Hadley

It’s the Best Thing I Ever Did

Presented by Douglas Walker

**Douglas:** Hello, and welcome to the Insights and Sound Bites podcast, where people facing vision loss share insights about what has helped them cope and adjust.

**Voice 1:** You cannot do this alone. You need people who are experiencing the same thing.

**Voice 2:** Probably the hardest part was just navigating through the emotions of it.

**Douglas:** My name is Douglas Walker. We all have different emotions when faced with changing vision. Today we’ll hear from Kendra. Kendra will share with us how a visit to a low vision center, gave her more than she ever expected.

**Kendra:** My name is Kendra Marcus, and I live in Lafayette, California, which is in the Bay Area of California. And I am working in the publishing industry, and I am still working. And it's very exciting to be able to figure out ways to work around and still continue to work.

First of all, I saw that my parents went blind and they didn't do anything to help themselves and to get ahead of it. They just accepted it. And I'm not that kind of person. And so, I was looking around and I went to a low vision center because somebody said, you can try a low vision center. And there they said they had a support group if I was interested. So, I went to the support group, even though I sort of don't like things like that. I'm not a joiner. I tend to just figure it out by myself. But I thought, I can't do this by myself. So, I went and it was a group of people from 40 to 92 who just came in.

And each time we sort of introduced ourselves, we talked a minute about our eye condition, and then we said, what was bothering us or how did we spend the holidays? How was that for us? What were the problems? And for the holiday one, somebody said, I feel so useless. I can't see anybody who's talking to me. I have to sit in a corner and wait for people to talk to me.

And everybody chimed in, well, have you tried this or have you tried that? And then somebody else would say, I can't read anymore. I don't know what to do. And then somebody would say, have you heard about BARD at the National Library for the Blind? And we just exchanged information at the same time as sort of dealing with some of the harder issues of losing sight. And I would say that that's been the best thing I ever did. And so, in a word, the best thing is to meet another blind person or another person with low vision and find out what they did, because everybody's willing to help. We all are flailing in the beginning because we don't know where to go.

**Douglas**: Kendra went against her nature and joined a support group, where she discovered new ways of doing things, as well as the comfort and compassion she needed to move forward.

Was there something that someone said to you or something that happened along the way that made all the difference in the world in helping you adjust to living with vision loss?

We‘d love to hear from you 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@Hadley.edu. Again, my name is Douglas Walker. Take care and I’ll see you next time.