

Brain Injury — Why do I Feel so Misunderstood and Shunned? Presentation

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As an individual living with the impact of a brain injury and an invisible disability, I have been asked the question many times.

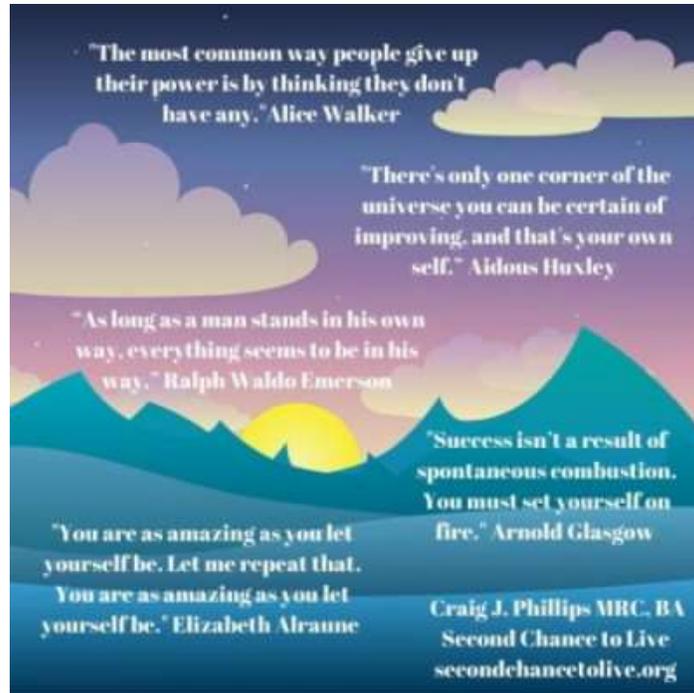
The question, “Why do I feel so misunderstood and shunned as an individual living with a brain injury?”.

In my experience and through many struggles the answer to the question became apparent to me. In July 2016 I wrote the article, **Brain Injury – Why do I Feel so Misunderstood and Shunned?**

In the article I shared what helped me to make sense of what previously left me baffled. If you have been baffled to make sense of this question, I would invite you to read on to find out what became apparent.

Since the time that I wrote the article I have created both a video and slide show presentation of the article. To make the information available to groups, I decided to create this presentation of the article.

The answer to the question helped me to make sense of and find peace. The answer to the question helped me to own my power.



What Became Apparent to Me

What became apparent to me helped me to have peace in my life when misunderstood and shunned.

What became apparent to me helped me to grow in self-acceptance, despite being misunderstood and shunned.

What became apparent to me helped me to let go of the people who misunderstand and shun me.

What became apparent to me helped me to move across the bridge of acceptance called hope and create a good life for myself.

Realization – I am Powerless over what People choose to Believe

In my experience and through my own recovery process, I came to realize two realities. The first reality is that many people do not want or do not know how to process their feelings.

The second reality that helped me to begin to have more peace in my life was that many people either do not know how to or do not want to change. To face the reality that our lives have been forever changed because of our brain injury may be too painful.

To Painful for Them to Accept

Too painful for them to accept. Because accepting our reality may be too painful, individuals may stay in and defend their denial. Defending their denial for what they do not want to accept is not our fault. Secondly, because of the lack of acceptance, they may justify the way they treat us.

Not Our Fault

Defending their denial for what they do not want to accept is not our fault. Justifying the way they treat us, because of their lack of acceptance; is not our fault. By accepting these realities, I am able to take care of myself.

Awareness

In my experience and for many years (once I began to come out of my own denial) I attempted to get family members and friends to understand and accept my reality. I tried to explain to them in many different ways that I was not “fudging” or “making excuses”.

I tried to convince them otherwise, but the more I tried the more I felt frustrated. What was conveyed to me was, that if I just tried harder “**then**” I would not be affected by my brain injury.

But the reality was that I had tried “every which way” that I could to not be impacted or affected because of my brain injury. My trying to convince them of my reality created ongoing conflicts.

Created Ongoing Conflicts

Conflicts in them because of what they could not accept.

Conflict in me for feeling that there was something wrong with me.

Conflicts in me for not being able to not be impacted by a brain injury.

Conflicts in me that would leave me frustrated.

Conflicts in me that left me with a sense of shame. A sense of shame for not being able to overcome the impact of my brain injury and my invisible disability.

After Many Years of Trying to Convince Them

After much toil and cycles through the mentioned conflicts, I had a spiritual awakening. A realization that I needed to do something different.

A realization that I needed to do something to be able to accept myself. A realization that what I was trying to change was not changing my reality.

When I reached a point when I could no longer deny and defend my reality, I made some life changing choices. I began to grieve my reality.

Moving across a Bridge of Acceptance into a Land of Hope

Grieving my reality helped me to get to a place of acceptance. Acceptance provided the “bridge” to taking a different course of action.

Through my grieving process, I discovered that as I was able to face, confront and address my own denial I had more peace in my life.

The Struggle to Let Go

What I discovered through confronting my own lack of acceptance, was that I could let go of the struggle.

The struggle that convinced me that I needed to get “them” to understand and accept what I could not change.

The struggle to get “them” to understand, so that I could begin to accept what I was powerless to change – the impact of my brain injury.

The struggle to let go of what other people wanted to or needed to believe about me and my “reality”.

The struggle to get “them” to understand so that I would no longer be misunderstood or shunned.

The struggle to get “them” to understand so I could keep “them” from going away to avoid feeling abandoned.

The struggle to break free from the need for “their” approval and acceptance to be able to get on with my life.

The struggle to no longer be misunderstood and shunned by “them” so that I could begin to love and accept myself.

The struggle to get people to understand how my brain injury impacted my ability to stay employed.

The struggle to prove my worth and value to people who choose to put me in a “box” through a label, stereotype and a stigmatization.

Through Growing in Awareness of My need to Let Go

That I could no longer wait for people to catch up. I needed and need to let go of what other people think of me.

That I could walk across the bridge called acceptance and keep walking. Keep walking to create a good life for myself without “their” understanding.

That I could no longer wait for people to catch up in “their” ability to understand or accept me in my reality.

That I could no longer wait for people to accept that I had changed because of my brain injury and invisible disability.

That I could no longer wait for people to accept that I could no longer stay gainfully employed.

That I could no longer wait for people to let me out of the “box” of a label, stereotype and stigmatization to see my great worth and value.

That I could no longer wait to be recognized to answer the call of my destiny. The call to express my great worth and value.

What I Did with this Awareness

That I could not afford to wait for people to catch up to pursue my destiny.

Answering the Call that Never Came

[Answering the Call that Never Came — Pursuing Our Destinies Part 1](#)

[Answering the Call that Never Came — Pursuing Our Destinies Part 2](#)

Answering the Call that Never Came — Pursuing Our Destinies Part 1 and Part 2 Video Presentation

What Helped me to Find a New Freedom

I began to realize that being misunderstood and shunned was the “way” in which “they” coped with what they could not accept. I began to realize that I needed to let the people who misunderstood and shunned me go. I needed to let them go so that I could grow in my own acceptance.

The acceptance of who I am and what I could do living with the impact of a brain injury and an invisible disability.

What I could do in ways that would work for me. Several years ago, I wrote an article and made a video presentation of the article. Below are links to the article and the video presentation. The article illustrates how valuable we are, with what makes us different in the midst of being misunderstood and shunned. You are of much value, because of your reality.

Let me encourage you to read or watch the video presentation of the below article: Living with a Disability and Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer

[Living with a Disability and Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer](#)

[Living with a disability and Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer Video Presentation](#)

Acceptance

In my experience, as I began to realize that I could not wait for people to “catch up” to me in their acceptance, I found a new freedom. I began to realize that I was walking down a road less traveled. A road that was leading to fulfilling my dreams. A road that was leading to my destiny. A road across other “bridges” of acceptance, yet to be discovered. Bridges of acceptance that would give me more peace in my life.

Bridges that would help me to accept that people are where they are on their own journeys. The people who misunderstand and shun me, for whatever reason.

During the past 15 1/2 years, as I have grown to accept both myself and where other people are on their journeys, I have continued to make peace with being misunderstood and shunned. As I have found more peace, being misunderstood and shunned has had less impact upon me.

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Hope

My experience *may* help you to let go of the people who misunderstand and shun you. My experience may help you to find more peace in your life when people misunderstand and shun you.

My experience may help you to not feel less alone. My experience may encourage and inspire you to walk down a road less traveled and over “bridges” of acceptance.

Bridges of acceptance, yet to be revealed to you and to me

Below is a video and slide show presentation of the article that I made into this presentation.

To watch and listen to the video presentation of the article, please click on this link:

[Brain Injury — Why do I Feel so Misunderstood and Shunned? Video Presentation](#)

I have also created a slideshow presentation of this article. To watch the slideshow presentation of this article, click on this link:

[Brain Injury — Why do I Feel so Misunderstood and Shunned? Slideshow Presentation](#)

Over the course of the past 15 ½ years I have created resources that helped me to move beyond being misunderstood and shunned.

[Self-Advocacy Resources for Ongoing Brain Injury Recovery Empowering the Individual, not the brain injury](#)

I have also created 11 other presentations to share through zoom or in person. I am available to share these presentations.

[Finding Purpose after Brain Injury and Stroke Presentation](#)
[Acceptance and Creating a New Normal after Brain Injury and Stroke Presentation](#)
[Neuroplasticity, Setting Goals and Creating Hope After Brain Injury and Stroke Presentation](#)
[Believing in Ourselves through Self-Advocacy — A Guide to Owning Our Power after Brain Injury and Stroke Presentation](#)
[12 Ways to Enhance Our Lives, Well-Beings and Relationships after a Brain Injury and Stroke Presentation](#)
[Making Our Lives Magical One Day at a Time after Brain Injury and Stroke Presentation](#)
[Cultivating Healthy Relationships after Brain Injury and Stroke Presentation](#)
[Living with a Brain Injury and an Invisible Disability --How are You Defining Success?](#)
[Living with a Brain Injury, an Invisible Disability and Change after Brain Injury and Stroke Presentation](#)
[Instead, We can Create our Own Genius after Brain Injury and Stroke Presentation](#)
[Grieving the Guilt and Shame of a Traumatic Brain Injury and Stroke Zoom Presentation](#)

