Hadley

“None of us know our future”

**Carolee:** So, I haven't driven in over a year, and that's a really hard one for me because I was one of these people that was so independent, I just went and did everything and just thought, you know, I would always be able to do that.

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

**Carolee:** Hello, my name is Carolee from Alabama, and I'm just wanting today to let you kind of hear my story with my vision loss. My story started when I was 73 and I'm now 79, so I'm six years into this.

I didn't know anything was really wrong with my eyes and I had always went maybe every two years, and I had my eyes checked and the last time I went, she says, you have the start of AMD macular. And to get on some vitamins. So, I didn't think too much of it. She said I had the start of it. So maybe that was, I don't know, a year before this happened. And in 73 I was with my husband. We were riding in his truck and he was driving and I noticed I couldn't see the cars in front of me. And I said to him, I said, something's wrong with my eyes. So, when we got back, we were in a different city at the time, and when I got back home, I said, I'm going to make an appointment. So, I went back to the eye doctor and she looked at me, she says, you need to go see a retinal specialist. And he informed me that I needed to get a shot in my eye.

So that day he did take care of my eye and what it was, it started in my right eye and my left eye wasn't affected at all. So, I couldn't tell that anything was really wrong. I had really good vision at that time in my left eye. So, this went on for a little bit, say three years, and then it went to my left eye and it's wet in both eyes. And I don't ask a lot of questions, actually, it makes me really, really nervous at this point about it.

I have a 5x magnifying glass now. I can still see as far as cooking and things like that. I'm not driving, my husband doesn't want me to drive. He doesn't trust with my sight. So, I haven't driven in over a year, and that's a really hard one for me because I was one of these people that was so independent, I just went and did everything and just thought, you know, I would always be able to do that.

And I'm still grateful today I will say that I can see what I can see and it's six years.

So, I guess what I want to say is it was a shock. And when it first happened, I was angry for a long time.

I thought, why me? Why me? And I was mad, angry, frustrated, because a lot of times it's blurry, if I want to read recipes or look at a can or read how to open something or what to cook. It's pretty frustrating for me at times and I get resentful, but then I realize instead of thinking of what I can't do, I just am very grateful for what I still can do. So, I think for me, it's probably 95% attitude

I try to stay positive. When people look at me, they don't see any difference, I suppose for right now, I don't talk about it a lot to other people because I'm thinking, I don't want them to think I want pity or whatever. But I have found out that people, when you're out in the public, they do want to help. They're very helpful.

None of us know our future, but I'm very grateful for today. And I thank you all for listening. Have a good day.

**Marc**: Insights & Sound Bites has made possible by Hadley’s donors. Who understand that hearing someone else’s story can truly make a difference.

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](mailto:podcast@HadleyHelps.org).