

Empowering Future Leaders in Brain Injury Recovery and Rehabilitation to Empower Self-advocacy in Individuals Living with Brain Injuries Summary Presentation

Craig J. Phillips MRC, BA Second Chance to Live

Here are several scenarios that students may encounter when interacting with individuals impacted by brain injuries and invisible disabilities.

Scenarios that I will address in this presentation. Address and share what I discovered that helped me to answer these questions and concerns.

I feel stuck in my brain injury recovery process. What can I do to get unstuck?

I don't feel like my life matters anymore?

I am so sad and I do not know what to do?

I feel minimized, marginalized, dismissed and discounted.

How can I improve my activities of daily living to enhance my quality of life, well-being and relationships?

I feel like I have lost hope. What can I do to find and develop hope in my life each day?

Background Insights

In 1967, at the age of 10, when I sustained the open skull fracture, right frontal lobe damage, a severe brain bruise with brain stem involvement, little was known about brain injury.

So, after undergoing brain surgery to remove bone fragments, undergoing several EEG's and a battery of cognitive and psychological testing, I did the best I could to navigate my life.

I was able to learn how to walk, talk, read, write and speak in complete sentences. After being tutored at home in the 5th grade, mainstreamed back into the 6th grade, I graduated high school.

Although I was not expected to be able to succeed beyond high school academically, I went on to obtain my undergraduate degree in 10 years and my graduate degree in 3 ½ years.

I obtained my master's degree in rehabilitation counseling and my national credentials as a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor. For more information, [Finding Craig -- Academically](#)

On my Own

Because I did not have Dr.'s who understood brain injury, I did my best to navigate my experience living the best I could. As a result, I had a lot of disappointments along the way trying to navigate.

After a long history of disappointments, see my [Autobiography](#) for more information, I created Second Chance to Live to share. To share what I learned that helped me make sense and navigate.

Make sense of what I did not understand and was in denial about because I looked normal. Because no one understood the impact of my open skull fracture traumatic brain injury when I was 10.

What I will brief share in this presentation will give you insights into what you can do to help people living with brain injuries. Help to empower people who are often living with invisible disabilities.

Lessons Learned

“It is not as important, what happened or happens to us, but how we respond to what happened or happens to us.”

Craig J. Phillips MRC, BA.

“In my experience I have found that adversity is what has made me successful, because I refused to give up because of adversity.”

Craig J. Phillips MRC, BA

“The process of living with the impact of a brain injury and an invisible disability involves a journey of steps. The good news is that once we take that first step and keep walking, before long we will be able to look back and see how far we have come. How far we have come because we did not give up.”

Craig J. Phillips MRC, BA

“Purpose is about a process and a journey, not a destination. I cannot know until I know and knowing just takes what it takes. There are no silver bullets or magic potions. By accepting that reality, I am given the gift of knowing. I am given the gift of knowing by trusting the process, a loving God and myself.”

Craig J. Phillips MRC, BA

“I was told over and over again that I would never be successful. That I was not going to be competitive and the technique was simply not going to work. All I could do was shrug my shoulders and say, “We’ll just have to see.”

Dick Fosbury (inventor of the Fosbury Flop and winner of a gold medal in the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City

What I Share In this Presentation

What I am about to share in this presentation, I share more extensively in my 24 presentations. Presentations that I have created and share to help individuals who are living with brain injuries to know that there is hope.
Hope beyond brain injury.

Let me know if you would like me to share one or more of these presentations with your group, association, hospital, rehab facility organization or in some other venue. I would be happy to do so.

Presentations created to encourage self-advocacy in Mind, Body, Spirit, Soul and Emotions.

Presentation Designed to Create Discussion

[You Are Not Crazy. You have an Invisible Disability Discussion Topic](#)

[Yes, I am Disabled, but Don’t Count Me Out because...! Discussion Topic](#)

[Learning to Accept Ourselves when Other People Can’t or Won’t Discussion Topic](#)

[Getting Comfortable in Our “Own Skin” Living with a Brain Injury and an Invisible Disability Discussion Topic](#)

Don't Let Anyone tell You; You Aren't Enough Because...You are Smart, Intuitive and Courageous Discussion Topic

Living and Thriving Beyond Brain Injury Awareness to Create a Good Life for Ourselves Discussion Topic

Creating Practical Hope in Our Lives through the Power of Identification Discussion Topic

Nine Habits to Benefit from Using the Principle of Neuroplasticity Discussion Topic

Presentations Designed to Inspire Purpose and Hope

Finding Purpose and not Giving Up after Brain Injury

Facing Adversity and Having Options When Life Does Not Make Sense

Brain Injury and The Power of "I CAN" in an Ongoing Brain Injury Recovery Process

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

Neuroplasticity, Setting Goals and Creating Hope After Brain Injury

Living and Thriving Beyond Brain Injury Awareness to Create a Good Life for Ourselves

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

Getting Comfortable in Our "Own Skin" Living with a Brain Injury and an Invisible Disability

Some Things to Consider so We Don't Stay Stuck Living with a Brain Injury Zoom Presentation

Believing in Ourselves through Self-Advocacy — A Guide to Owning Our Power after Brain Injury

Don't Let Anyone tell You; You Aren't Enough Because...You are Smart, Intuitive and Courageous

Finding Freedom from Feeling Alone, Isolated, Alienated, Intimidated and Diminished Living with a Brain injury and an Invisible Disability

Presentations Sharing my Personal Journey and Process

[Second Chance to Live and Succeeding Beyond my Special Needs from 10 Years of Age](#)

[Comprehensive History of Second Chance to Live — Answering the Call that never Came](#)

Presentations Empowering Groups and Organizations

[Living with Long Covid-19 Invisible Disability — Hope, Encouragement and Support Zoom](#)

[Empowering Current and Future Professionals in Brain Injury Recovery and Rehabilitation](#)

Among the places where I have spoken

Cleveland Clinic, Medstar National Rehabilitation Hospital, Penn Presbyterian Hospital, Overland Park Rehabilitation Hospital, Adventist Rehabilitation Hospital, Magee Rehabilitation Hospital, Encompass Rehabilitation Hospital, Brooks Rehabilitation Hospital, Carolinas Rehab, Colorado Department of Education, University of North Dakota, University of North Carolina — Chapel Hill, Harvard University, University of California at Berkley, Columbia University and Synapse National Conference

To Schedule the above Presentations

[Public Speaking; Craig J. Phillips MRC, BA Second Chance to Live](#)

Advice for Current and Future Leaders in Brain Injury Recovery and Rehabilitation to Encourage Self-Advocacy in an Ongoing Process

Everyone is susceptible to a brain injury -- treat people like you would like to be treated.

Learn about the Grieving Process – denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance.

Change of Perspective -- Help the people you work with to change perspectives.

From “**Why Me?**” to “**Why Not Me?**”

From “**What Isn’t**” to “**What Is?**”

Ask a High Power” -- to guide you through your recovery and rehabilitation process, one step, one day at a time.

Start a program of Neuroplasticity – create new neural pathways and brain reorganization – as soon as they are able after their brain injury. Through repetitive mirrored movements. One skill and one skill set at a time. Click the picture to see how I develop neuroplasticity.



Learning Styles -- help people with brain injuries to discover how they learn – visually, auditorily or kinetically or a combination of ways. Have them tested.

Encourage them to Advocate -- for themselves in their mind, body, spirit, soul and emotions

A Switch, not a Stop sign – much is yet to be discovered

Create Hope in every area of their lives – one skill and one skill set at a time. **Riddle** – How do you eat an elephant?

Everyone is a Genius – You don’t have to climb trees to be a genius

Identity -- the individual is not their brain Injury – not their limitations of deficits

Not a label, stereotype or stigmatization – we are powerless over what other people choose to think about us.

“Never be bullied into silence. Never allow yourself to be made a victim. Accept no one’s definition of your life. Define yourself.”

Robert Frost

They are not limited – encourage them to find a way that will work for them – to use their gifts, talents and abilities

“Every strike brings me closer to my next home run.” Babe Ruth

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

Celebrate Small Successes – baby steps turn into miles when put together

Great worth and value – encourage people living with brain injuries and invisible disabilities that they are a gift to their world – They are wounded healers.

Quotes to Encourage and Inspire

“Big things have small beginnings.” Prometheus

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

“Every strike brings me closer to the next home run.” Babe Ruth

“All things start out as hopes that end up as habits.” Lillian Hellman

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

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

**“You are the only person on Earth who can use your ability.” Zig
Ziglar**

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

**“Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.” Theodore
Roosevelt**

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

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

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

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

**“All life is an experiment. The more experiments the better.” Ralph
Waldo Emerson**

**“Hope is being able to see that there is light, despite all the
darkness.” Desmond Tutu**

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

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

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

**“Confidence is going after Moby Dick (whale) in a row boat and taking
tartar sauce.” Zig Ziglar**

**“When setting out on a journey, do not see the advice of someone
who has never left home.” Rumi**

**“Don’t judge your day by the harvest you reap, but by the seeds you
plant.” Robert Louis Stevenson**

**“The most common way people give away their power is by thinking
that they have any.” Alice Walker**

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

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

- “Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.” Ralph Waldo Emerson**
- “The three most important ways to lead people are:... by example... by example... by example.” Albert Schweitzer**
- “Our circumstances are not meant to keep us down, but they are meant to build us up.” Craig J. Phillips MRC, BA**
- “Hope lies in dreams, in imagination and in the courage of those who dare to make dreams into reality.” John Salk**
- “Not everyone will understand your journey. That’s okay. You’re here to live your life, not to make everyone understand.” Banksy**
- “Ideas do not always come in a flash but by diligent trial-and-error experiments that take time and thought.” Charles K. Kao**
- “Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgement that something is more important than fear.” Ambrose Redmon**
- “Though no one can go back and make a brand-new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand-new-ending.” Carl Bard**
- “Persistence and resilience only come through having been given the chance to work through difficult problems.” Gever Tulley**
- “If your actions inspire others to dream more, to learn more, to do more, to become more, you are a leader.” John Quincy Adams**
- “Research your own experience. Absorb what is useful, reject what is useless and add specifically your own creation.” Bruce Lee**
- “History has demonstrated that the most notable winners usually encountered heartbreaking obstacles before they triumphed. They won because they refused to become discouraged by their defeats.”
B.C. Forbes**
- “In my experience, I have found that adversity is what has made me successful because I refused to give up because of adversity.” Craig J. Phillips MRC, BA**

“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

“Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great.” Mark Twain

“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

“You cannot connect the dots looking forwards. You can only connect the dots looking backwards. So, you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future. You have to trust something, your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever. Because believing that the dots will connect down the road will give you confidence, even when your heart leads you off the well-worn path. Everything else is secondary.” Steve Jobs

“When I stand before God at the end of my life, I hope that I would not have a single bit of talent left and could say, “I used everything you gave me.” Emma Bombeck

“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

“When you dance to your own rhythm people may not understand you; they may even hate you. But mostly they’ll wish they had the courage to do the same.” Sue Fitzmaurice

“Purpose is about a process and a journey, not a destination. I cannot know until I know and knowing just takes what it takes. There are no silver bullets or magic potions. By accepting that reality, I am given the gift of knowing. I am given the gift of knowing by trusting the process, a loving God and myself.” Craig J. Phillips MRC, BA

“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 other’s opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most importantly, have the courage to

follow your heart and intuition. They somehow know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary.” Steve Jobs

“Insist on yourself, never imitate. Your own gift you can present with the cumulative force of a whole life’s cultivation, but of the adopted talent of another, you only have an extemporaneous half-possession. Do that which is assigned to you and you cannot hope too much or dare too much.” Henry David Thoreau

“I was told over and over again that I would never be successful. That I was not going to be competitive. And the technique was simply not going to work. All I could do is shrug and say, “We’ll just have to see.” Dick Fosbury (Inventor of the Fosbury Flop and winner of the gold medal in the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City

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

“Here’s to the crazy ones, the misfits, the rebels, the troublemakers, the round pegs in the square holes... the ones who see things differently — they’re not fond of rules... You can quote them, disagree with them, glorify or vilify them, but the only thing you can’t do is ignore them because they change things... they push the human race forward, and while some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius, because the ones who are crazy enough to think that they can change the world, are the ones who do.” Steve Job

“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 frightens us. Your 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