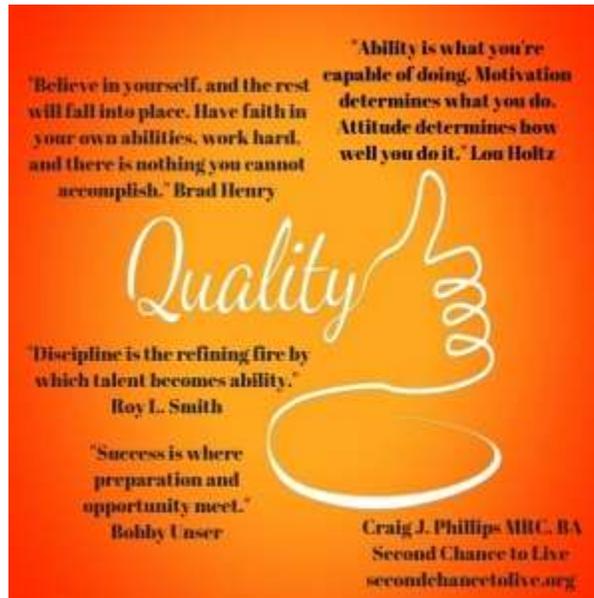


Finding the Freedom from Feeling Stuck after a Brain Injury Presentation

Craig J. Phillips MRC, BA Second Chance to Live



Several nights ago I gave my presentation [Brain Injury and The Power of "I CAN" in an Ongoing Recovery Process](#) to a brain injury support group.

After the presentation, one of the members asked a question.

"How can I stop feeling stuck?"

I shared some information with the individual, however because of the limited time I decided to write this article. Write this article to share what helped me stop feeling stuck after my brain injury.

"You were born to win, but to be a winner, you must plan to win, and expect to win." Zig Ziglar

In My Experience

In my experience, the process of finding freedom from feeling stuck began when I could no longer deny. Could no longer deny the impact of the traumatic brain injury that I sustained when I was 10 years old. When this occurred, I began to grieve what I could not change. Grieving opened the door to explore beyond the **“box of my confusion”** that kept me feeling stuck.

“When one door of happiness closes, another opens; but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one which has been opened for us.” Helen Keller

Acceptance

In my experience, and as I grieved, I grew in acceptance. Acceptance gave me to freedom to realize that I could give myself permission. Permission to try something different, beyond what was not working and kept me feeling stuck. Acceptance gave me the ability to change the things that I could. Change the things that I could to be able to create my new normal. Create in ways that would work so that I could stop feeling stuck.

“Decision is the spark that ignites action. Until a decision, nothing happens.” Wilfred A. Peterson

“The most common way people give away their power is thinking they don’t have any.” Alice Walker

Create beyond Feeling Stuck

Creating my new normal helped me to find my purpose and define success for myself. Define success for myself through advocating for myself in my mind, body, spirit, soul and emotions. In the process, I was and am able to improve the quality of my life, well-being and relationships. **BUT**, this process just took time. Lots of time and effort to stop feeling stuck because of what I could not change — the impact of my brain injury.

**“Nothing is a waste of time if you use the experience wisely.”
Auguste Rodin**

**“Dreams do not vanish, so long as people do not abandon
them.” Phantom F. Harlock**

**“Create your own visual style... let it be unique for yourself
and yet identifiable for others.” Orson Welles**

**“Research your own experience. Absorb what is useful,
reject what is useless and add specifically your own
creation.” Bruce Lee**

Reality Set in for Me

In my experience, although I wanted the process to be quick, reality set in for me. I discovered that there were no quick ways to stop feeling stuck. It just took what it took. Although there were no quick fixes, silver bullets or magic potions, I became aware of principles. **Principles** that I could use each day, in my process. Principles that would help me to stop feeling stuck. Stuck because of what I was/am powerless to change.

**“Don’t give up at half time. Concentrate on winning in the
second half.” Paul Bryant**

**“Sometimes adversity is what you need to face in order to
become successful.” Zig Ziglar**

**“Not everyone will understand your journey. That’s okay.
You’re here to live your life, not to make everyone
understand.” Banksy**

Principles that Helped me to Stop Feeling Stuck

The process of finding freedom from being stuck takes **hard work, commitment, determination, drive, discipline, fortitude, persistence, tenacity** and **courage**.

“If you want to improve your self-worth, stop giving other people the calculator.” Tim Fargo

“Ideas do not always come in a flash but by diligent trial-and-error experiments that take time and thought.” Charles K. Kao

“Ability is what you’re capable of doing. Motivation determines what you do. Attitude determines how well you do it.” Lou Holtz

Inch by Inch, life’s a Cinch. Yard by Yard, it’s very hard.

Hard work or Work-ethic

“Without hard work, nothing grows but weeds.” Gordon B. Hinckley

Definition

constantly, regularly, or habitually engaged in earnest and energetic work : **INDUSTRIOUS, DILIGENT**

My Perspective

Hard work for me means being diligent, to accomplish a task or a goal that is set before me; with focus.

Hard work involves sticking with a project or a goal to achieve the desired outcome.

For me, hard work does not mean running a sprint but involves running a marathon; which requires consistent and ongoing effort.

Article link:

[A Word of Encouragement – Keep Swinging at the Fences](#)

Commitment

“It is not that I am so smart, it is just that I stay with problems longer.” Albert Einstein

Definition

“a willingness to give your time and energy to something that you believe in, or a promise or firm decision to do something” **[Cambridge Dictionaries online](#)**

My Perspective

For me commitment involves loyalty, first to myself; to stick with a goal, regardless...

Commitment communicates to me to remain undeterred from what I set out to accomplish.

Although the way that I set out to accomplish something may change, my commitment teaches me that I can find a way that will work for me to be able to accomplish my goal.

Article link:

[When Circumstances Change Our Plans](#)

Determination

“I will prepare and someday my chance will come.” Abraham Lincoln

Definition

“is a positive [emotion](#) that involves persevering towards a difficult [goal](#) in spite of obstacles.^{[1][2]} Determination occurs prior to goal attainment and serves to motivate behavior that will help achieve one’s goal.” [Wikipedia](#)

My Perspective

Determination helps me to focus on what I want to accomplish, in spite of obstacles and setbacks.

Obstacles become a sign on the road that helps me to realize that adjustments need to be made to accomplish my desired goal (s).

Determination teaches me to not give up in spite of apparent obstacles and setbacks because I know that more will be revealed in time.

Article link:

[Experiencing Adversity, Failures, Setbacks and Not Giving Up!](#)

Drive

“I have not failed. I’ve just found 10,000 ways that won’t work.” Thomas Edison

Definition

“There are three major components to motivation: activation, persistence, and intensity. *Activation* involves the decision to initiate a behavior... *Persistence* is the continued effort toward a goal even though obstacles may exist... Finally, *intensity* can be seen in the concentration and vigor that goes into pursuing a goal.” [About Education — What is Motivation](#)

My Perspective

Motivation can either be external or internal. Being externally driven will only last until the threat is removed. Being internally motivated or driven, on the other hand; is sustainable because of the individual’s internal desire to achieve the skill, skill set or goal.

The drive encourages me to stick with the process and keep learning from my circumstances, my experiences and my opportunities.

Article link:

[Don’t Give Up — Your Life Matters!](#)

Discipline

“Discipline is the bridge between goals and accomplishment.” Jim Rohn

Definition

“training to act in accordance with rules; drill, activity, exercise, or a regimen that develops or improves a skill, the rigor or training effect of experience, adversity” [Dictionary.com](#)

My Perspective

For me, discipline means that I keep working on my craft, tweaking and taking away; adding and making the decision to follow through to condition myself to achieving an end.

Article link:

[Neuroplasticity, Small Successes, and Learning / Relearning Skill Sets](#)

Fortitude

“Fortitude is the marshal of thought, the armor of the will, and the fort of reason.” Francis Bacon

Definition

“Fortitude meaning **[courage](#)** or bravery is the ability and willingness to confront fear, pain, danger, uncertainty, or intimidation.” **[Wikipedia](#)**

My Perspective

For me, fortitude means that I commit to pursuing my dreams and my destiny, my vision, and mission in the face of being minimized, marginalized, dismissed and discounted.

Fortitude means that I remain true to myself, regardless of whether anyone else “gets it” or understand me. Fortitude means that I stay committed to my goals, whatever they may be at the time.

To thine own self-be true.

Article link:

Having the Courage to be Me

Persistence

“Persistence and resilience only come from having been given the chance to work through difficult problems.” Gever Tulley

Definition

“the quality that allows someone to continue doing something or trying to do something even though it is difficult or opposed by other people” [Merriam-Webster](#)

My Perspective

For me, persistence is the decision to get up more times than I fall down.

Persistence for me means that I don't give up regardless...

Giving up simply is not an option. Persistence means believing in myself.

Article link:

[Answering the Call that Never Came](#)

Tenacity

“It's not that I'm so smart, it's just that I stay with problems longer.” Albert Einstein

Definition

“an unwillingness to yield or give up, being dogged, stubbornly, persevering and steadfast” [Wiktionary](#)

My Perspective

Tenacity keeps me moving toward what I want to accomplish in my life. Tenacity means that I keep looking for ways to win in life.

Tenacity means that I do give myself no for an answer.

Tenacity means that I trust the process, a loving God and myself.

Tenacity means that I keep moving forward.

Article link:

[Detailed About Page](#)

Courage

“Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgement that something is more important than fear.” Ambrose Redmoon

Definition

“The state or quality of mind or spirit that enables one to face danger, fear, or vicissitudes with self-possession, confidence, and resolution; bravery.” [The Free Dictionary](#)

My Perspective

Courage to me means I stay committed to the process, the footwork, and the journey. Courage helps me to remember that I do not have to do things perfectly. Courage reminds me that I can pursue excellence, instead of perfection. Courage reminds me that will all learn, there is a learning curve. Courage reminds me to stay committed to my mission and vision.

Courage gives me hope.

Article link:

[More than a Survivor](#)

“Seek out that particular mental attribute which makes you feel most deeply and vitally alive, along which comes the inner voice which says, “This is the real me.” And when you have found that attitude, follow it.” William James

If you advance confidently in the direction of your dreams and endeavor to live the life that you have imagined...you will meet with a success unexpected in common hours.” Henry David Thoreau

“Insist on yourself. Never imitate. Your own gift you can present every moment with the cumulative force of a whole life’s cultivation. But of the adopted talent of another you have only an extemporaneous half-possession... Do that which is assigned to you and you cannot hope too much or dare too much. ” Ralph Waldo Emerson

Below are 19 presentations. Presentations in which I share what helped and continues to help me find the freedom from feeling stuck. If interested, click on this link:

[Autobiography](#).

To Schedule my Availability to Share these Presentations, click on this link: **[Availability](#)**

[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

Living with a Brain Injury and the Messages We Tell Ourselves Presentation

Brain Injury and The Power of “I CAN” in an Ongoing Brain Injury Recovery Process Zoom Presentation

12 Ways to Enhance Our Lives, Well-Beings and Relationships after a Brain Injury and Stroke Presentation

The Progression of Living My Best Life after My Brain Injury Presentation

Making Our Lives Magical One Day at a Time after Brain Injury and Stroke Presentation

Brain Injury, Stress, Anxiety, Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years Presentation

Cultivating Healthy Relationships after Brain Injury and Stroke Presentation

Living with a Brain Injury and an Invisible Disability — How are You Defining Success? Presentation

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 Presentation

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

Living with a Brain Injury — I Can Not Do Everything, But Still I Can Do Something Presentation

Comprehensive History of Second Chance to Live — Answering the Call that never Came Presentation

Second Chance to Live and Succeeding Beyond my Special Needs from 10 Years of Age Presentation