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Keeping a Career *Finely Tuned*



When you're a consummate professional your job isn't really a job. It's a passion and it's all consuming. Your work becomes life itself, and every moment spent with colleagues and clients isn't really time spent working. It's time spent living. So imagine when you're told it's time to do something else. You're told your hearing issues can't be solved and your career is finished. Move on, please. Go do something else with your life. This is exactly what happened before this 36 year old female education professional from the Southeast met Tuned. For this case study, we'll call her Diane (not her real name as patient privacy is a priority).

Diane's days were spent in the company of students and colleagues, where she could showcase her talent. Which really was indulging in her passion. The enthusiasm and dedication she brought to work is something most Managers would surely appreciate, as would anyone benefiting from her expertise. Yet that enthusiasm was dwindling and something was definitely out of tune. Over the years, Diane had developed a ringing in the ears and it only seemed to get worse, becoming louder and more persistent. At the same time, certain sounds had become physically painful.

Imagine when the very world that provides so much pleasure, suddenly causes pain and discomfort. For this professional, it led to *depression and anxiety*, as she was robbed of everything that made life special.

Did you know?

providers listen for an average of just **11 seconds** before interrupting a patient? That's right – providers concerned with hearing don't listen. We're changing that.



The good news is, Diane is continuing doing what she loves, with an even bigger smile on her face, able to look forward to a long and distinguished career. And we know that sounds good.

Over a period of 12 months, Diane tried multiple audiologists and even went to see an Ear, Nose & Throat doctor in the hope they could identify the problem and recommend a solution that would bring relief. Yet every appointment was met with a growing sense of frustration, adding fuel to the depression and anxiety, as she was told 'there's nothing that can be done'. One specialist said 'it's time to find a different line of work'. Another said 'your hearing is normal, we can't help you'. That might have been the most difficult advice to take. Being told everything is normal, when you know it isn't, is incredibly hard to deal with.

Fortunately, in October of 2022, Diane's insurance offered Tuned. Diane decided to try and get help one more time, and so, an appointment with Tuned was made. Diane went through the same process as all Tuned patients, starting with completing the online hearing screening and answering a few questions about hearing health. Depending on her results, Diane knew she faced having to consider a new line of work if the problem couldn't be fixed. Because of Tuned's industry-leading tele-audiology care delivery model, Diane's audiologist really took the time to listen to Diane's story.

This listening uncovered the crux of the issue, which was the continual use of a headset without ever being educated as to its proper use. It had led to debilitating tinnitus (ringing in the ears) and hyperacusis (an extreme sensitivity to sound which causes physical pain). These disorders were present in the absence of any clinically measurable hearing loss. The 'old way' of providing hearing care focused on hearing loss and had failed to identify disorders, which in the case of tinnitus, is remarkably common in the general population, with 1 in 4 adults suffering (albeit, more mildly than in Diane's case).

We were able to share the good news that with therapy options to manage the tinnitus and hyperacusis, not only did Diane not need to quit her job, but she would be able to live her life in much the same way as before. After a few tears of relief and joy were shed, we completed several validated questionnaires to better gauge the severity of the disorders and now Diane receives her care from one of the most specialized tinnitus and hyperacusis specialists in the country. The cost to her employer? \$2.00 per employee per month.

What did Tuned do that was so different?

Our ability to triage and apply a modern approach to holistic hearing health, with access to a focused network of hearing health expertise is key. It meant the correct speciality and hearing information on therapy for the disorders was available.

The only regret is we wish we had met Diane sooner. We wish we could have reached her before she spent a year in limbo, uncertain what to do and seeing the quality of her life crumble away.

Then we could have empowered and educated her to manage her disorders. We could have applied the patient-centered approach we know helps.

The good news is, Diane is continuing doing what she loves, with an even bigger smile on her face, able to look forward to a long and distinguished career. And we know that sounds good.

A 36 year old professional, who wears a headset for hours every day, is told her career is over, because of hearing issues. After a year seeing multiple specialists, **Tuned is her last chance to get her life back**. We're able to use a patient centered, holistic hearing health approach, and apply the right tools, with access to the right people. **Diane's back at work and more productive than ever.**

It shows how a modern method is changing what could have previously prematurely ended a career.

Tuned is a digital-first hearing care company. Available as a standalone and an employer-sponsored benefit, Tuned offers the only lifelong hearing benefit for patients of all ages. The company supports care with comprehensive product options for hearing health, freeing employers from the need to evaluate thousands of practice groups, headsets, and software combinations. Today, 5.1 million people can access Tuned through employer benefits and marketplaces. Tuned is a private company headquartered in New York City, with audiologists across the United States and worldwide. For more information visit: www.tunedcare.com

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The Hearing Care Benefit