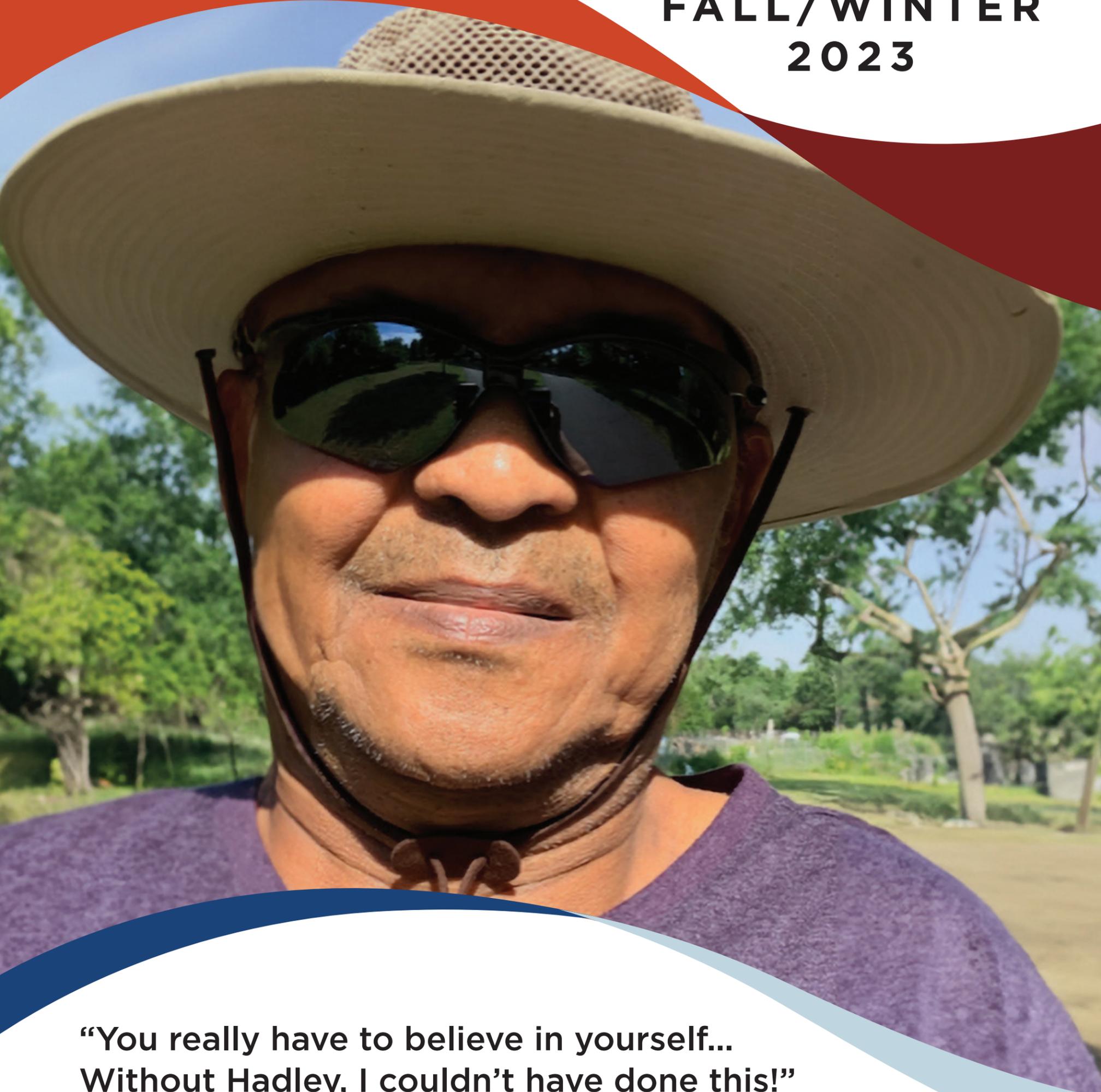


FALL/WINTER  
2023



**“You really have to believe in yourself...  
Without Hadley, I couldn’t have done this!”**  
—Cyril Purnwasy

 Hadley  
**Thrive**

## Inside this issue

- 4 Hadley Helps Alice Manage Diabetes with Vision Loss
- 5 Sharon Murphy: “Hadley was the Contact that Made the Difference”
- 6 Hadley Help Desk Gets High Marks from Members
- 8 Hadley Fills a Void for Diane Cottenden
- 9 Cyril Purnwasy: “The Longest Journey Begins with the First Step”
- 10 Vision Loss Bloopers: The Power of a Good Laugh
- 11 Your Gift Matters

On the cover: Hadley HERO, Cyril Purnwasy.

### Presenting the Hadley Woman’s Board

### 2023 Braille Holiday Card

Hadley’s 2023 braille holiday cards are ready to ship. This year’s artwork features snowflakes falling on a silver birch forest against a light-blue sky, as stocking-capped cardinals merrily perch on scattered branches, creating a whimsical winter scene. A bird, tree and snowflakes are embossed for tactile effect. The inside greeting, “Wishing you peace, happiness and the spirit of the season,” is in both print and braille. Holiday cards may also be customized with corporate or personal imprints. Order online at [brailleholidaycard.hadleyhelps.org](https://brailleholidaycard.hadleyhelps.org) or call 800.323.4238, extension 2755.



Prefer a Custom Photo Card? Shop on [Minted.com](https://Minted.com). When you use the code **FUNDRAISEHADLEY23**, you will **save 20%** on your order, and Minted will donate 15% of your purchase to Hadley. This offer also



applies to Minted’s stationery, gifts and home decor items and can be applied any time of year.

Scan the code to order your braille holiday cards today.

## Why the New Look for Thrive?

At our core, Hadley is about empowering people with vision loss; empowering them to thrive. In fact, that's why we call this publication THRIVE. But what we realized is that the very publication that bears the name THRIVE was difficult for many to read. So, we listened, learned and adjusted. The result is the new design for the publication you are now reading.

What's new? THRIVE is larger, to accommodate increased text size and line spacing. We've made the headings more prominent and the overall design cleaner. We have added high-contrast colors to help content stand out and non-glossy paper to reduce glare. All these changes are intended to make THRIVE more readable to everyone, no matter their level of vision.

Of course, for those who prefer to read this publication online, you can still find it on our website at: **HadleyHelps.org/publications**, or **scan the code on the right**. We hope you enjoy THRIVE and we welcome your feedback.



## Double Your Impact on Giving Tuesday – November 28, 2023

Your gift on Giving Tuesday, a worldwide day of generosity, will allow Hadley to help learners like Mary Frances Early.

Mary shares, “The Hadley website presented a treasure trove of useful information. Not only does it feature excellent videos in technology, it also includes discussion groups, recreation and tips for daily living with vision loss. Because of Hadley, I am still enjoying an active life that includes broad communication with others. I feel so fortunate to have discovered this website and recommend it highly to others with vision loss!”

On Giving Tuesday, your contribution will have an even greater impact. All gifts on that day, up to \$25,000, will be generously matched by longtime Hadley donors.

To donate, visit **www.HadleyHelps.org/GivingTuesday** or **scan the code here**.



## Hadley Helps Alice Manage Diabetes with Vision Loss

Alice West-Ferguson was delighted when Hadley launched its Managing Diabetes workshop series. She had contacted Hadley just a few days before to ask about this type of support.

“I was having trouble with the diabetes pen,” Alice shared. “The Hadley workshop showed me how to use it, and I have been doing it myself every day since!”

Alice also puts into practice many other Hadley tips such as how to slice away from her hand to work safely in the kitchen; ways to improve the lighting in her home to help her see her medications; and how to use the



**Alice took charge of her health with Hadley’s Managing Diabetes series.**

text-to-speech feature on her smart phone. “Hadley is very helpful,” she states. “I am impressed by all it offers.” Alice especially likes being able to replay the workshops to make sure she has fully learned the material.

After retiring from her work as a computer specialist in 1997, Alice enjoyed being a substitute teacher, researching her genealogy, and swimming several days a week.

Alice is now 81 years old and health challenges, including vision loss, have made it difficult to do many of the things she loves. Through local services in Maryland, she received in-person training to help do things like use bump dots to label settings on her microwave. She is now awaiting another in-home visit to learn to use her walker along with a white cane so she can navigate outside of her apartment. In the meantime, she is staying physically active by walking in place—a suggestion she picked up in a Hadley Presents podcast.

Help flows both ways between Alice and Hadley. She supports Hadley financially and routinely gives feedback on the workshops. In fact, her reviews have been so helpful that she was named a Hadley HERO.



**“Thanks to Hadley I don’t feel so helpless.”**  
—Sharon Murphy

## “Hadley was the Contact that Made the Difference”

Sharon Murphy loves to read. If she could choose any place to be, it would be a library surrounded by books.

But reading is more difficult now. “Age-related macular degeneration slowly carved a path through my life,” Sharon explains. A friend suggested she reach out to Hadley for help.

When she called, Hadley staff took time to get to know her and suggested she give talking books a try. “The next thing you know, a digital talking book player and book cartridges arrived at my door,” Sharon recalls.

Hadley’s personal touch makes all the difference to Sharon. “There is always someone there. Many organizations offer a range of services, but you don’t always get a timely answer. Hadley is different. It is fabulous to have someone help me be independent. It is a gift.”

With her digital talking book player, Sharon can also listen to Hadley workshops. When she needs the next workshop mailed out, Hadley is just a phone call away.

Sharon, now 80, spent most of her life in the Washington, D.C. area. She worked for an international organization and then went back to school to become a psychotherapist. When driving was no longer possible, she relocated to New York City, where she has other transportation options and is near her daughter.

New York City living agrees with Sharon. She loves exploring all the city has to offer. She gets around mostly by public transportation, and she credits her fourth-floor walkup for keeping her fit and agile.

In such a large city, Sharon has access to helpful services. However, Hadley holds a special place in her heart. “It is a terrific operation. Hadley was the contact that made the difference,” she states. “You’ve given me so much. Thanks to Hadley, I don’t feel so helpless.”

## Hadley Help Desk Gets High Marks from Members



**“People are reassured to hear that Hadley can help them right away...”** —Anna Sechorz, Community Engagement Specialist

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At Hadley, no call goes unanswered. The team responsible for this is our Help Desk.

These professionals understand that the person at the other end of the phone may feel frustrated and overwhelmed. “Many people don’t know where to start. They often find Hadley when their doctor has no more options for them, and they don’t know what to do,” Anna Sechorz, a lead member of the Help Desk team explains.

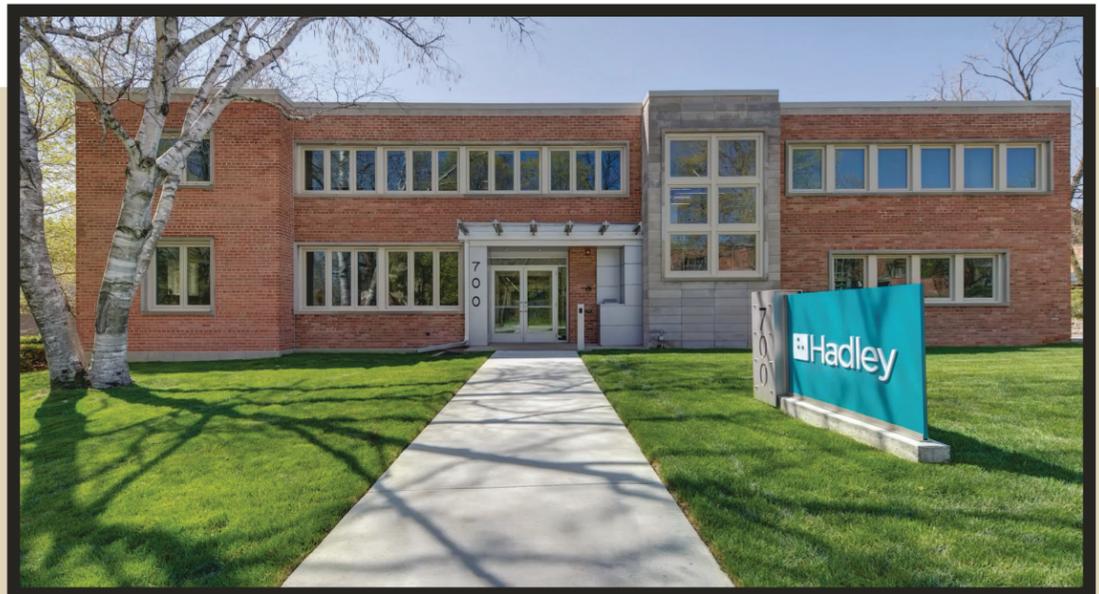
With a warm and friendly approach, support specialists listen carefully and ask questions so they can be as helpful as possible.

Anna, who has been with Hadley for 23 years, knows the essential role that Hadley plays. “Getting in-person services through vision rehab agencies can take as much as six months to a year,” she shares.

“People are reassured to hear that Hadley can help them right away and that we can help them discover new ways to do things that vision loss has made more difficult.”

Anna is inspired by the tremendous impact of the new learning model Hadley adopted in 2020. “The help we offer is relevant and practical. People learn things to help them in their everyday life. Something as straightforward as putting a label on a microwave can make a big difference to someone. It helps them maintain their independence.”

People call Hadley with a wide range of needs, so the Help Desk is prepared to connect them with outside resources too, if that is a better fit. Support specialists refer to vetted and verified lists to help individuals locate financial assistance, local agencies and support groups, technology equipment, and more.



**At Hadley, no call goes unanswered.**

The Help Desk also manages Hadley’s new Peer-to-Peer mentoring program. They identify promising pairings through their interactions, make the connections, and provide any needed guidance. “Some of our callers have never talked to another visually impaired person who would understand what they are going through,” Anna states.

This personal connection is also what makes Hadley’s Help Desk so special and effective. On many occasions, Anna and her colleagues have been told, “You’re the only organization that always returns my calls.” The time they spend on the phone and their warm, friendly approach makes a huge difference because people know they are being heard and that they have found someone who wants to help.

Frequently, these conversations conclude with a sigh of relief. “I was terrified before, but now I am not anymore,” and “I feel so much better now that I found you,” Hadley learners have shared.



Thanks to **you**, people facing vision loss can learn without barriers or boundaries.

## Hadley Fills a Void for Diane Cottenden

Diane Cottenden is the type of person who jumps in to find solutions for any problem that comes her way. When confronted with sudden vision loss, Diane went to work looking for answers.

The state of Arizona put her on a waiting list for in-person vision rehab services. “They told me there are so many people going blind in the state that they don’t have the manpower to accommodate it.” She was put on a waiting list that they estimated would be six to eight months.

So, her online search continued. “I stumbled onto Hadley and I haven’t left your site since!” Diane recalls.



**Diane was put on a waiting list for state services, but received help from Hadley right away.**

She started with Hadley’s Managing Diabetes series as managing her diabetes was top of mind. From there, she has gone on to take more than 90 workshops and discussion groups across a wide range of topics including cooking, safety and technology.

“There is so much you have available. I am so grateful,” Diane states. “I don’t think I could have gotten by without you, without Hadley.”

What stands out to Diane about Hadley is our responsiveness. “I am just one of thousands of people getting services from Hadley, but you see me. That’s amazing.”



**Thank you** for helping Hadley learners thrive at home, at work and in the community. Because you care, thousands of people are discovering new ways to do things in their daily lives that are more difficult with vision loss.

Hadley offers more than 700 online workshops, discussion groups and podcast episodes that people can access 24 hours a day, seven days a week. And thanks to your generosity, all of Hadley’s programs are free of charge so cost is not a barrier.



**Cyril is a Hadley HERO for the large volume of workshops he's completed.**

## “The Longest Journey Begins with the First Step”

Cyril Purnwasy was one of the first people to complete Hadley's Braille for Everyday Use and Contracted Braille workshops. Then, he started again. “I practice almost every day,” he states.

For this second time, Cyril added the slate and stylus to write out the example sentences. This has boosted his confidence and skills. He knows the time he spends working helps him improve. Now, he is pleased to report, “I can read and write braille, label items, and make lists of things.”

Cyril began having problems with his vision as a teenager when he lived in Guyana. “It got so bad that I couldn't see anything,” he shares.

The doctor diagnosed him with glaucoma and after several weeks of treatment, he noticed improvement.

Soon after Cyril moved to Schenectady, NY, in 2019, his vision started to further deteriorate. He sought help from the Northeastern Association for the Blind at Albany, who provided him with training to use a white cane and referred him to Hadley to learn even more—including braille.

Cyril, now 60, wasn't sure he was ready for braille, but a friend who is blind encouraged him to jump in, so he did. Cyril was named a Hadley HERO for the large volume of workshops he's taken—not only braille but also on topics including safety basics, container gardening, cooking, and using an Android phone with low vision.

His advice to others is the same thing he tells himself: Stay focused and keep working. “You have to believe in yourself,” he says. “The longest journey begins with the first step. You're the one in charge.”

Cyril is grateful to Hadley for all the help he has received and for the fact that there is no cost for Hadley's workshops. “Enrolling with Hadley was the best thing that has happened to me,” Cyril declares. “Without Hadley, I couldn't have done this.”

## Vision Loss Bloopers: The Power of a Good Laugh

As the saying goes, laughter is the best medicine. “It can be helpful to healing and adjusting to a new condition, too,” says Hadley Chief Program Officer Ed Haines.

That helps explain the overwhelmingly positive response to the Hadley Presents podcast episode, “Vision Loss Bloopers.” In this program Hadley staff shared their own experiences that were embarrassing at the time but are good for a laugh now—like getting in the wrong car, wearing a mismatched outfit, and hugging a stranger who resembled a friend.

Podcast host Ricky Enger, who is visually impaired herself, reminds us these things happen to everyone regardless of our vision. “It is just part of the human condition. I think it helps a lot to understand that it’s not just you that these things will happen to.” She also emphasizes how helpful it can be to find humor in a situation, “if you can smile about it and look back on it with a chuckle, it’s so much better than wallowing in that embarrassment.”



**Podcast host Ricky Enger**

The message resonated with listeners. In fact, because of the tremendous feedback on the episode, we asked listeners to share their own bloopers. The response was overwhelming. Stay tuned for a Hadley Presents episode featuring listeners telling their own tales.

Celia Peterson is among the listeners who called with a funny story of her own. She was shopping using an app that reads signs and labels aloud, but it would not stop talking in the store. Embarrassed, Celia had her groceries delivered for a couple weeks afterwards, “but now it’s really funny and I share it with everybody in my family.” She is



also grateful to share a laugh with others across the Hadley community. “Thank you for making this podcast because we need humor,” says Celia. **Scan the code to listen to the Vision Loss Bloopers episode.**

## Your Gift Matters



We are grateful for the gifts and caring of donors that make it possible for Hadley to provide its services free of charge. Because cost is not a barrier, Hadley is accessible to anyone who turns to us for assistance.

There are many ways you can support Hadley, including:

- **Making a Gift from Your IRA:** You can make a direct transfer from an IRA to Hadley at age 70 1/2. The gift is not subject to taxes as it would be if you took the distribution. Contact the bank or broker holding your (non-Roth) IRA and ask them to send a gift to Hadley.
- **Donor Advised Fund (DAF):** Hadley is happy to receive contributions through your DAF. You can recommend a grant or recurring grants now to make an immediate impact.
- **Gifts of Securities:** Transfer instructions can be found at [HadleyHelps.org/gifts-securities](https://HadleyHelps.org/gifts-securities).

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact **Brooke Voss** at **847.784.2774** or **brooke@hadleyhelps.org**. Also, please contact Brooke when you plan to make a stock gift, so we know it is from you.

To learn more about donating to Hadley, **scan the code.**





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### Our Mission as a 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Organization

Hadley creates personalized learning opportunities that empower adults with vision loss or blindness to thrive—at home, at work and in their communities.

## Hadley Helps Nearly 70,000 People

When we launched the Hadley 2.0 learning approach in July 2020 after months of testing, we knew it would be successful. However, we have surpassed expectations!

Over the past three years, nearly 70,000 individuals have registered with Hadley for help navigating life with vision loss.

