Hadley

You put one foot forward

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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.

**Gregory:** Hello, my name is Gregory Peterson from Elmwood Park, Illinois.

I was born with low vision. I was probably 15 maybe, 15, 14, 15-years-old. And I was diagnosed with rod and cone dystrophy. I've lived a prosperous life, a fulfilled life, I think. A couple kids, three kids and grandkids. And I became an operating engineer working on air conditioning and maintenance in a building.

And then about two years ago, I noticed my vision declining. I was like, "This is getting worse. Something's going on here." Find out I have cataracts. Saw the cataracts. They removed the cataracts. That's as good as I'm going to get. And here I am. Now I'm visually impaired, legally blind. And that's it.

**Marc:** Gregory reached out and discovered Hadley’s peer-to-peer program.

**Gregory:** The turning point, when I got my phone call from my mentor, somebody that has gone through and is going through vision loss, made the difference where I am now. It's been one of the best things, Bill and I, he calls every two weeks, and we don't talk about woe is me. We talk about all kinds of stuff, and what's out there. And he helps me out, and I help him out. And just to have somebody to talk to that's going through the same thing or has gone through the same thing. You put one foot forward at a time.

And it gives me a purpose now. I'm going to get involved. It's made a big difference for me and my family.

**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.