

Living with a Brain Injury and Finding Freedom from Feeling “Stuck” in Time and “Spinning” our Wheels Presentation

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Living with a brain injury can leave us feeling like we are “stuck” in time and that we are simply “spinning” our wheels. “Stuck” in time and “spinning” our wheels as we strive to not be affected by the impact of our brain injuries.

In response we may strive all the more to not be impacted by our brain injuries, or give up because we feel stuck in our lives and relationships.

But there is Hope. We can Stop “Spinning” and Feeling “Stuck”

Yesterday, I finished creating my newest poster to share some quotes and an illustration. Quotes and an illustration to share what I learned that helped me to stop “spinning” my wheels and feeling “stuck” in time.

Yield Signs are Not Stop Signs

What I discovered was that I no longer had to spin my wheels or be stuck by time. Instead, I could use my energy and time in an empowering way.



Although my brain injury put up many **yield signs**; during my lifetime, I am glad that I did not see them as **stop signs**.

What Helped me to Stop Feeling Stuck and Spinning my Wheels

In my experience, I found that I needed to grieve what I was powerless to change. Powerless to change to move forward.

I Needed to Grieve to Move Forward

My Grieving Process — Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression, Acceptance



By grieving what I could not change, I confronted my **denial** over what I was powerless to change — the impact of my brain injury.

After I confronted and challenged my denial, I became angry **anger** because of what I was powerless to change.

My anger motivated me to start to challenge and disprove what I was powerless to change — and I failed. **bargaining**

When I realized that no matter how hard I tried, I could not change the impact of my brain injury, I experienced **depression**.

When reality sank in I began to experience an **acceptance** of what I was powerless to change.

Finding Freedom from Spinning my Wheels and Feeling Stuck in Time because of the Impact of my Brain Injury.

As I began to accept what I could not change, I realized that I no longer needed to feel like I was spinning my wheels or stuck in time because of my brain injury. I began to realize that I could do something different to enhance my life, well-being and relationships.

In my awareness and acceptance over what I was powerless to change, I began to examine. I began to examine (with the help of a loving God) how I could use my gifts, talents and abilities.

Use my gifts, talents and abilities in ways that would work for me. In the process I discovered that I alone needed to figure out what would work for me, through trial-and-error experiments.

Grieving what I could not Change Opened the Door

Note: It took me another 7 more years. Took 7 more years; after I grieved what I could not change, before I was able to stop feeling like I was spinning my wheels and that I was stuck in time. Before I was able to start using my gifts, talents and abilities in ways that worked.

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

“Don’t quit. Never give up trying to build the world you can see, even if others can’t see it. Listen to your drum and your drum only. It’s the one that makes the sweetest sound.” Simon Sinek

To Move Forward

I also discovered that all the experiments that I made on the way to discovering what worked for me were valuable. The experiments (writing **poems**, an **autobiography** and a **book**) all helped me to develop as a writer. All helped me to build a foundation upon which I continue to build through Second Chance to Live.

My Encouragement to You

In the event that you feel stuck in time because of your brain injury, grieve what you are powerless to change. Open the door to possibilities. Create hope; by faith, a little at a time. And as you create, remember that nothing is a waste of time. A waste of time in your search to find a way that will work for you.

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

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

Give yourself as much time as you need to make as many experiments as you need. You will make more progress than you realize by sticking to the process and by not giving up. You will be rewarded by all the experiments that you make. That you make on the way to finding a way that will work best for you.

**“Life is a journey and if you fall in love with the journey, you will be in
love forever.” Peter Hagerty**

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

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 Redmon

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](#)

The Good News

We Don't have to Figure Out How to Live our Best Lives on Our Own

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

Below are the 12 Ways that I adapted from 12 Step Programs

The Presentation of the 12 Ways

First, I give my perspective of each of these 12 ways. Then I share a quote that encapsulates the individual way. I then share the adaptation that helped me to create hope in my life.

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

“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

Hope and the Progression of Living our Best Life after Brain Injury 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

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](#)

