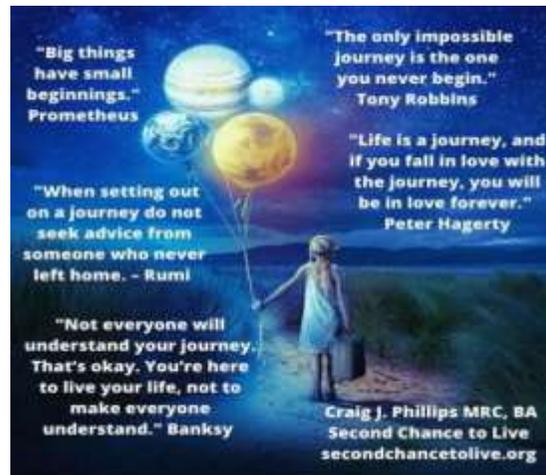


Brain Injury and The Power of “I CAN” in An Ongoing Brain Injury and Stroke Recovery Process Presentation

Craig J. Phillips MRC, BA Second Chance to Live



“Big Things Have Small Beginnings.” Prometheus

Car Accident 1967 10 years old, Fracture skull, right frontal lobe damage, severe brain bruise, brain stem involvement, coma 3 weeks. Fractured left femur, traction 6-7 weeks, Spica full body cast 5-6 months. Taught myself how to walk, talk, read, write, speak in complete sentences. 2 EEG's, battery cognitive psycho social testing. Results shared with my parents.

Found out the day of graduation with my master's degree from my mom, that I was not expected to succeed beyond high school academically. Took me 10 years to obtain my undergraduate degree with 4 different majors, 2 universities and 1 college. Took me 3 1/2 years to obtain my master's degree with 2 programs and 2 different graduate schools.

Vocational Rehabilitation and Social Security Disability

Had a long history of getting and being fired from nonprofessional and professional jobs. Difficulties in undergraduate and graduate schools. Client of the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation 2 times. After 2nd evaluation I was told that I was unemployable. Applied for SSDI 3 times. 3rd application approved. Felt like someone all dressed up with nowhere to go, despite my academic and vocational determination.

Making Every Day a Good Day

What we become in life is not based on what other people say we can or cannot do. What we become is based on what we say, **WE CAN DO.**

Inch by inch, life's a cinch. Yard by Yard, it's very hard.

After a brain injury the way "we can" may change, but we are not limited:

Everyone is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid." Albert Einstein

Owning Responsibility for My Life

And with this understanding comes the realization that I need to own the responsibility. The responsibility of what I become in this life is MINE.

"Nothing in the universe can stop you from letting go and starting over." Guy Finley

"We must be willing to let go of the life we have planned so as to have the life that is waiting for us." Joseph Campbell

Considering the Concept of "2-Days" before our Brain Injury

Several days ago, I watched a TV program that began with the caption, "2-days before". After the "2 days before" caption appeared, the TV show began showing the events that led up to the present-day events.

Living with a brain Injury can be likened to the "2-days before"

Living with a brain injury can leave us focusing on what we were able to do, "2-days before".

Living with a brain injury can also keep you and I stuck focusing on what we can no longer do.

Living with a brain injury can keep you and I stuck focusing on our limitations and deficits.

Living with a brain injury can keep you and I focusing on symptoms, instead of looking for solutions.

Living with a brain injury can keep you and I from experiencing what we could be experiencing in the present.

**But the Good News is that We Don't Have to be Stuck in 2-days before
The Power of "I CAN" in My Brain Injury Recovery Process**

The good news is that I CAN move beyond "2-days before".

The good news is that I CAN live my life in "2-days" later".

The good news is that I CAN move beyond any prediction (s).

The good news is that I CAN work to create our own predictions.

The good news is that I CAN explore my creative capacity.

The good news is that I CAN move forward to create hope in my own recovery process. My own recovery process, one day at a time.

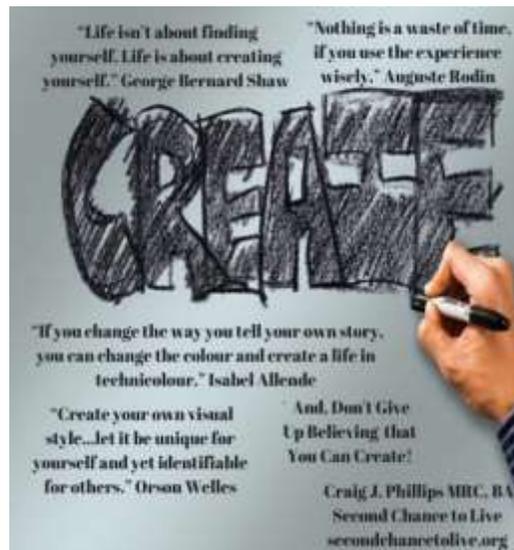
The good news is that I CAN set goals. Set and work toward doing and accomplishing those goals, one bite at a time.

The good news is that I CAN start focusing on what I can do. What I can do with my life, not on what I cannot do.

The good news is that I CAN answer the question, "Why not me?", instead of being distracted by the question, "Why me?".

The good news is that I CAN see my life through the lens of "What is?", instead of seeing my life through the lens of "What isn't?"

The good news is that I CAN take the time to discover. Discover how I CAN make what works for me, work for me.



The good news is that I CAN pursue my dreams and my destiny.
Pursue my destiny through using my gifts, talents, and abilities.

The good news is that by the grace of a loving God and hard work, I
CAN. I CAN achieve beyond all reasonable expectations.

The good news is that I CAN have a huge impact on both my life and
the lives of other people who are brought into my life.

The good news is that I CAN pursue my dreams a little at a time. I
CAN pursue my dreams, one skill and one skill set at a time.

**“Believe in yourself, go after your dreams and don’t let anyone put
you in a box.” Daya**

The good news is that I CAN make tremendous gains in my recovery
by staying committed. Committed by running my own race.

**“Those who danced were considered to be quite insane by those who
could not hear the music.” Angela Monet**

The good news is that I CAN stay committed to my recovery process,
one day at a time. A little at a time through decision and diligence.

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

The good news is that I Can succeed by trusting the process, by
doing the footwork and then by letting go of the outcomes.

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

The good news is that I CAN grow where I am planted. The good news
is that I CAN determine to build something beautiful on my lot in life.

**“Regardless of your lot in life, you can build something beautiful on
it.” Zig Ziglar**

Be Aware of How you Learn

**[Traumatic Brain Injury, Learning Styles and Activities of
Daily Living](#)**

Achieving Our “CAN’s” One Bite at a Time

The Training Camp Metaphor

I would like to share something that has helped me in my brain injury recovery process. I would like to borrow from the concept that many sports use in their preparation. The concept of training camps for readiness.

Training camps prepare the individuals in the sport to achieve effectively and efficiently. Like training camps in sports preparation, I have come to realize that life’s experience provides many training camps.

These camps are designed to empower you and me to perform effectively and efficiently. And as with any training camp, those who participate in the camp must dedicate themselves to the activities of the camp.

The benefit received by each participant in the “training camp” is dependent upon the effort that they put forth during the training camp.

But in order to benefit from the training camp the participant needs to stay committed to the process, while executing the basics.

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

“Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.” Thomas A. Edison

Basic attitudes that Need to be Owned to be successful in any training camp. A training camp in Football or in the UFC.

Principles to Empower our Ongoing Brain Injury Recovery Process

Hard Work, Commitment, Drive, Determination, Discipline, Fortitude, Persistence, Tenacity, and Courage.

Training camps necessitate hard work, commitment, determination, discipline, drive, fortitude, persistence, tenacity, and courage. **AND**, making the decision to not give up, despite...

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

When the individual makes a decision to persevere in the face of adversity, discouragement and setbacks, character is formed.

Character enables the individual to grow and develop in ways that once seemed to be out of their reach.

“If you take responsibility for yourself you will develop a hunger to accomplish your dreams.” Les Brown

Being and Staying Committed to the Process

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

“What you get by achieving your goals is not as important as what you become by achieving your goals.” Zig Ziglar

Just Don’t Give Up

If you doubt that you can benefit from putting the work into your “training camp” let me share some good news with you.

You are capable. You can learn from what does and does not work for you. What works for you may not work for anyone else, but you won’t know that unless you put in the time and effort. So don’t give up!

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

Look at your circumstances as opportunities as training camps, as designed to help you win in life. And stay committed to each of your training camps.

Don’t take short cuts.

Apply the basics — hard work, commitment, determination, drive, discipline, fortitude, persistence, tenacity and courage — to your process.

By staying committed to your process; before long you will be able to see how much progress that you have made. Progress that you made because you stayed committed to the process in your training camp.

“The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” Lao Tzu

Once we start walking, before long we will be able to look back and see how far we have come, because we did not give up.” Craig J. Phillips MRC. BA

To believe in the Power of “I CAN”, I needed to Combine these Attributes

Hard Work, Commitment, Drive, Determination, Discipline, Fortitude, Persistence, Tenacity, and Courage

Envision yourself winning in life.

See your experiences in life as a series of training camps.

Training camps that are helping you to run your race in life.

Training camps that are preparing you to finish strong.

Training camps that are rewarding you for your hard work and determination.

Training camps that empower you to follow your dreams

Training Camps that cause you to triumph in your life.

To Be Successful in my Training Camps, I need to Combine and Commit to these Attributes and Concepts

The Attributes and Concepts Discussed

Hard work or Work-ethic

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

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

“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](#)

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

“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](#)

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.

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

Article link:

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

Drive

“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](#)

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

“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](#)

“Discipline is the bridge between goals and accomplishment.” Jim Rohn
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** meaning [courage](#) or bravery is the ability and willingness to confront fear, pain, danger, uncertainty, or intimidation.” [Wikipedia](#)

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

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

“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](#)

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

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

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

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

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

“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](#)

“Your time is limited, so don’t waste it living someone else’s life. Don’t be trapped by dogma – which is living with the results of other people’s thinking. Don’t let the noise of others’ opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition.”

Steve Jobs

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](#)

“Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure, it is our light, not our darkness that most frighten us. You’re playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people will not feel insecure around you. We were all meant to shine as children do. It is not just in some of us, it is in everyone. And as we let our own light to shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same, as we are liberated from our own fear. Our presence automatically liberates others.

Sir, I just want to say thank you. You saved my life.” From the movie, Coach Carter, quote attributed to Marianne Williamson

Discovering 12 Ways that Helped me Accept, Find and Create

Through my process and on my journey, I have discovered 12 different ways that have helped me to create hope. Create hope in my life and in my new normal. My new normal in my well-being and in my relationships.

Benefits of Creating Hope in my Life through My New Normal

In the process of using these 12 ways I have discovered my purpose, created my new normal, improved my brain/body connection and have learned how to be an advocate.

These 12 Ways may Also Help You

These ways may also help you to create hope your life and your new normal. In the process of creating hope, you may discover your purpose, improve your brain/body connection and help you to be an advocate.

Inch by Inch, Life's a Cinch

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

“I am only one, but still, I am one. I cannot do everything, but still, I can do something; and because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do something that I can do.” Helen Keller

My Perspective

When I reached a point in time when I could no longer defend or deny the impact of my brain injury and invisible disability I began to grieve.

“Nothing in the universe can stop you from letting go and starting over.” Guy Finley

Application

1. Admitted that we are powerless over the impact and effects of our brain injury and invisible disability. That our lives have forever

changed because of our brain injury. Although we are powerless over the impact of our brain injury and our invisible disability, we are not helpless. As a result, we no longer need to feel like a victim or that we are helpless to change because of our brain injury/invisible disability.

My Perspective

By realizing that all my efforts to try to change what could not be changed, I surrendered. By surrendering I became open and willing.

“We must be willing to let go of the life we have planned, so as to have the life that is waiting for us.” E.M. Forster.

Application

2. Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could help us to accept what we are powerless to change (the impact of our brain injury and our invisible disability). Consequently, we can rely on the power that many of us have found to be God. We can rely on a loving God to help us to stop sabotaging and undermining our lives, well-beings and relationships by trying not to be impacted by a brain injury. We can rely on a loving God to help us to accept ourselves and to create a good life for ourselves.

My Perspective

Through accepting my inability to change what I simply could not change; I made a decision to ask for help from a power greater.

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

Application

3. With the awareness that we need this power in our lives, we can make a decision to ask Him to lead and guide our process and journey. We no longer have to figure things out on our own. Instead, we can ask Him to help us own our power. Own our power as an individual living with a brain injury and an invisible

disability. Own our power through what we can do, not what we can't do. Own our power (what is in our power to control) in our mind, body, spirit, soul and emotions in ways that work for us, a little at a time/ one day at a time.

My Perspective

By asking for help, I began to examine patterns of what got in the way of my ability to create hope in my life, well-being and relationships.

“As long as a man stands in his own way, everything seems to be in his way.” Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Application

4. With the help of a loving God, we can begin to examine areas of our lives that no longer work for us. That undermine and sabotage our lives, our well-beings and our relationships. With the help of a loving God, we can look for patterns. Patterns such as defense mechanisms in which we strive to defend, answer and explain what we can't do. Patterns that keep you and I believing/feeling that we are victims of our brain injury, our invisible disability and our circumstances.

My Perspective

As I examined what got in the way of my life, my well-being and my relationships I realized that needed to learn how to trust.

“Accept what is, let go of what was, have faith in what will be.” Sonia Ricotti

Application

5. We no longer have to remain isolated/alienated because of what we are no longer able to accomplish with because of our brain injuries and invisible disabilities. By admitting to ourselves, a loving God and another person what we are unable to accomplish, we can come out of the shadows of isolation and break free from

feelings of alienation. Alienation from ourselves, a loving God and other people, because of what we can no longer accomplish. By letting go of these expectations we can learn how to trust, again -- a loving God, ourselves and other people.

My Perspective

By realizing that I needed to trust, I discovered that I needed to let go of what no longer worked for me to discover what works for me.

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

Application

6. Through being sick and tired of being sick and tired of getting the same results, we become willing to try something different. Become willing to try something different to get different results in our lives and relationships. Through being willing, we can ask a loving God to help us to stop doing things that no longer work for us. Doing things that get in the way and sabotage of our ability to get on with creating a good life for ourselves. In the process, we become entirely ready. Entirely ready to let go of what no longer works for us living our lives.

My Perspective

To discover what would work for me, I needed to let go of my will to ask a loving God to lead, guide and direct my discovery process.

“Be miserable. Or motivate yourself. Whatever has to be done, it’s always your choice.” Wayne Dyer

Application

7. Through being ready to let go of what no longer works for us, we can be actively involved. Actively involved in the process of discovering how to use our gifts, talents and abilities. Discovering how to use our gifts, talents and abilities through trial and error. In

the process, we can find ways that will fit our gifts, talents and abilities. We can humbly ask a loving God to help us in/with this process of self-discovery. In the process of letting go and self-discovery we can find and have/experience peace in our lives and relationships.

My Perspective

By examining the patterns of what no longer works for me, as I live my life, I am able to make peace with what no longer works for me.

“If you take responsibility for yourself, you will develop a hunger to accomplish your dreams.” Les Brown

Application

8. Through letting go of what no longer works we can pursue what works for us. In the process, we can stop being a prisoner to our deficits and imitations. Instead of trying to not be impacted by our deficits and limitations, we accept them. As a result, we are able to stop fighting with and against ourselves. Stop fighting with ourselves and other people by trying to prove that we do not have those deficits and limitations. As we stop fighting with our deficits and limitations, we gain the freedom to run our own race. In the process, we become the individual that we choose and decide to become in our lives.

My Perspective

I am able to make peace with what no longer works for me in my life, well-being and relationships by changing the way I use my energy.

“If you do not like something, change it. If you cannot change it, change the way that you think about it.” Mary Engelbreit

Application

9. We can let go of the life that we had planned to create the life that works for us. In the process, we can learn how to own the power in our mind, body, spirit, soul and emotions. Own our power through

the use of our time and energy. In the process, we can create our new normal in ways that work for us. In ways that work for us, through being an advocate for, in our mind, body, soul, spirit and emotions.

My Perspective

As I seek to change the way that I interact in my life and relationships I continue to be aware of what no longer works for me each day.

**“Time stays long enough for anyone who will use it.”
Leonardo da Vinci**

Application

10. And the good news is that we don't have to figure out how everything will fit together. Fit together as we seek to own the power in our mind, body, spirit, soul and emotions. Instead, we can take the process, one day at a time, one step at a time. In the process, we can ask a loving God to lead, guide and direct our steps, one day at a time. In the process, we can trust the process. Trust that the dots will connect forward as we learn how to use our gifts, talents and abilities. Learn to use our gifts, talents and abilities in ways that work for us.

My Perspective

Because I realize that brain injury recovery is an ongoing process, I ask a loving God to guide, lead and direct my process, each day.

“If you feel like you don't fit into the world you inherited it is because you were born to help create a new one.” Ross Caligiuri

Application

11. We can ask a loving God to give us direction each day. We can do the footwork, while letting go of the outcomes by trusting the process, a loving God and ourselves. We can learn to trust through doing the footwork and letting go of the outcomes. We can let go of the outcomes one day at a time. We can trust that more

will be revealed to us with time. We can ask and trust that we are being guided in the direction of fulfilling our purpose, to be of service.

My Perspective

As I continue to ask a loving God to lead, guide and direct my process in ways that work for me, I encourage others to do the same.

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

Application

12. As we grow in the understanding of ourselves (with the help of a loving God) we continue to use our gifts, talents and abilities. Use our gifts, talents and abilities in ways that work for us. In the process, we learn from our circumstances, our experiences, our lessons and opportunities. Learn from them, instead of being threatened by our circumstances, experiences, lessons and opportunities. In the process, we create hope in our lives, well-beings, relationships. In the process, we create our destinies one lesson, one experience, one opportunity and one day at a time. In the process, we share hope.

“Regardless of your lot in life, you can build something beautiful on it.” Zig Ziglar

What Helped me May also Help you to Create your New Normal

Over time and through staying committed to the process I have been able to build on my lot in life. I have been able to paint on the canvas of my life.

Build on my lot and paint on my canvas in ways that work for me.

Still had a desire to find a way to use my gifts, talents and abilities in ways that would work for me. I wrote poems, an autobiography and a book (not published) before a friend encouraged me to start a blog. On February 6, 2007 I created Second Chance to Live.

Since that time, I have written **2075 articles** and **12 eBooks**. I have created **450 video presentations** and **41 Posters** to share what has helped me to create my new normal. In addition, I have created **21 power point presentations** to share what I has helped me to create my new normal after my brain injury throughout the United States.

Below are 20 of my other Keynote (Zoom) Presentations

To Schedule Availability click on this link: [Availability](#)

[Finding Purpose after Brain Injury and Stroke Presentation](#)

[Acceptance and Creating our New Normal after Brain Injury and Stroke Presentation](#)

[Living with a Brain Injury and Finding Freedom from feeling “Stuck” in Time and “Spinning” our Wheels 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](#)

[Hope and the Progression of Living our Best Life after Brain Injury Presentation](#)

[Finding the Freedom from Feeling Stuck after a Brain Injury Presentation](#)

[12 Ways to Enhance Our Lives, Well-Beings and Relationships after a Brain Injury and Stroke Presentation](#)

[Cultivating Healthy Relationships after Brain Injury and Stroke Presentation](#)

[Living with a Brain Injury and the Messages We Tell Ourselves Presentation](#)

[Grieving the Guilt and Shame of a Traumatic Brain Injury and Stroke Presentation](#)

[Living with a Brain Injury, an Invisible Disability and Change 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 — I Can Not Do Everything, But Still I Can Do Something Presentation](#)

[Brain Injury, Stress, Anxiety, Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years Zoom Presentation](#)

[Making Our Lives Magical One Day at a Time after Brain Injury and Stroke Presentation](#)

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

Resources Available to Encourage and Empower our Lives

[Empowering the Individual, not the Brain Injury](#)

Second Chance to Live Author's Autobiography in Bullet Points.

[Autobiography in Bullet Points](#)

