

TIPS FOR MANAGING SOCIAL SITUATIONS WITH A VOICE DISORDER



Dysphonia International polled our Facebook friends on how they handle social situations with spasmodic dysphonia and related voice conditions. Here are some of their best tips.

1 ENJOY YOURSELF

Remember your voice is just a part of you and you are so much more, so just enjoy the parties. You probably care more about the sound of your voice than others do. Don't worry and enjoy.



2 TALK ONE-ON-ONE

At social gatherings, scope out those you would like to converse with and try to talk one-on-one. Try not to speak over too much noise, and only speak face to face.



3 DON'T STRAIN TO SPEAK

Try not to speak over everyone. If they can't hear you, ask them to move closer. Do not strain to talk louder.

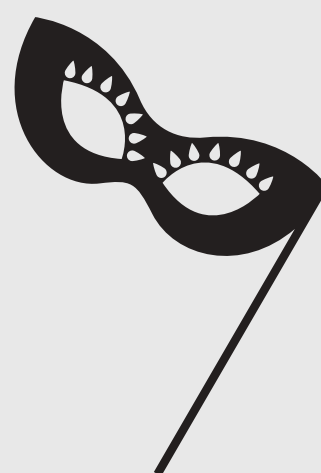
4 MOVE THE CONVERSATION

If possible, avoid noisy environments but if you are in a noisy room, look for an opportunity to move your conversation to somewhere quieter - perhaps an adjoining room, lobby or hallway.



5 HAVE A PLAN

Speaking on the out breath with only 3 words at a time and preparing 3-word social responses beforehand, can help cope better at parties. Short questions and positive statements work well, such as "You look well/How's things?/Love the music..."



6 TAKE A FRIEND

If you need support there is no one better than a good friend or a cherished loved one. Then, of course, enjoy who you are with. They love you and understand.



7 BE WILLING TO SHARE

Be willing to talk about SD and answer questions. As a family member said, "It was very helpful to my understanding of what it was and how it affected him. It went a long way to ease my concerns that he wasn't in pain or overly straining his voice when he spoke."



8 SMILE

Don't hide behind your voice. A smile makes you seem more approachable. So, smile, laugh, use gestures and above all, have a good time.