

Hawaii Association of the Blind Newsletter

August 1, 2024

UPCOMING EVENTS

Image Description: Foodland Logo



Hawaii Association of the Blind Pearl City Holo Holo Shoppers August Event

When:

Friday, August 2, 2024, 4pm-7pm

Where:

Pearl City Foodland Farms: 1150 Kuala Street, Pearl City

Join HAB's Certified Orientation & Mobility Specialists for a supported shopping adventure within a local favorite gathering spot.

Foodland gift cards are available for shoppers to use during the supported event.

WHY:

To provide a supported social gathering in a community setting to strengthen shopping, communication and O&M skills.

Liability Disclaimer: All participants are responsible for their own safety throughout the event. Hawaii Association of the Blind shall not assume any liability resulting in injury or death

Please RSVP to Sherri Martinez, COMS

Email: sherrimartinez46@gmail.com

Phone: (808)561-5968

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IOLANI PALACE

Image description: A red crown with a mid-evil cross on top. An emblem for Iolani palace.

Join Hawaii Association of the Blind when we tour Iolani Palace on September 21, 2024 at 11:00 am-1:30 pm.

The audio tour will provide opportunities to

- learn about the history of the Hawaiian Kingdom during a tumultuous time
- explore tactile representations of the royals apparel and drapes that adorn the palace
- climb the famous koa stairway that monarchs and other foreign dignitaries have climbed
- make use of your apps that give specific definitions of surrounding artifacts
- utilize a tactile map to understand the layout of the palace

The palace has a familiar musty smell reminiscent of old historic buildings. In addition to the tour, learn the history of the surrounding palace grounds like the Kawaiaha'o Church, King Kamehameha Statue, and building resourcefulness and ingenuity of historic Honolulu buildings from Dtours tour guide Jeff Parker. Bentos and drinks will be provided to members after the tour.

Admission is free to HAB members only. You must bring a Hawaii State picture ID to verify your residency. Other guests may purchase tickets online or at the event.

Liability Disclaimer: All participants are responsible for their own safety throughout the event. Hawaii Association of the Blind shall not assume any liability resulting in injury or death.

Handivan drop off is Richards Street entrance.

RSVP: Nancy Parker at (808) 291-5390. Spaces are limited. Please reply as soon as possible. Also please let me know if you will be bringing additional guests and if they have purchased their tickets.

Backpacks and bags are not allowed during the tour. There will be an area to leave your bag while you tour or there are pay lockers on the palace grounds.

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Hawaii State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled (LBPD) MONTHLY BOOKCLUB STARTING August 3, 2024, 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm

All LBPB registered users, family members, and LBPB community friends are invited to join in a fun new opportunity at the library the first Saturday of each month at 2:00 pm, starting on August 3, for an in-person book club and social time. Readers will have the opportunity to make their own reading selections from within a theme designated in advance for each month. During the book club participants can share as much or as little as they want about the book they read. There will be some easy questions to help encourage the conversation and sharing, but don't worry, this is NOT intended to be your sixth grade class book report. All formats are welcome including braille, audio, large type, or other.

In addition to sharing information about the books the club members have read during the previous month there will also be time for some special features, maybe even some surprise presentations. What's not a surprise is that there will be a "Readers Theater" presentation to help kick off this program on August 3 that will feature special performances by Tutu Nyla Fujii-Babb, Papa Jeff Babb, and Dann Seki. Light refreshments will also be provided. Participants will be invited to make suggestions for the monthly book club themes at this gathering as well. Possible themes include biography, historical fiction, mystery, travel, humor, and so many other possibilities.

We hope you can join us for this and future book club gatherings. It's sure to be fun, and also a great way to catch up in person with friends and neighbors. Please let us know if you'd like to join in for our first gathering by calling the library at 808-733-8444, or emailing at olbcirc@librarieshawaii.org.

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**Hawaii Association of the Blind Events committee in collaboration with
Parents and Youth Committee (PAY) presents an emergency preparedness workshop**

The focus will be on emergency preparedness. We will learn what we as blind persons need to know and do in the event of a real natural disaster.

What: Emergency Preparedness Workshop

Where: Library for the Blind and Print Disabled:402 Kapahulu Ave. Honolulu, HI 96815

When: August 17th 2024

Time: 10:00a.m. till 12noon.

What to Bring: Wear comfortable clothes and bring a friend or family member. All is welcome.

Cost: Free

Don't miss out on getting in on this great educational event. Don't delay prepare today.

RSVP: by August 11th 2024 habpay808@gmail.com or call Terri-lynn

Higashi (808)489-3265

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**The Waipio Walking Club
Girl Power**



Image description: Mae, Dani, and Intern Claire charging a truck battery with jumper cables! Everyone has a big smile! Then, everyone walked several loops on July 29.

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Remembering Kenny Johnson ACB Angel Jacksonville Florida.

The ACB Angels Memorial Tribute is an opportunity for ACB members and friends to honor their loved ones and guide dogs who have passed on and who played an important role in the American Council of the Blind, its affiliates, and/or its members. The memorial includes a permanent, individualized page on the ACB website. In addition, a Wall of Angels will be displayed at future ACB conferences and conventions. This display will consist of a plaque with large print and braille representing each memorialized person.

It was wonderful to be able to hear Kenny Johnson become an ACB Angel during ACB's convention in Jacksonville. Many people were delighted to hear about Kenny and shared many memories of the times they spent with him. Mahalo Ron Flormata for helping to coordinate to make this happen and to many of those in Hawaii who helped by sharing memories of him and providing their experiences. Enclosed below is the write up which is on the ACB Angel Memorial Page.

Kenny Johnson

December 25, 1953 — December 28, 2023

Kenny Johnson was born and raised in Chicago. He also lived in both Los Angeles and Las Vegas. In 2007, he moved to Honolulu, Hawaii, with his wife, Vicki. He and Vicki were married for 20 years. Sadly, Vicki passed away on March 12, 2021.

Kenny was a very gregarious person who loved eating out in different restaurants with friends. He enjoyed drinking Bud Lite and smoking his cigars, usually the slim ones. He got a thrill dining on a boat while sailing across the waters of Oahu. He was a voracious reader and enjoyed downloading audio books from BARD and sharing the story with friends. His favorite authors included James Patterson, Tom Clancy, Clive Cussler, Lee Child, Vince Flynn, John Sanford, Don Pendleton, Richard Marcinko, Nelson DeMille, Michael Connelly, James Lee Burke, and the list goes on. You could find him sitting down by the bench in the yard near the parking lot where he and Vicki lived, relaxing by reading the audible books he downloaded from BARD/NLS using his Victor Reader Stream.

He enjoyed listening to music with Vicki. His favorite artists included Elton John and a number of blues singers. He loved listening to jazz and classic rock. Call it premonition, he loved singing the song by Tim McGraw entitled "Live Like You Were Dying." He knew some of the lyrics and tried singing along.

When he and Vicki came to Hawaii, he initially worked as a sales associate with Blind Vendors Ohana (operated by three blind vendors under the Randolph-Sheppard Vending Program) at the Honolulu International Airport. In 2009, he got to operate his own vending facility as a licensed blind vendor at Camp Smith, a military facility.

Aside from joining the Hawaii Association of the Blind, ACB, and RSVB, he was also a member of the Pearl City Lions Club in Hawaii. He just loved being with people and sharing life.

He was very unassuming and generous. He did not hesitate to donate to fundraising projects when he knew it was for a good cause — especially for the blind. He made a bid for bourbon balls at one of the past ACB auctions, where he won the item for \$500!

He joined a number of ACB Community calls on his iPhone. He was loved by many in the ACB Community. He would attend calls at 4:00 in the morning Hawaii time. He even attended a call while in his death bed in the hospital. ACB Community participants sang happy birthday to him on December 25, 2023! No one knew he was ill.

Aside from working as a blind vendor under the Randolph Sheppard Program, he was also a professional stand-up comedian. He loved performing and sharing his talent to make people laugh and enjoy themselves. His last stint was at the Warriors' Lounge inside the Hale Koa Hotel in Waikiki.

When you get the chance, watch one of his performances by clicking here:

<https://youtu.be/qTssjXGMK3o>

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Post-Convention Recap.

By Art Cabanilla

This year's national convention was attended by eight members of HAB. They were: Brian Huffman, Amy Monthei, Anthony Akamine, Terri Lynn Higashi, Deborah Braiman, Onkar Nerurkar, Natalie Barrett, and myself. Also included were Amy Monthei's parents, Arlo and Elsy. Joining us from Ho'oponohono were: Kyle Laconsay, Joseph Lee, AJ Wilson, Kelly Pang, Nihii Asquith, and Mara Oneichu.

The week-long convention was filled with many sessions and activities. There were various workshops on legislative issues and membership seminars. Other workshops had to do with families with blind children, and how Lego building helps children get a tactile sense of what the world is like around them.

There were also serious workshops on the latest updates on social security changes affecting the disabled community in general. Other workshops focused on specific types of technology, such as Jaws for Windows, the latest tech from Humanware, advancements with AIRA's instant-live guided service, just to name a few.

Also seen at this year's exhibit hall included other mobility devices, such as the Glide, an electronic version of a guide dog, and the smart cane that talks and/or vibrates, which provides the user feedback on their outside travels. These are just a few of the many tech products in attendance.

Additionally folks like Blind International Technology Specialists, "BITS" and Independent Visually Impaired Enterprisers, "IVIE" hosted various workshops exploring many kinds of technology for the blind. Such devices demonstrated how such technology can help level the playing field for the blind.

Even with Covid still around, some folks continued to wear masks as a precautionary measure while others chose to go without. The atmosphere within the hotel felt like how in-person conventions were prior to the pandemic. Stepping onto outside your hotel room saw various people with canes and/or guide dogs traveling to and from between diverse workshops and/or meetings being held throughout the hotel. Others could be found catching up with friends over lunch, dinner, or rushing to get to the tour bus pickup.

This years tour committee did an outstanding job with the arranging of multiple tours which attendees and their families could attend.

The Sea Serpent Airboat tour was a blast. We were given headsets to wear for protection from the loud noise that came from the large fans which powered the boats. The headsets also allowed us to listen to audio descriptions of the different areas of the swamp lands as we zipped by in our airboats.

Unfortunately, no alligators or snakes were spotted; it was too hot of a day and they were all in hiding to get out of the heat.

Some HAB members attended an indoor skydiving event where Powerful jets of air shot upward from the floor which propelled the special suits that the user wore in to the air. Once high enough, they were able to stay afloat and fly like birds with their arms and legs apart.

While many other tours were available, the one that was most impressive was the tour to the Kennedy space center. Here we were able to get a hands-on experience of the various rockets which normally are roped off to visitors and can only be seen visually.

But in our case, they removed a section of the rope to allowed us a hands on feel of the rockets up close. Due to time and the number of folks attending this tour, not everyone was able to experience the shuttle lift off simulator. Fortunately, I was one of the lucky ones who did get to experience lift off and weightlessness in space. Although, it was short and I am not sure they brought us back to earth. It kind of felt like they left us up there and forgot to bring us home. Of course, meeting former astronaut Don Thomas and listening to him share what it is like to go in to space and come back was riveting.

Despite the fun, there were lots of opportunities for us to mingle and develop new relations with other ACB members. The best part of convention is meeting new people and making new friends.

Hawaii's delegation has always done well in this area by way of sharing a bit of Hawaii candy, lei or coffee. It is so fun to see and hear others refer to our HAB O'hana as the folks from Hawaii. All one needs to do is say there name and say they are from Hawaii and instantly they are famous.

Even with this instant fame, Hawaii's members remain humble and always remember if not for HAB, we may not have had the opportunity to grow or meet others. This makes our Hawaii folks and the ohana concept something that other affiliates wish they had.

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Check out the Hawaii Votes newsletter from the Office of Elections

Aloha,

For voters with disabilities, read on to learn about Hawaii's accessible voting services. This guide highlights accessible voting options so that you can decide which voting method works best for you and your individual needs.

What Are My Voting Options?

Vote at home with a paper ballot

- If reviewing, marking, and returning your paper ballot poses any challenges, you can ask for help.
 - You're permitted to ask a friend, family member, or caretaker, to help read through your ballot, mark your choices, and be your witness if you cannot sign the return envelope independently.

Next steps:

By registering to vote, you'll automatically receive a mail ballot every election. No separate request is needed.

Vote at home with an accessible electronic ballot

- With this option, your electronic ballot is securely delivered to you via e-mail. You can then use your own at-home assistive devices to independently read and mark your ballot.

Next steps:

When registering to vote, check the option to request an accessible electronic ballot and affirm that you meet the qualifications. You'll need to provide your email address. If you're already registered to vote, you can make the request by updating your current voter registration.

[Click here to try out an accessible electronic ballot.](#)

Vote at a voter service center using a ballot marking device

- Accessible ballot marking devices are available at all voter service centers statewide. These locations are open for up to 10 business days leading up to Election Day, so that you have plenty of time to plan your visit.
- Some features include: large touchscreen interface, rotary wheel console to move through the ballot, compatibility with tactile switches and "sip and puff devices", adjustable text size and screen contrast for increased visibility, and headphone capability for audio access.

Next steps:

Registering ahead of your visit may reduce your wait time at a voter service center.

Am I Allowed to Receive Assistance?

Yes, you have the right to ask for assistance in the registration and voting process. If you need assistance with registering to vote, or reviewing, marking, and returning your ballot, you can have a trusted individual, like a family member or caretaker, provide you with the help you need.

Be mindful that to protect you against voter intimidation or persuasion and maintain the integrity of the election process, Hawaii law prohibits your employer or union agent from providing you with voting assistance. Additionally, candidates are prohibited from assisting voters with their ballot.

What Resources Are Available?

Instructions for registering to vote and resources about Hawaii elections are available in braille and audio formats. These resources can be requested from our office, the Hawaii State Library of the Blind and Print Disabled, or your County Elections Division.

Additionally, our website, including the Online Voter Registration System, is compatible with screen readers. Learn more about Hawaii elections and take advantage of the quickest way to register to vote at elections.hawaii.gov.

If you have questions regarding any of these services, please feel free to contact us at (808) 453-VOTE (8683) or email us at elections@hawaii.gov.

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July 15, 2024

Dear Community Members,

We are pleased to announce that Ho'opono is launching a series of statewide facilitated focus groups to fulfill the requirements of Public Act 253 (2023).

This statute was passed by the legislature last year and outlines the requirements for Ho'opono to convene a working group to research and design a pilot training program for blind and visually impaired residents who live outside of O'ahu (referred to as the neighbor islands by the law) and are not current recipients of training from Ho'opono. This pilot program is intended to identify the essential qualities of supplemental training services for blind and visually impaired people who live in communities with limited access to consistent services and programming. The working group and pilot program design activities were intended to begin in 2023, but due to the Maui fires and unforeseen challenges we were unable to meet that timeline.

The law specifies that the working group must consist of members of the community with lived experience. It further specifies that the pilot program must use the principles of structured discovery for blind people. If you are interested in joining the working group, please complete this form online with your contact information. (link to form: <https://bit.ly/neighborisland>)

In the coming days we will be putting out more information about the pilot program design process and how working group members will be engaged. Until then, we hope that you will help us spread the word about the opportunity to be a part of the group and encourage people who are blind or visually impaired to sign up. We hope to achieve geographic and demographic representation that reflects the diversity of our local residents on each island.

Please feel free to contact me at 808-586-5271 or gabe@dhs.hawaii.gov if you have any questions.

Mahalo,

Gavan Abe
Branch Administrator (Temporarily Assigned)

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ACB Summer Auction: Always a Fun Time for a Good Cause

By the ACB Auction committee

The ACB summer auction continues to be a fun and engaging event. This year the bidding excitement was a part of the virtual convention experience leading up to Jacksonville. This year the auction had over 200 items. Every year at the ACB national convention, there is a thrilling auction to help raise funds for the American Council of the Blind. The summer auction takes months to prepare and lots of time and helping hands go into putting on a successful auction. It is always fun to see people from Hawaii taking part in the bidding frenzy. There are times the excitement is so intense people end up bidding against each other. The back and forth of the bids are quite comical. Everyone has a good time. Leslie Spoon Chair of the ACB Auction committee extends her warmest appreciation by saying "Thank you to The Hawaii Association of The Blind and its members for your continued support of the ACB Auction. Your contribution means a lot to the committee and to ACB. The unique collection of items that Hawaii provides truly helps share the Aloha spirit and adds to the fun of the event."

This year Hawaii donated 2 auction items. Here are the description:

1. touch of Hawaiian Beauty: an earring and necklace set. Dazzle in this pair of earrings that has a shiny ball on the top and tiny white seashell hangs from the ball. The seashell has delicate lines within it. It come with an 18-inch necklace and a basket charm. Within the basket there are 3 delicate white stones like the shiny balls of the earrings. It will also come with some surprise treats, such as chocolate, and coffee.

2. Fun Time in Hawaii: A porcelain Shaka wall hook by local artist Jason Dow Enamel mug with a design that says Hawaii in colorful letters below 3 pineapples. Hawaiian Harmony from Big Island Roasters, 100% Kona coffee beans 7 ounces. Yellow Hau flower enamel key chain from paradise Now Hawaii - made on Maui. Lucky Fortune Cat 3-D shaped sponge from Fred. Ennamal flair pin shaped like a bowl of Ramen noodle soup from Moxhi Kids. Vinyl sticker sheet with Hawaii's favorite smiling foods and 2 larger vinyl stickers shaped like spam musubi and Boba tea from Mochi Kids - these can be placed on water bottles, phone, or iPad cases.

A special mahalo (thank you) to those HAB members who helped to put together these items and create the engaging descriptions for this year's HAB items that was packed with many local flavors. In addition, thank you to others within the Hawaii Ohana (family) that provided additional auction items individually and to those that bid on the items.

In closing, we hope to see you at the 2024 ACB Media Holiday Auction. The sneak a peek will take place on November 29th and 30th. The ACB media Holiday Auction will take place on December 1st.

See you there!

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Watch the Olympics in Audio Description

The Olympic Games started on Friday evening with the opening ceremony. Here is all the information you need to access audio description and catch the Olympic spirit.

Where and when can I watch the Olympic and Paralympic coverage with audio description on television?
"All coverage on NBC, including daytime, primetime, and late night, and the Gold Zone whip-around show on Peacock, will feature audio description provided by Descriptive Video Works. In a first for a U.S. broadcaster, audio description

services for NBC coverage will be provided in stereo, enhancing the quality of sound for viewers. For the Paralympic Games, NBC Sports will provide live audio description for all broadcast and cable programming, including those aired outside primetime hours, as well as on all Simul streams.”

This means that for the Olympic Games, all broadcast programming including the opening and closing ceremonies, regardless of when it airs, will have live audio description on the SAP channel on the NBC network; for the Paralympic Games, all broadcast programming including the opening and closing ceremonies, regardless of when it airs, will have live audio description on the SAP channel on NBC and other cable networks. The Audio Description Project’s daily listing of TV shows with description is listing the Olympic coverage — look for 2024 Paris Olympics and Paralympics. Please consult the ADP’s audio description on television information page for general guidelines on how to access SAP.

Who do I contact if audio description is not being passed through on television?

If you are not receiving audio description or you're experiencing an issue with audio description on NBC television, please send an email to ADFeedback@nbcuni.com.

Please include the following information in your email:

- Your name
- The city, state, and zip code where NBC is being received
- Your television provider (example, over-the air with antenna, or the name of the cable, satellite, or internet provider)
- The NBC TV station you are reporting (example: WMAQ, Chicago 5)
- What is the cable or satellite set-top box that is connected to your TV? Or the internet connected device used with your TV (example: Roku, Apple TV, etc.)
- What is the programming you are inquiring about and the date and time of the issue you are noting? (Example: NBC Olympic Primetime Show, July 26, 9:15PM EDT)

Can I stream the Olympic and Paralympic coverage live with audio description?

“[I]mproved web content accessibility, including keyboard navigation, color contrast and support for screen readers, will be available on NBCOlympics.com, NBC.com, the NBC Sports app, and Peacock. Livestreams and replays which offer audio description will have English audio description as a language choice within the players on these digital platforms.” For most content on NBCOlympics.com, NBC.com, and the NBC Sports app, a provider sign-in will be required; for the Peacock platform, a subscription is required to view content.

On NBCOlympics.com, you can activate the “Personalize your schedule” button on the Schedule page, and personalize by sport, interest (such as “Audio Description”), and viewing method. Additionally, the streams with audio description can be found by searching for “audio description” on NBCOlympics.com, filtering by the “Audio Description” topic in the NBC Sports app, and looking under the “Audio Description” heading of the Olympics section on Peacock.

“All of this audio description and closed captioning will be available to Comcast Xfinity customers who experience the Games on the Xfinity X1 platform, including on the live Olympic Games coverage delivered in 4K, on Xfinity Stream, and on Xfinity Flex.”

To easily find all events streaming with audio description, consult the schedule on NBCOlympics.com. To view only a chronological schedule of streams with AD, consult the live stream schedule on NBCOlympics.com. There is also a page that lists the replay streams for the Olympics with audio description.

Can I stream the Olympic and Paralympic Games on-demand after the fact with audio description?

All television coverage live streams are able to be replayed on NBCOlympics.com, NBC.com, the NBC Sports app, and Peacock after the fact. For the NBC Olympics platform, please consult the replay streams with audio description page. Alternatively, search for “audio description,” navigate to the “REPLAYS” level-two heading, and choose the stream you want to watch.

How do I access audio description of a live stream or replay?

“Livestreams and replays which offer audio description will have English audio description as a language choice within the players on ... NBCOlympics.com, NBC.com, the NBC Sports app, and Peacock.”

For further information, read the full press release at <https://www.nbcsports.com/pressbox/press-releases/nbcuniversal-enhances-accessibility-for-its-coverage-of-the-olympic-games-paris-2024>.

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Barbie Introduces First Blind Barbie Fashionista Doll

L SEGUNDO, Calif., July 23, 2024 — Mattel, Inc. (NASDAQ: MAT) announced today the addition of a blind Barbie doll and a Black Barbie doll with Down syndrome, created to allow even more children to find a doll that represents them and inspire all children to tell more stories through play.

Barbie partnered with the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB), an organization dedicated to creating a world of endless possibilities for individuals with blindness and low vision, to ensure details of the blind Barbie doll, including face sculpt, fashion, accessories, packaging experience, and e-commerce communication, accurately depict individuals with blindness or low vision.

Counseled by AFB, Barbie was committed to represent individuals with blindness and low vision throughout all stages of the design process, from the doll’s sculpt to the dress pattern:

- **Accessories:** The doll comes with a white and red cane with an identifiable marshmallow tip and includes stylish and functional sunglasses. With some blind or low-vision individuals sensitive to light, the lens provides additional eye protection.
- **Elbow Articulations:** The blind Barbie doll includes elbow articulations to ensure comfortable cane use.
- **Textured and Vibrant Fabrics:** Barbie conducted testing with blind and low-vision children to ensure that the doll provided an accessible and satisfying play experience for kids with blindness or low vision. With AFB’s guidance, Barbie designed the doll’s fashion to include a satiny pink blouse with a textured ruffle skirt for tactile interest. Additional details

include a brightly colored high-contrast hook and loop fasteners for closure on the back of the doll's top, as well as an elastic skirt waistband to make swapping outfits easier.

- **Packaging and Design:** Barbie worked with AFB to create accessible packaging for the doll, including the placement and writing of 'Barbie' in braille on the package.
- **Eye Gaze:** The doll is designed with an eye gaze facing slightly up and out to accurately reflect the sometimes-distinct eye gaze of a blind individual.

The 2024 Fashionistas dolls, including the blind Barbie doll and Black Barbie doll with Down syndrome, are available online now and in store this summer at major retailers.

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Everything We Know About Amazon's New Home Internet Service

Cord Cutters News - Sunday, July 28, 2024 at 9:12 AM

One of Amazon's most aggressive projects right now is its internet service. Amazon has started to open up about its plans for its home internet service, currently code-named Project Kuiper.

So, what is happening with this new internet service that will offer home and business internet? Here is everything we know.

Launch Date

We have a date for when its first mass production satellites will be launched into space. Originally scheduled for the first half of 2024, Amazon has delayed its launch of the first satellites and set a new launch date.

Amazon's new satellite construction facility is at its peak capacity, and it will be building up to five satellites per day with plans to launch its first satellites in the fourth quarter of 2024. This is still in line with its plans to start offering the service in select areas in 2025.

"Building advanced communications satellites at this scale is incredibly complex, and we want to ensure every Kuiper spacecraft meets our standards for performance, reliability, and safety," said Steve Metayer, Project Kuiper's vice president of production operations. "The progress from the team is so impressive, and we now have the foundational pieces in place to ramp up production ahead of a full-scale deployment. We can't wait to get service to our customers as soon as possible."

So now that Amazon is close to launching the service, what do we know about it? Here is everything we know about Amazon's new home internet service.

Amazon's internet service will come in three speed options:

Standard The standard version will have an 11" square antenna that will offer speeds up to 400 Mbps down. This will be perfect for most households.

Pro If you need a lot of speed, Amazon has an 11" by 30" pro antenna that can offer speeds up to 1 Gbps. This will be perfect for companies or large households.

Portable If speed is not important and you want something you can easily travel with, Amazon's ultra-portable version that is 7" square and offers speeds up to 100 Mbps may be a good fit.

What can you expect from this service?

One of the big questions about Amazon's new home internet service has been the cost. Amazon CEO Andy Jassy says he expects the new internet service to offer a low price that will help it reach the 400 to 500 million households still without internet.

Jassy was recently interviewed by CNBC's Jim Cramer. In that interview, Jassy said, "I think we can charge a low price and still make good margins where it's a good business for us. I actually am very bullish about that business."

According to Bloomberg, a standard satellite dish from Amazon will cost under \$400 to manufacture. This will help Amazon undercut the \$599.99 cost that SpaceX charges for its standard Starlink kit. The standard satellite dish from Amazon promises speeds of up to 400 Mbps down.

Unfortunately, we still don't know the monthly cost, but Amazon seems dedicated to being cheaper than SpaceX's Starlink.

Amazon hopes to start limited testing in late 2024 and to slowly roll out the service in 2025. Like the Starlink rollout, look for the service to be offered in limited areas at first as Amazon moves to expand the service in more areas.

<https://cordcuttersnews.com/everything-we-know-about-amazons-new-home-internet-service-2/>

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An Important Message for All Users of the Be My Eyes App from our Founder

1. We intend to provide video data to organizations to train AI models to be more inclusive and representative of the blind and low vision community

2. We are strengthening our data and privacy policy - and making it more restrictive - to ensure you have even greater control over if and how your data is used

We are taking these steps to ensure our users, and the blind and low-vision community generally, are not left out of the innovative power of AI, and that AI models are trained using data that reflects the real, relevant, and lived experiences of people who are blind or have low vision.

The 26th of July this year is the 34th anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the United States' strongest measure protecting the civil rights of people with disabilities. With equivalent acts around the world such as the European Accessibility Act (EAA), there has perhaps never been a stronger focus on ensuring equality and inclusion for all. However, with the exponential rise of AI technologies beginning to impact every element of our lives, there has also never been a greater risk of undoing all the great work that has been done to-date.

That's because AI is developing at a breakneck speed, and we are already starting to see examples of biased characterizations of blindness and even offensive language being surfaced through AI, as well as less than inclusive responses to otherwise reasonable questions. There is no suggestion that this is deliberate. Blind people have simply not had the opportunity to inject their own experience into the extremely fast-paced development of AI models. So the potential for AI-generated bias and exclusion is very real, and completely contrary to the principles of the ADA, the EEA, and our own Be My Eyes' mission.

Addressing this problem requires data to ensure that AI models are trained using information that reflects the real, relevant, and lived experiences of people who are blind or have low vision.

That is why tomorrow we will be announcing an initiative that would provide video data - in the form of conversations between blind and low-vision users and sighted volunteers around real and lived experiences - to organizations to train their AI models without such bias, and proactively develop a more accessible and inclusive AI future.

However, we will only be doing so under the governance of a strengthened privacy policy that will ensure every one of our users, including you, has a choice to opt-out. And even if you do opt out, you will still be able to use all Be My Eyes' products and services. Importantly, we will also announce that none of your photos or their AI descriptions in Be My AI will be shared for AI training purposes. This is because those results likely include the biases in current AI models - which is exactly what we want to avoid in future training.

I believe there is a moral imperative to ensure AI models not only account for blindness and blind people, but do so in a way that is consistent with our actual experiences, capabilities, and power. Our premise is simple: Our mission is to make the world more accessible for people who are blind or have low vision and that must include shaping the future of AI.

Be My Eyes has also heard from many of our 675,000 blind and low-vision users, who have told us that they would like their own experiences to play an active role in shaping the future of AI technology. An example of this is explained by Bryan Bashin, Vice Chair of Be My Eyes, who is also blind: "Last year, 19,000 blind beta testers participated in a group that made OpenAI models materially better for the blind community. Their feedback and data convinced OpenAI to allow more robust and fuller facial descriptions of people to be generated from photos. Think about that. Blind people directly shaped the most utilized AI model in the world - and bent it to their needs. We need more of this at scale and we need it quickly."

As AI models continue to speed up the acquisition and importing of data, we see incorporating disability data as an urgent and immediate need, and will therefore continue to work with the disability community on inclusive solutions for a more accessible world, alongside and in partnership with you, our users.

With best regards,

Hans Jørgen Wiberg
Founder, Be My Eyes

Further Details - Strengthening the Be My Eyes Privacy Policy

As the world's leading provider of accessibility services for people who are blind or have low vision, Be My Eyes is in the unique position of having significant data on the real and lived experiences of that community. This data falls into three distinct categories:

1. User Account Data. This is basic and limited data about our users including their name, email address, preferred languages, and approximate location.
2. Photos and associated AI descriptions. These are the photos and images that our users share with Be My AI, and the corresponding AI-generated descriptions of those images.
3. Video data from calls with volunteers. These videos are stored primarily for quality, safety, and to improve our services. These are the calls where Be My Eyes automatically connects a user with an unknown volunteer to assist with accessibility needs. For example, the two most frequent types of calls to volunteers are for product distinction, and to read instructions and describe images.

Our current terms and policies state that while we don't normally share information with any third party, photos and video data can be shared for the purposes of product improvement, research, and AI training. Today we are tightening that policy in 3 specific ways:

Policy change #1 - No Photo Sharing. Be My Eyes will not share photos or their AI descriptions to third parties for training. We believe this data is not likely to be useful for AI training, and in fact, might reinforce bias that exists in current results. The only exception will be for alpha and beta tests of new AI models, but these will involve users in these tests signing separate and specific permission agreements.

Policy change #2 - Video Opt Out. Be My Eyes will allow any user to opt-out of sharing videos, and that opt out will apply to the user's past, present and future videos. An opt-out will not affect a user's ability to access the full Be My Eyes service.

Policy change #3 - Auto Data Deletion. Be My Eyes has historically saved encrypted image data for quality control, service improvement, and to comply with law enforcement requests. By January of 2025, we will update our policies to include a time frame for auto deletion of all image data. These policy changes are being further reinforced with the Principles for Data Sharing that Be My Eyes is committed to adhering to:

1. **Transparency and Disclosure:** Be My Eyes will act with transparency and disclosure around data usage and provision, and will ensure our user community is always notified of any significant changes to our policies. For the full privacy policy [Click here](#).
2. **Full Consumer Choice and Opt-Out Program:** Be My Eyes will provide a full opt-out choice from sharing all past, present, and future video data for anyone in the Be My Eyes' user community. Regardless of what they choose, users can continue to get the benefit of all the services Be My Eyes offers.
3. **Strict Limitations on Data Use:** Any data partnership will include written agreements prohibiting marketing and advertising use (no data mining allowed), no sharing with unaffiliated third parties, and ensuring safe storage and deletion of data post-training. Be My Eyes will also delete personal information from video metadata prior to any sharing. No data from Be My Eyes enterprise products (such as Service Connect, also known as Specialized Help and Be My Eyes for Work) or Be My Eyes Groups, our friends and family product, will be used in training.
4. **Blind Leadership:** The blind members of Be My Eyes' Board of Directors have ultimate authority over AI training and data decisions and had veto power over this policy and every one of these four principles.

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The End of an Era: A Message From the Founder as We Announce the Closure of AppleVis
<https://www.applevis.com/blog/end-era-message-founder-we-announce-closure-applevis>

Dear AppleVis Community,

It is with deep sadness and a heavy heart that after careful consideration I have made the difficult decision to step down from my responsibilities with AppleVis. As a direct result of my departure and following extensive deliberation, the editorial team has come to the painful conclusion that AppleVis will be closing. This decision was not made lightly, but it has become clear that continuing AppleVis without my involvement is not feasible.

Some of you may be aware of my recent health scare, and I would like to emphasise that the timing of this decision is entirely coincidental and unrelated. The discussions have been ongoing for a couple of months, and the final decision had already been reached. My health scare has only delayed this process.

Maintaining AppleVis has essentially been a full-time responsibility for me since I founded it in 2010 — a commitment I've undertaken entirely on a voluntary and unpaid basis. This level of dedication has demanded countless hours of work encompassing nearly every aspect of AppleVis' operations, often starting or ending well outside what many would consider a typical workday. While I've been largely happy to make this commitment, driven by our mission and the positive impact we've had on the community, it has come at significant personal cost. The level of this work has meant substantial sacrifices to my personal and family life, with many missed moments and opportunities. Moreover, the voluntary nature and level of this work has led to additional sacrifices in terms of potential career opportunities and income, a choice I made willingly for the benefit of our users. This dedication wouldn't have been possible without the unwavering support and understanding of my wife. Her patience, encouragement, and willingness to accommodate the demands of AppleVis on our personal life and circumstances have been instrumental in allowing me to devote so much time and energy to this project. I owe her a debt of gratitude that words can scarcely express.

As life evolves, so too must our priorities. I've now reached a stage in my own life where I need to reassess my commitments and focus more on personal matters. The demands and mentally exhausting nature of my responsibilities for AppleVis have made it increasingly challenging to maintain a healthy equilibrium between my personal life and volunteer commitments. Despite my passion for this project, I find myself no longer able to dedicate the necessary time and energy to maintain AppleVis at the level it deserves and our community expects. After much reflection, I have made the difficult decision to step down from my responsibilities with AppleVis. This choice, while not easy, is necessary for my personal well-being and to allow me to redirect my focus to other aspects of my life.

My responsibilities for AppleVis have been so all-encompassing that not a single day has passed in the last fourteen years when I've been able to completely set aside these obligations. I must acknowledge that this situation is largely of my own making and choosing. By being the sole person responsible for the development and maintenance of the website itself, I've shouldered the entire technical workload alone. This situation also meant that I was often the only person on the team who could handle questions and issues from the community about the website and their use of it, creating a bottleneck and placing additional pressure on my time and energy. While this approach allowed for consistency and rapid decision-making, it has also created an untenable situation. Not only has it meant carrying a constant burden, but it has also placed both myself and the rest of the editorial team in a difficult position where there is no 'exit ramp' by which I can transition these responsibilities to others on the team.

While personal circumstances are the primary reason for this decision, I must also acknowledge other contributing factors. The increasingly negative environment fostered by a small but vocal minority within our community has taken its toll. Over time, the constant barrage of criticism, unfounded accusations, and toxic interactions has become a significant source of stress and exhaustion. This situation has been exacerbated by the growing necessity for intervention and moderation on the site. Contrary to what some might claim, I do not enjoy this aspect of operating AppleVis, nor do I possess the skillset necessary to do it well. The process of moderating discussions, along with the frequent pushback it generates, has become increasingly draining. Waking each day to face these challenges has gradually eroded my enthusiasm and energy for AppleVis. After much reflection, I've come to realise that life is too short to voluntarily continue to subject myself to such an environment. While I remain proud of our achievements and grateful for the positive aspects of our community, I believe it's time to prioritise my well-being.

Another significant factor in my decision is my lack of formal training or background in web development. Even referring to myself as a hobbyist in this field would be a stretch. Despite this, I have been extremely proud of the website that I created and maintained. I believe that it has offered a good set of features, performed well, and remained stable

throughout the years. I've also strived to deliver a solid user experience for the majority in our community who use screen readers. However, it's become increasingly clear that for some in our community, this is not enough. The demands for more advanced features and technical improvements have grown, and I find myself lacking the skills and expertise to deliver what they require. This gap between expectations and my capabilities has made the situation increasingly untenable. While I've always been committed to making the AppleVis website the best that I can, the growing demands of user expectations have outpaced my ability to deliver.

I am acutely aware that this news will shock and disappoint our community. Please know that this decision was not made lightly or hastily, but rather as the result of careful consideration by our entire editorial team. Each member has invested significant time and effort into AppleVis over the years, making this decision all the more difficult. AppleVis has been a labor of love for all of us, and we're incredibly proud of what we've achieved together. The dedication and hard work of every team member have been instrumental in shaping AppleVis into the valuable resource it has become, and this collective effort makes the decision to close even more poignant. While I wouldn't want to put words in their mouths, I know that my decision has triggered significant soul searching by each member of the editorial team. They have not only contemplated the future of AppleVis but also explored potential options to prevent its closure. Additionally, each team member has reflected deeply on their own circumstances, capabilities, and desire to remain involved with what they all consider to be an endeavour they are extremely proud to be part of.

All team members have their own commitments and demands on their time which limit their availability for AppleVis. In light of this, the members of the editorial team only deserve praise and appreciation for their willingness to devote some of their own precious free time for the benefit of AppleVis and our community. Their dedication, despite the challenges of balancing work, family, and other personal responsibilities, is truly commendable. This selfless contribution of time and expertise has been the backbone of AppleVis's success and longevity.

I anticipate that there will likely be some people reading this who will be critical of the team and the decision we've made. However, it's important to understand that this is an extremely easy position to take when one is not aware of all that goes into maintaining AppleVis on a daily basis, especially by volunteers who have only ever sought to contribute what they can for the benefit of the wider community. To those who may be quick to criticise without full understanding, I would respectfully suggest that you give your head a wobble. The dedication and effort put into AppleVis by our team of volunteers over the years have been extraordinary, and this decision was not made lightly or without careful consideration of all possible alternatives.

Reflecting on our journey, I am immensely proud of all we have accomplished over the past fourteen years. AppleVis has made a real and meaningful difference in the lives of many. To everyone who has contributed – whether by sharing information, submitting apps to our directories, recording podcasts, creating content, or offering help and advice to others – you should feel a profound sense of pride. Together, we have created a valuable resource and significantly improved the accessibility of Apple technologies and third-party applications, a testament to the power of our community.

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to those I've worked most closely with over the past fourteen years: the current and former members of the AppleVis Editorial Team. It has been an absolute honour and privilege to work alongside you. If my appreciation for your contributions hasn't always been clear, I sincerely apologise. To the current Editorial Team members – Thomas, Michael, Scott, Alex, Dave, and Tyler – I know that this closure affects you deeply. Your unwavering support, understanding, and years of selfless dedication to making AppleVis an invaluable resource are truly appreciated. I hope everyone reading this will join me in thanking you and wishing you the very best for the future. I am honoured to call you friends.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to everyone who has made financial contributions to AppleVis over the years. Your support has been instrumental in our success, and you should share in the pride of what we've achieved. If you currently have an active recurring donation to AppleVis, you can expect to receive a confirmation email from PayPal in the next few days stating that this has been cancelled. We appreciate your ongoing support and want to ensure that you're not charged for any future donations given our impending closure.

I would also like to express my heartfelt appreciation to the individuals at Apple with whom I've had the privilege of interacting over the past fourteen years. It has been incredibly rewarding to witness firsthand the impact that AppleVis has had on improving the accessibility of Apple technologies for the blind and low vision community. One of my biggest regrets has been not being able to speak openly during this time about the extensive collaborations, initiatives, and work that Apple undertakes with individuals, groups, and organisations to enhance the accessibility of its products. It has been particularly frustrating to observe certain criticisms of Apple's accessibility team or circulating information about them, knowing that it doesn't reflect the full reality. I sincerely hope that a time will come when Apple can be more transparent about these efforts, as they truly go above and beyond what is publicly known. It has also been immensely gratifying to see the reach and influence of AppleVis within Apple itself. Learning that people at the highest levels of the company have, on occasions, been aware of and acted in response to concerns and wishes expressed by our community has been both humbling and inspiring. This behind-the-scenes impact has been a constant source of pride and motivation throughout our journey.

Effective immediately, the AppleVis website will be set to a read-only mode. This means that while all existing content will remain accessible, new posts, comments, and account registrations will be disabled. We anticipate maintaining this read-only state until August 31, 2024. At that point, unless the editorial team has identified a viable option to keep AppleVis alive in some form, the website will be taken offline permanently. This timeline allows the team a period to explore potential alternatives while still providing access to the valuable resources and information currently on the site. We understand that this change may be disappointing, especially as it coincides with Apple's usual major OS release cycle in September. However, this decision reflects our current circumstances and the need to manage the site's closure responsibly. We encourage users to save any crucial information from the site during this read-only period, as access beyond August 31 is not guaranteed.

In closing, I want to express my deepest gratitude to everyone who has been part of the AppleVis journey. Your contributions, support, and engagement have made this community truly special. While this chapter may be ending, the impact of our collective efforts will continue to be felt in the world of Apple accessibility for years to come.

Thank you for being part of AppleVis.

David Goldfield,
Blindness Assistive Technology Specialist

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Aira's Biggest Access Offer Yet

Aira has a long-standing history with AI, and we see its enormous potential to advance and offer more value to the blind and low vision community. Earlier this year, we launched Access AI, a free image chat experience that provides instant descriptions and the ability to request free, on-demand verification from our professional visual interpreters.

We're continuing this commitment to pushing AI forward within our product with an exciting new initiative called Build AI.

Aira is inviting Explorers who make calls in the US to join Build AI and participate in helping to train AI to effectively assist the blind and low vision community. Explorers who opt into Build AI will have some of their qualifying call recordings securely shared with our third-party AI technology partners. These sessions will provide a data foundation to allow us to develop global solutions that uniquely address the broad and trusted use of visual interpreting. Aira's goal with Build AI is to continue our tradition of innovation, and develop cutting-edge AI technology with the potential to support independence and efficiency for Explorers.

What is Build AI? How are Build AI and Access AI different?

Aira is taking the next step in AI innovation for the blind and low vision community. To do that, we are partnering with leaders in the AI space. Build AI is Aira's data collection program that Explorers can opt into. By participating, you allow Aira to share your visual interpreter call recordings (excluding those with personal information, or those paid for by third parties like employers, schools, or Access Offers i.e. Target or Starbucks) with our AI development partners. Your benefit for being part of the program is that you receive 10 free minutes every 30 minutes. This offer is similar to Aira's 5 minutes free offer in that you receive free minutes that reset after a set period of time. In this case, your 10 free Build AI minutes reset every 30 minutes. Just like the 5 minutes free, your minutes do not accumulate and will automatically reset every 30 minutes.

This doesn't change how you use Aira and doesn't impact the separate, free Access AI feature. With Build AI, you still speak with a human visual interpreter. Access AI is an AI image chat, but you can choose while using it to connect with a human visual interpreter for verification. The purpose of the Build AI program is to help Aira potentially develop advanced AI capabilities by using real-world data. While there are no guaranteed outcomes, the collected data might aid in creating new AI features. Your participation is entirely on your terms; you can opt out at any time and control which calls are shared.

Build AI is an Access Offer, but what does an Access Offer mean?

An Access Offer is a way to access free Aira minutes. When calling Aira through an Access Offer, a specified number of minutes are free, and the Explorer will not be charged for them. Only one Access Offer can be used per call. If an Explorer wants to maximize their savings and use multiple offers, they will need to end the call and call back with a different offer. Visual interpreters cannot switch Access Offers, and once an offer is started, it cannot be paused.

How do I join Build AI?

If your app is up to date and you are located in the US, follow these steps to sign up:

1. Look for a banner on the main screen inviting you to join Build AI.
2. Click the link on mobile or web.
3. If you miss the banner, go to More > Preferences. Toggle on Build AI and agree to the terms and conditions.
4. You can also use this section to opt out of the program at any time.

Do I need to do anything to activate this offer?

No, the offer will be auto-applied.

How do I opt out a specific call from being shared with the AI partner?

To opt a specific call out, follow the below steps:

1. Go to "Call History" within 72 hours of completing the call
2. Select the call in question
3. Use the options at the bottom of the screen to not share the call

Who is eligible for the Build AI offer?

Build AI is available for Explorers calling from within the U.S. Calls from an international number are eligible for this offer when the call is placed within the US. Both Explorers with free accounts and paid subscriptions can opt in.

Why is this only in the US?

We intentionally partner with organizations that share our mission to advance AI benefits specifically for blind and low vision individuals as well as maintain stringent safety and security standards. At present, our third-party AI partners cannot manage data collected outside of the US due to their own high standard data handling policies, including compliance with privacy laws. While we cannot forecast or commit to supporting non-US-based calls at this time, we recognize this limitation and continue to advocate for broader access. Despite these restrictions, the AI solutions we develop from the data we collect will be available globally and will not be limited by geography. We understand the significant access Aira provides and acknowledge the disappointment for users outside the US regarding the current limitations. Know that we are working toward expansion alongside our partners and plan on the AI we develop not being restricted by geography. Aira subscribers, wherever they are located, will still get priority connect over Build AI calls, especially when there is high demand.

Which calls are shared?

If you choose to opt in to this program, subscriber minutes as well as Aira sponsored offers such as Five Minute Free call minutes, Job Seeker Access Offer, and the Build AI Access Offer will be shared. These are all Aira supported Access Offers, which is why they are shared. You can always opt out certain calls that you do not want shared. Sessions through an Access Partner, like at an airport or through an employer, will be excluded from Build AI. As with any Access Offer, the visual interpreter will communicate with the Explorer that the Build AI offer can be used. When using Access AI, if you choose to verify the chat responses with a human visual interpreter, we may share the images with the Build AI partner, and the messages may be read and appear in the audio.

Can I use the Build AI access for any task I want?

Yes, you can but that may change so take advantage while you can. In the future, we may change the eligibility and exclude certain tasks. Today, we encourage you to make use of the offer for everything. Sessions that contain sensitive information will not be shared with third-party AI partners regardless of your choice to share the session.

How secure is Build AI when it comes to my personal information?

As part of Build AI, Aira is committed to maintaining our high standards of trust within the Explorer community. This means the program has rigorous controls to ensure security and privacy for all participants. Explorers have full authority which calls are shared for the first 72 hours after the session has completed. No Explorer will have their data shared with Aira's third-party technology partners without explicit consent. Call will be de-identified with only the video and audio from the call recording shared. Calls identified as containing sensitive information will not be shared. This includes information like financial data (credit card numbers, financial statements), medical information (prescription details, medical records), or personal information that identifies someone (state ID information, passport details). Explorers can also opt out of sharing any specific call through the "Call History" feature in the app, which shows the session sharing status. By clicking on a specific call's entry, a feedback form will appear. This contains a new drop-down that allows Explorers to opt-out of sharing an individual session. Explorers can also call customer care to have a session opted out of Build AI.

If I opt in, can I opt back out?

Due to our commitment to privacy, which includes not sharing your data and sessions with third parties without your consent, we are requesting your consent for data sharing through this program. Your participation is entirely on your terms; you can opt out at any time and control which calls are shared. Simply navigate in-app to your preferences, then scroll to the bottom and toggle on or off the "Build AI" section.

How does this impact my subscription if I have one?

If you opt in to the program, your calls from your subscription will also be shared, but you can opt out of any calls through the "Call History" feature in the app. As we expect there to be higher demand for calls, subscriber calls will receive priority connect to avoid longer wait times that may occur with the Build AI Access Offer. If you use the Build AI Access Offer and go over the time limit, it will roll into your paid minutes, similar to a Five Minute Free call.

I received an ineligible content for one of my Build AI calls. Does that mean my plan minutes were used?

No, your plan minutes were not used. This means that the call contained sensitive information and will not be shared. The first 10 minutes of that call were still covered by the Build AI program.

What happens if I'm on a Build AI call for more than 10 minutes?

If you're on a Build AI call for more than 10 minutes, only the first 10 minutes will be under the Build AI offer, and the remaining time will be covered by your account minutes.

Why does opting in provide Explorers with free minutes via the Build AI Access Offer?

The third-party technology partners that are working with Aira are supporting this Access Offer, in exchange for Aira providing call recordings to train AI.

Who are the third-party technology partners Aira is working with?

While the names of the third-party AI companies are confidential, Aira can share that they are major AI companies with very high standards around data stewardship. Aira is committed to keeping Explorers informed about the Build AI program and any updates through our social media accounts and the Aira Compass update.

How long will this program last?

There is not a set timeline for this program, but it is a limited time offer. You can stay up to date on developments through our social media accounts and the Aira Compass update.

Is Aira trying to replace visual interpreters with AI?

The human experience with a visual interpreter is always at the core of Aira. As AI technology continues to advance, we recognize that there are some tasks and use cases it is very well suited for and some significant future potential. Human visual interpreters are also essential for many other tasks, and provide a high degree of trust and security. We envision a future at Aira with the best visual interpreters possible and the most advanced AI technology working seamlessly together. Whether you join the Build AI program or not, you will always have a choice over whether to work with AI or a human visual interpreter.

Do you have additional questions? Please connect with Customer Care at support@aira.io
<https://aira.io/build-ai-faq/>

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**INDEPENDENT VISUALLY IMPAIRED ENTREPRENEURS
ONLINE Business Expo
November 16, 2024**

IVIE is offering a great opportunity to blind or visually impaired business owners/entrepreneurs. When you join in our Online Business Expo shopping experience, you can describe your products and services, pass on contact information, and allow participants to ask questions. For IVIE members, the fee for presenting for fifteen minutes is \$10, for a half hour is \$20, or for an hour is \$30. Not an IVIE member? Then, the fee for presenting is an additional \$15 -- \$25 for fifteen minutes, \$35 for a half hour session, or \$45 for an hour session. Nonmembers have the option of having \$15 of the payment used to pay IVIE dues for 2025.

All those participating in the call, whether presenting or not, will use the same Zoom information to connect. The date and time line be November 16, 2024, from 11:30 am to 7 pm Eastern. At 11:45 am, an introduction of all the vendors participating with their specific time slots would be given along with instructions for those attending. A wrap-up after all the presentations would be available for anyone to ask any final questions of those exhibiting online.

The deadline for purchasing a time slot to give a presentation is October 31, 2024. To purchase a time slot or ask questions, send an email to info@ivie-acb.org with your request to present/exhibit. Please send your business name, product line, your telephone number, and your email address. You will be sent a link for payment and additional information. If you wish to attend the IVIE Online Business Expo and listen to this unique shopping experience, there is no cost. However, please send an email to register so we can send you the Zoom call details. Send the email request to info@ivie-acb.org or contact Ardis Bazyn, phone 818-209-8684.

Thanks.

Ardis Bazyn
303-963-5153

"Making the Impossible Possible"

For inspirational speaking, business coaching, or books: <http://www.bazyncommunications.com>

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Insight for the Journey: shared by Kenneth Semien Sr. Shifting the Focus to Self Introspection and Reflection: A Case for Emotional Maturity Among Leaders

Let's begin by reviewing character, emotional intelligence (EI), introspection and reflection. Our character plays a huge role in how we respond to situations we face.

Character: The values, traits, and virtues that underlie our actions and thoughts.

EI: The awareness and management of emotions, both our own and others', to build positive relationships. EI behaviors are built on top of character.

Character and emotional intelligence can be considered as two layers of our leadership capability, the two layers that are foundational to our leadership effectiveness.

For example, respect for others is a character value that motivates our desire for relationship and drives us to further develop our empathy or our ability to work in a team.

Introspection involves looking inward to examine your thoughts, emotions, desires, and fears. It can help you become more self-aware and make choices that align with your authentic self. Some examples of introspection include journaling, meditating, reflecting on situations, and talking with a mental health professional.

Introspection gives you access to understanding yourself, self reflection lets you process what you learn, and insights are the answers you come up with and that you can act upon. Through self awareness, you become less likely to veer off track when difficult emotions surface.

Now, we'll move into the article for today.

6 Traits Of An Emotionally Mature Person

by Oleksandr Berdychevskyi

Emotionally mature people are often misunderstood or looked down upon. Here are 6 traits of an emotionally mature person you should know.

In this day and age, emotional maturity has become indispensable for better living. The more emotionally mature we become, the easier it becomes to accept changes and adapt to reality.

But contrary to popular belief, age and literacy are in no way indications of emotional maturity. They're just numbers that bear no intrinsic value when it comes to emotional maturity.

It is high time we start considering emotional maturity an intrinsic quality, and not just a measurement.

Here Are 6 Traits Of An Emotionally Mature Person

1. Being self-aware.

Self-aware people are usually found to be emotionally mature when compared with their peers. Not many fall in this category. And people mostly remain ignorant of themselves and the actions they take.

Being self-aware is about looking at yourself from an objective point of view. Understanding your strengths, limitations, and weaknesses is crucial in creating emotional stability. Things won't always go in your favor.

Thus it is very important that you become increasingly aware of yourself, the external events, and how these things actually end up affecting you.

2. Being accountable.

Learning to deal with mistakes is one of the major traits of emotional maturity. The first thing you realize that we are all accountable for our actions and the choices we make. No more do you buy into the delusion that things happen by chance. The accidental view of life changes and you start holding yourself accountable for every event. You stop blaming fate and whining about how cruel and biased people are. You realize that the finger can be pointed to no one but yourself. There is a gradual shift in the perception and you start looking at yourself as the prime mover of all the events that take place around you, including the ones that make you emotionally vulnerable. You are accountable for your own outcomes- that is the fundamental insight you gain in this stage.

3. Humility.

Modesty is one of the prime virtues of mankind. It is instrumental in maintaining health and positivity in a relationship. Arrogance only fuels our false sense of self-esteem and propagates violence in the form of emotional hazard. But the one who nourishes within them enough humility is the one who can be truly regarded as an emotionally mature soul. It is humility that gives rise to the sense of equity. It is the stepping stone towards universal cooperation and brotherhood. An emotionally mature person knows the value of being modest and humane, and thus never refrains from culturing humility as one of the best practices.

4. Acceptance.

Reality doesn't always align with our demands. We as a population on this planet fake ourselves to compare and compete with our peers. But an emotionally mature person has reached a phase where they have realized the futility of comparing themselves. They know how foolish it is to spend so much time and energy in such pursuits. Instead, they work on accepting the outcomes and be content with who they really are. They realize how meaningless it is to keep perpetuating the same process.

It is therefore wise to accept who we are, what we have and eventually make peace with ourselves.

5. Acknowledgement and gratitude.

We are getting drained of the habit of acknowledgment and thanksgiving. The world as we know it is already hesitant of being thankful to life.

But an emotionally mature person knows that even the smallest things that make us happy are more treasurable than gold itself. When we feel thankful for little things, our lives become the vessel of contentment and positivity. The more one demands from life, the more one turns out to be feverish.

This discontent and mental chaos eventually leads to severe dissatisfaction that can never be extinguished, but only fueled by more expectations and demands.

An emotionally mature person sees the folly of this and is always thankful for whatever life has bestowed upon them.

6. Compassion.

In all the major religions across the world, compassion has been the key driving factor behind human welfare. Without compassion, there is no sense of brotherhood and communion among human souls.

An emotionally mature person has transformed themselves into a vessel of compassion because for them, human virtues outweigh any scope for selfish gains.

They know that without compassion, humanity will eventually doom itself through conflict and greed.

The world inherited by the next generation, if lacks compassion, then would disintegrate into a cradle of decadence and individualism, solely concerned

with material gain. The emotionally mature ones realize this and are motivated to cultivate as much compassion as possible.

Source 1:

<https://newhorizonpartners.com/the-link-between-character-and-emotional-intelligence/>

Source 2:

<https://medium.com/@alex.berd86/6-traits-of-an-emotionally-mature-person-dad467a170c4>