Hadley

I’ve Lost…but I’ve Gained

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.

**Deb Reed:** I consider myself an introvert. And I never ever expected myself to be in this position.

**Douglas:** My name is Douglas Walker. Today we’ll hear from Deb. Deb shares with us how losing her ability to drive was actually the beginning of a whole new journey.

**Deb Reed:** This is Deborah Reed. My friends call me Deb, and I'm from Bristol, Connecticut.

I cried on the way home from the doctor's office. I had driven myself there, so I had to get myself back. And I cried because I had a job that was almost like a ministry. I was a homemaker companion for disabled seniors. And so, my car was key to the work I did. I was taking them to appointments, taking them shopping, cleaning, cooking for them. And you become like family with people like that. And that was something I had to give up. I definitely wasn't in it for the money. But yeah, I was very sad to have to close that chapter.

My husband was still working at the time and I thought, how am I going to get anywhere? And so, I found out from the state that there's a paratransit service in our town because we have the public bus route. And when I called that number, the woman who answered, who helped with the certification, was actually, recently in a motorcycle accident with her husband, about a year before. And they were both injured pretty bad. They were broadsided by a truck. And he lost his sight was one of the results. And so, she had been through all the things that she knew I was going to have to go through, and it was just an amazing wealth of information that she was able to share with me. And then she told me about a National Federation of the Blind support group that met at the library. And so, I started to go to that.

But I will say that here we are over 10 years later, and I am now heading up this chapter meeting that I attended at the beginning of the journey. And I consider myself an introvert, and I never, ever expected to be in this position. And I've learned so much and grown so much just by belonging to this organization. So even though I have so many losses because of my vision deteriorating, I've gained a lot.

**Douglas**: You never know who might need to hear your story. If you’d like to share, you can leave me a voicemail by calling, 847-512-4867. Or, you can email me a recording to [podcast@HadleyHelps.org](mailto:podcast@HadleyHelps.org). Again, my name is Douglas Walker. Take care and I’ll see you next time.