

Hearing Loss
by
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Worried Caller: Hello?

111 Nurse: Yes? Why are calling today?

Caller: I've suddenly lost hearing in one ear...

Nurse (trying to be calm): I see. Have you banged your head on anything recently?

Caller: No...

Nurse: Have you taken any new medications?

Caller: No...

Nurse: Have you ever shared a syringe with anybody?

Caller: No!

Nurse: Do you have any ideas where your symptoms may come from?

Caller: I've been listening to lots of loud music... Throughout my life.

Nurse (not so calm anymore): ... Ohhhhh...

Caller: So... Do you have any advice for me?

Nurse: I guess get used to using your other ear...

Caller: I'm not going to get better?

Nurse: Nope. Your good ear is clearly fine, though.

Caller: But I need my other ear, I'm a musician...

Nurse: Just remember all the good times you had together. All the sounds of birds singing, all the classic rock riffing...

Caller: That's your genuine response?

Nurse: Would you rather I said you'll never enjoy music again?

Caller: No, but...

Nurse (interrupting): Well there you go. Are you a nostalgic person?

Caller: I dunno. Maybe.

Nurse: Right! People like you love reminiscing about the past.

Caller: Look drop it! I'm supposed to be happy is that what you're saying?

Nurse: It's bitter sweet at least, right?

Caller: I mean, not really.

Nurse: Why not?

Caller: Is this call going to turn into some kind of philosophical debate?

Nurse: That's what I've been trained to do.

Caller: I don't believe you...

Nurse: Oh yes. Though I've been encouraged not to go too dark. I'm not supposed to discuss Nietzsche with patients.

Caller: I bet.

Nurse: There was this one time I did and I gave a person a huge panic attack.

Caller: How?

Nurse: I said he'll be completely fine but his life had no meaning whatsoever.

Caller: Why did you say that?

Nurse: I got it the wrong way round. I'm used to saying to people you won't be fine, but your life still has meaning. It could happen to anyone.

Caller: Just a simple mix up.

Nurse: Right, that's exactly what I said when the guy complained.

Caller: You didn't get sacked?

Nurse: I nearly did. Then I got into a philosophical argument with my boss. I pointed out how we're all equal. Though that does mean I can't ever expect a pay rise.

Caller: But you know you'd never get one? Even if you didn't convert your boss into a communist?

Nurse: I maybe could if you put in a good word for me...

Caller: And why would I do that?

Nurse: Because I've improved your outlook on life...

Caller: That's not true. You've actually made me paranoid about calling this number again.

Nurse: And that will free up call spaces for people who REALLY need treatment.

Caller: I do too!

Nurse: No you don't you brought this on yourself! You listen to years of loud music and get surprised when you get hearing loss?

Caller: Yeah...

Nurse: Well you shouldn't be! Anyway, about my pay rise...

Caller: Look, I don't mean to be rude, but I really don't care how much you're earning or how much you could be. Which is good for you - As Nietzsche put it 'That which does not kill us makes us stronger.'

Nurse: Yeah, well Nietzsche also said 'without music, life would be a mistake.'

Caller: Screw you!