Hadley

I lost my License and found acceptance

**Eugenia:** What I realized, if I didn’t accept this help from other people, where does it leave me? It’s isolating.

**Marc:** This is Hadley’s Insights and Sound Bites, where people facing vision loss share what has helped them cope and adjust.

**Eugenia:** Hi, this is Eugenia DeReu. I'm from the Buffalo, New York area. I'm 63. I'm legally blind. My moment that I'm talking about today is when I found out I lost my driver's license, which is three years ago, and I lost it because of my sight.

I've had my license since I was 17. And I was so excited to get it because it gives you a sense of freedom. You could jump in that car and go do anything. I could do anything anytime, anywhere I wanted. It was that freedom and when it was taken away, it was a big loss for me. And I'm used to being someone that does stuff for everybody. I grew up that way and my parents volunteered. They gave us this sense of community, family. I lost that and it's something I had to wrap around my head because I had to learn how to rely on other people. I was the one that always did that. But now I had to rely on family, friends.

I just felt guilty about it. What I realized if I didn't accept that help... I live in Buffalo. It's a very, very long winter. You can only do so much. So, it's isolating. And if I didn't accept this help from other people, where does it leave me? And I realized that if I accepted this help, maybe it could bring me back to a volunteering place, to a place where I can help people.

I'm slowly learning that I am getting out more for myself, which is a big part of this journey also. I am legally blind. I have to rely on people. I have to learn a different way of life, which I am. But maybe I can go volunteer at a food pantry. I can volunteer anywhere. There's something I can do. I know there is, and I can help other people.

And I think I realized that through my blindness and my family and friends, that I'm giving them that opportunity. I know that sounds odd, but it gives them the opportunity to help me, which I know it makes them feel good, and I had to accept that also. I just think the acceptance of help from your community is important. And I guess that's what I wanted to say. It's a big important to me because right now we are in the winter and I just started feeling isolated again. So, I have to start getting out there and really using those resources. And that's it. Thank you very much.

**Marc**: You never know who might need to hear your story. If you’d like to share with us, just leave us a message on our Insights & Sound Bites voicemail. By calling, 847-512-4867. Or, you can use your smartphone or computer and email us a recording to podcast@HadleyHelps.org.