

Does It Matter?

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Some years ago, I read the stunning poetry of [Siegfried Sassoon](#). In 1917, already a veteran of the horrific European battlefields, he penned one of the most famous and searing war poems ever written, *Does It Matter?*, which challenged the attitudes towards war and disability at the time.

100 years later, I'm using Sassoon's questions as the inspiration to question attitudes towards hearing loss.

It's easy for us to forget – I, as a seasoned hearing loss and you, the seasoned hearing health professionals – that each new person who develops hearing loss has walk the same road to acceptance, feeling the sting of lingering stigma and ignorance by those whose hearing is 'normal'. Acceptance of hearing loss is a journey – and often a private one.

Does It Matter? Losing Your Hearing?

Does it matter? – losing your hearing?

For people will always be nice.

When asked to speak up, they're happy

To shout louder, but for just one sentence.

Then lower it back for the next.

Does it matter? – not understanding?

People don't mind repeating their words

Unless they forget what they've said

Or they're tired, grumpy or stressed

Then they'll say, "oh just never mind".

Does it matter? – wearing an aid?

Most people are quick to admire:

"It hardly shows at all, and the color

Is great because it blends with your hair."

(But they think, “I’m glad it’s not me.”)

Does it matter? – not following along?

As the conversation spirals away?

It’s hard to say *hey, what did you say?*

But as they back up the dialogue,

They let only a bit of eye-rolling show.

Does it matter? – losing your hearing?

Yes it does – but mostly to me.

Am *I* patient with people whose memory

Is failing, or those complaining of pain?

We all have a *thing*, and mine is *hearing*.

But still – it matters to me.

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