

The following is a testimonial from an adult who has gone through FAC's Berard Auditory Integration Training (AIT):

"First, it was amazing to be so connected to my body and recognize the impact of music on my physical being---all of the side effects were fascinating to me. The strong physical reactions to the music were all very curious to me---how it worked and what changes I could expect long-term. AIT validated my body's negative physical response to auditory overload.

Second, throughout my adult life, I have had the sensation of hearing underwater in one ear, as if it (the ear) was continually plugged. I have had numerous tests to determine what was wrong with my hearing—all tests came back negative. I have great hearing with no hearing loss or damage according to the standard audio test. However, I had this heaviness in my right ear that made it difficult for me to understand when talking to others. Often, I would turn my left ear to focus in on conversation because it seemed like voices coming in my right ear were heavy and muffled. As a result, I had people stand on my left to talk to me. And though standard audio testing showed no problem, it was like hearing underwater.

From time to time, the heavy sensation will return, mostly when I am stressed, overtired or struggling with sensory overload, auditory and otherwise. But, once life shifts back to a norm, the feeling of heaviness and difficulty hearing goes away. As I was recently walking with a friend, about midway through our time together, she noticed that she was walking on my right side (not my left). Friends no longer need to talk to me on my left side nor do I need to position myself to favor listening out of the left ear anymore. I can now simply listen regardless of their position.

Third, about six weeks after AIT, I started trying to listen to music for enjoyment. It was a slow process, starting with classical music and I could only listen for a few minutes. Over the course of a few months, I was able to increase my listening time. Now, I am able to listen for 30 minutes AND enjoy it! While typical radio stations are still jarring with the talking, music, etc., I find that classical music stations are more predictable, not over stimulating. Prior to AIT, if my family had the radio on while I was gone, I would immediately turn it off when I got home. Now, I am able to notice it, adjust to it and enjoy it with them for a while.

Fourth, I have noticed an improvement in my ability to "hear" the correct phonic sounds in words. In the past, I had difficulty distinguishing specific linguistic sounds, often misspelling and mispronouncing words. Prior to AIT, I was corrected on my pronunciation of words and even then would still not be able to hear the difference in what I said versus the correct pronunciation of the word. I have been amazed that I can now "hear" the difference and I get it when corrected. Others have noticed a difference in my spelling, as well.

With AIT and Occupational Therapy (OT), combined, I have learned to identify my sensory needs, understand how I process auditory input, and learn skills to better my sensory processing. I have become more aware of how the difficulties I have with sensory processing have impacted my relationships, health, social life and daily choices. With this awareness, I have been able to make the positive changes that enable me to effectively modify situations when I am facing sensory overload, as well as learn strategies to improve my sensory processing abilities. AIT

made a significant impact on my ability to effectively and efficiently process auditory input and, in effect, jumpstarted a more reliable mind/body connection. Even months later, I, and others close to me, continue to see the positive impact of AIT to the emotional, social and physical aspects of my life.”