

QUICK START GUIDE: SESSION ONE TOPICS

Now that you have prepared for the program, it is time to develop the content and topics for your first session. The primary goal for Session One is to enable the group to express their life experiences with hearing loss and to recognize the sources of their communication challenges.

Identify Group Perspectives

Encourage participants to write down 5 to 10 ways (or more) hearing loss affects them and their significant others. Ask attendees to share their perspectives regarding what problems they experience. This activity helps the group warm-up and bond with each other. They should now be aware that they are not the only one experiencing challenges with living with hearing loss.

To make this activity easier, you may want to acquire Sam Trychin's *Living With Hearing Loss: Workbook* (2002), which is available for purchase online.

Identify Daily Challenges

After identifying life experiences, you can now work with the group to identify sources of everyday difficulties, encouraging them to be as specific as possible. As group participants identify particular sources for challenges, you can organize them into the following categories: Talker, Listener, Environment, and Message. If possible, you may want to use a white board or chalk board to start categorizing the various challenges.

Solicit Group Input

Toward the end of the first session, as time allows, ask the group if there is anything in particular that they would like to learn more about.

Possible topics could be: assistive listening devices, hearing aid expectations, traveling tips, "Why won't he/she wear their hearing aids?", "Why won't he/she get hearing aids?", tinnitus, how the ear works, cochlear implants, etc.

You can provide answers to their questions as time allows, and/or make time to address some of their questions during the second session.