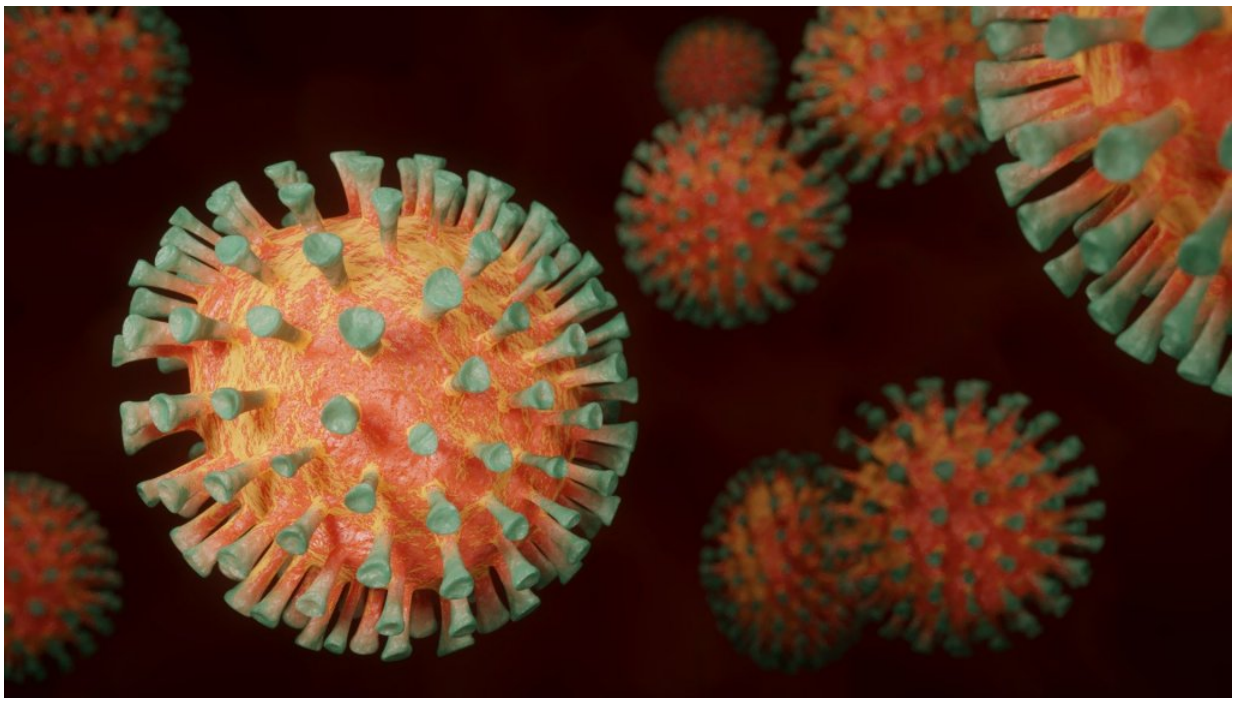
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During The Pandemic — We Still Need You!

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> *"It's hard to find anything good to say about being stuck inside except that I haven't had to ask anybody to repeat themselves."*

Someone texted this to me this week after I gave a webinar for CHHA called "Surviving the Pandemic: A Lighter-Hearted Look at Staying Sane in an Insane World." I clearly hadn't cheered her up at all, although she *did* learn about ASR apps that help us make sense of uncaptioned media and live conversations. Also, she learned that changing her wax guards once in a while is a good idea, rather than waiting for your audiologist to do it. I expect she experienced a big and startling boom when she changed it later that day.

In preparation for my webinar, I went to the website of my audiologist. I was comforted to read that she was available for Telehealth consultations, curbside supplies, and minor hearing aid repairs. In addition, should a client experience sudden hearing loss or major hearing aid issues, a personal (and presumably safely conducted) meeting can be set up.

And when I say "comforted," I really mean it. In this time of coronavirus, most of us have stocked up on toilet paper (don't ask me why – gastro issues are not among the listed symptoms) and peanut butter. Some things are harder to get, like oatmeal, flour, and sugar; apparently, we are baking up a storm in our sheltering-at-home. One thing for certain – there are going to be a *lot* of overweight people at the end of the virus tunnel. Yesterday, I felt like someone out of the rationing

measures during WW2; I came home and gleefully told the Hearing Husband I'd managed to score some sugar. (We also use it to make hummingbird food; a bird's gotta eat, too!)



In early March, when the Hearing Husband and I arrived home after visiting southern California, I checked the supplies of my most important necessities: hearing aid batteries. I am a battery-operated person and without my 312s, 13s, and 675s, I stop functioning. To clarify, I don't have three ears, but I have two different hearing aids for the left side, one of which I use primarily for streaming. Anyway, my supplies were low-ish, so I ordered a huge box of each from Amazon. They were cheaper, what can I say? Wax guards, I got directly from a clinic, and I have enough dry-aid bricks for a year, the same with microphone protectors for my CI sound processor.

So, I'm stocked up, hearing-wise, with batteries and all sorts of devices to keep me connected. But it still helps to know that if I *need* my audiologist, she'll be there for me. I appreciate that many clinics have had to lay off audiology and support staff; a scary by-product of a world forced indoors.

But here's a shout-out to all the hearing care professionals, when we bang our pots at night to celebrate front-liners, we're thinking of you, too. We *will* get through it together, and if you are there for us when we need you during the pandemic, we will be there for you forever.

And to that person with hearing loss ricocheting solo off the walls of her home – I encouraged her to get exercise, limit the amount of time she obsesses over the news, use her devices and to reach out on social media to other people with hearing loss. Keeping connected is a two-way street that provides some sanity in an insane world. Suggest to your clients to reach out to others on hearing loss social media through – they will be glad to hear from you!