Hadley

That really changed my life

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

**Karen:** My name is Karen. I'm from New York City. I have low vision. I can read if I hold paper up to my nose or use magnifiers, but the issues I have, and I don't know if it's getting worse or I'm just becoming more aware of it, I don't always recognize people, especially if I don't see them very often.

But the thing that really has changed my life was during the pandemic, I somehow became involved with ACB, the American Council of the Blind, and also its affiliate, the Councils of Citizens with Low Vision International, CCLVI. And even more recently, I've become active with the Greater New York Council of the Blind.

It was mentioned to me that there's such a thing as an identity cane. Now, an identity cane is used to let people know you have a visual problem. It's thin, it folds up into my purse, whereas a mobility cane, it's bigger and it's meant for people to find their way.

And so, I think having the identity cane answers some questions for people regarding my behavior and my eyes. In most cases, people are friendly and respectful. They realize, "Okay," and they may even think I'm totally blind, but that's okay because it gets me what I need. But I find that it’s made a big difference.

**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.