, problematic) is highlighted. This discussion in turn raises awareness regarding communication partnerships and their environments and facilitates discussion and formulation of rehabilitation goals.

### INSTRUCTIONS

The Communication Rings consist of four circles:



**Ring No. 1.** The center or core represents the person completing the rings.



**Ring No. 2.** The inner circle represents the most important people in the individual's social network – those the individual shares a lot of time with or feels particularly close to.



**Ring No. 3.** The middle circle represents people who are still very important but not as close or important as the people in the inner circle.



**Ring No. 4.** The outer circle is reserved for those individuals who are less important but are present on a regular basis.

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**Reference:** This exercise is adapted from Antonucci, T. C., and Akiyama, H. (1987). Social networks in adult life and a preliminary examination of the convoy model. *Journal of Gerontology*, 42(5), 519-527.