



Discussion Points: Justin Osmond

Discussion points have been embedded after each section of the transcript. The full transcript, uninterrupted follows the discussion points.

[Hello, my name is Justin Osmond, and I was born with a 90% hearing loss and severe to profound hearing loss. I had to take 12 years of speech therapy growing up, and I still feel like I'm learning how to talk. It's an everyday challenge, but I love it.]

- What is the decibel level of your hearing loss?
- How would you describe your hearing loss to others?
- Justin talks about his continued challenges speaking clearly. Do you feel like this?

[I had a hard time growing up, trying to fit in, I felt disconnected, isolated, low self-esteem, low self-confidence growing up and trying to fit in and trying to figure out who I was instead of what I was and people putting a label on me and all these different things.]

- Share some examples of when you have felt like Justin did while growing up (i.e., isolated)?
- He mentioned trying to fit in and how people put a label on him rather than getting to know him (who he was – that kid with hearing loss, instead of what he was – a regular kid with varied interests and talents). Share if/when you have felt that way. What were some examples of when you were especially annoyed, irritated, or upset when someone 'put a label on you'?

[And I just come to realize that I may have a hearing loss, but that hearing loss does not have me. My hearing loss doesn't define me. I define my hearing loss. And even though I miss out on things sometimes, I love being able to take my hearing aids out and whether you have an FM system or cochlear implant or wear hearing aids, it's okay, it's alright, it's our brand, it's our unique signature that we stand for.]

- What do you think Justin means by 'I may have a hearing loss, but that hearing loss doesn't have me'?
- How do you define how your hearing loss impacts you day-to-day or situation-to-situation?
- Have there been times you really loved being able to take off your hearing aids? When?
- What is your reaction to Justin saying that wearing hearing technology (or even signing) is part of your unique brand or signature that makes you recognizable as YOU?

[And it's good, I believe that we all have something that we wish we didn't have, but it resembles, it reflects what we need to make a stronger and better people and to make society as a whole better as well. It's just all about educating them and helping them understand our situation.]

- What do you think when Justin says that your hearing loss makes you a stronger and better person?
- He mentions how we need to educate hearing people and help them understand our situation. In doing so we can make society better as a whole. What are things you need to be able to understand better that also probably help everyone to understand better?

[And so, you know, it's okay to be in a situation that we're in, you're not alone. There's so many people out there that are in your shoes.]

- Have you ever felt like you are the only kid/person around that is dealing with hearing loss?
- Feeling alone is hard. What would help you not feel this way? (i.e., these videos, connecting with other kids with hearing loss, reading about famous people with hearing loss)

[I, for one, am just like you. It took a lot of hard work, a lot of dedication, a lot of perseverance, and a lot of assertiveness as well. I had some wonderful teachers and great friends that believed in me and instilled in me.]

- Justin said that communicating with hearing loss took a lot of hard work. It took dedication and perseverance to continue to communicate until he was sure he really understood a situation. He also mentioned assertiveness. What are some situations in which you had to persevere? Be assertive?

[I was told I could never play a musical instrument because of my deafness. And I love to go back and prove them wrong. I can play the violin, the viola, the piano, and the drum. And a lot of it was the vibration, the vibration of the sound and the music, because I don't have the best intonation in playing these musical instruments.]

- Have you ever been told you cannot do something because of your hearing loss?
- Have you – or do you think you could – prove them wrong? What would it take?

[So just a big echo to all my deaf and hard of hearing friends and my brothers and sisters. Don't feel ashamed of your hearing loss. It doesn't make anyone less of a person than who you are. You know, if more people get to know you for who you are and not what you are, you'll feel a lot better about yourself. You'll make more friends and I learned that the hard way.]

- Justin talks about not being ashamed of your hearing loss. Have you ever felt as though you were less of a person because you had a hearing loss?
- If so, was it because of what one or more people said (teasing/bullying)? If you had a chance to respond to such a situation in a different way, what would you like to say?
- Having friends who like you for who you are makes you feel better about yourself. Who are your friends? What could you do be more outgoing and make more friends?

[And I'll say another thing, it's better to be embarrassed or ashamed and raise your hand and learn something than not learn anything at all. So I had to learn that the hard way as well.]

- Justin says it is more important to learn than it is to be embarrassed about asking for clarification. Have you ever not asked for clarification or help because you were embarrassed? How did that work out for you?
- What are your general goals for the future?

- How does making sure you are getting the information you need in school fit into your future goals?

[Just know that I'm there with you every step of the way, you're not alone in all of this. Yeah it's tough and it's rough, but we as the deaf and hard of hearing, we are the best listeners. Meaning we have such good facial expressions and our perception is so strong that we have such a strong mental toughness. We have to work harder than the average person, but that's okay, it teaches hard work ethic. It teaches us mental toughness and all that is great stuff.]

- What do you think about Justin talking of having to be stronger or more mentally tough because of his hearing loss?
- This has to do with having more perseverance (grit) to stay with something until you really understand. What are some situations that you can think of when this sounds like you?

[So no, you're not alone in all of this. I'm proud of you guys; I stand with you every step of the way. If you would like to reach out to me, I'd love to get to know you better. You can go to JustinOsmond.com, or you can find me on Facebook.]

- Justin is very approachable and really likes hearing from kids who are dealing with feelings about having a hearing loss. If you could ask Justin anything, what would it be?

[Anyway, when we have a hearing loss, that hearing loss does not have us. That doesn't mean we don't love it, we embrace it. I love my deafness; it's made me who I am. And it's made us who we all are, and we can definitely fit in where our heart desires.]

- How have you 'embraced your hearing loss'? What could this look like for you?
- How has your hearing loss strengthened your character and made you who you are?
- Do you feel like you can accomplish anything you want to do or be, regardless of your hearing loss? If not, why not? Maybe this isn't true or could be changed....

[So anyway, good luck, God bless, and hope to meet you someday down the road. Thanks.]



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The following is a captioning transcript of the Kool Kidz Vid by Justin Osmond.

Hello, my name is Justin Osmond, and I was born with a 90% hearing loss and severe to profound hearing loss. I had to take 12 years of speech therapy growing up, and I still feel like I'm learning how to talk. It's an everyday challenge, but I love it. I had a hard time growing up, trying to fit in, I felt disconnected, isolated, low self-esteem, low self-confidence growing up and trying to fit in and trying to figure out who I was instead of what I was and people putting a label on me and all these different things. And I just come to realize that I may have a hearing loss, but that hearing loss does not have me. My hearing loss doesn't define me. I define my hearing loss.

And even though I miss out on things sometimes, I love being able to take my hearing aids out and whether you have an FM system or cochlear implant or wear hearing aids, it's okay, it's alright, it's our brand, it's our unique signature that we stand for. And it's good, I believe that we all have something that we wish we didn't have, but it resembles, it reflects what we need to make a stronger and better people and to make society as a whole better as well. It's just all about educating them and helping them understand our situation.

And so, you know, it's okay to be in a situation that we're in, you're not alone. There's so many people out there that are in your shoes. I, for one, am just like you. It took a lot of hard work, a lot of dedication, a lot of perseverance, and a lot of assertiveness as well. I had some wonderful teachers and great friends that believed in me and instilled in me. I was told I could never play a musical instrument because of my deafness. And I love to go back and prove them wrong. I can play the violin, the viola, the piano, and the drum. And a lot of it was the vibration, the vibration of the sound and the music, because I don't have the best intonation in playing these musical instruments.

So just a big echo to all my deaf and hard of hearing friends and my brothers and sisters. Don't feel ashamed of your hearing loss. It doesn't make anyone less of a person than who you are. You know, if more people get to know you for who you are and not what you are, you'll feel a lot better about yourself. You'll make more friends and I learned that the hard way. And I'll say another thing, it's better to be embarrassed or ashamed and raise your hand and learn something than not learn anything at all. So I had to learn that the hard way as well.

But anyway, just know that I'm there with you every step of the way, you're not alone in all of this. Yeah it's tough and it's rough, but we as the deaf and hard of hearing, we are the best listeners. Meaning we have such good facial expressions and our perception is so strong that we have such a strong mental toughness. We have to work harder than the average person, but that's okay, it teaches hard work ethic. It teaches us mental toughness and all those great stuff.

So no, you're not alone in all of this. I'm proud of you guys; I stand with you every step of the way. If you would like to reach out to me, I'd love to get to know you better. You can go to JustinOsmond.com, or you can find me on Facebook. Anyway, when we have a hearing loss, that hearing loss does not have us.

That doesn't mean we don't love it, we embrace it. I love my deafness; it's made me who I am. And it's made us who we all are, and we can definitely fit in where our heart desires. So anyway, good luck, God bless, and hope to meet you someday down the road. Thanks.