

Living with Long Covid-19 Invisible Disability

Hope, Encouragement and Support Zoom Presentation

Craig J. Phillips MRC, BA Second Chance to Live

My name is Craig J. Phillips. I have lived with the **impact** of brain injury and the **impact** of an **invisible disability** for 55 years.

The **impact** of the **invisible nature** of **Long Covid-19** presents with many similarities to individuals who are living with the **impact** of the **invisible nature** of **brain injuries**.

As a result, individuals living with the **impact** of **long Covid-19** may feel frustrated by what they are powerless to change.

Individuals living with **long Covid-19 invisible disability** may also find themselves feeling, as many individuals living with brain injuries feel.

Feel and Experience Being Challenged and Disbelieved

In response these individuals may find themselves denied, dismissed, discounted, minimized and marginalized. As a result, the individual living with long Covid-19 may find themselves in shock, angry and frustrated.

In response the individual living with long Covid-19 may feel helpless. Helpless to create hope, because of what is not understood or believed.

I Can Identify with Individuals living with Long Covid-19

I spent many years of not knowing the impact of my invisible disability. Many years being blamed for what was unknown and powerless to change. Many years of blaming myself for not being able to not be...

Many years of being Challenged and Disbelieved.

I spent many years being stuck in my efforts trying to overcompensate for what was unknown, denied, challenged, disbelieved and ridiculed.

But I Found Hope

But I Found there was a Way to Create Hope. Create Hope beyond what I was Powerless to Change. Create Hope, despite my Invisible Disability.

Create despite being denied, challenged, disbelieved and ridiculed.

An Opportunity

On **May 3** I shared a message of support and hope to and with the **Cleveland Clinic's Long Covid-19 support group**.

The zoom presentation was well received and I engaged each of the support group members during the meeting.

The Presentation Shared

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

In this presentation I share what I discovered. Discovered, that helped me to create hope in my life despite. Create hope in my life, despite what was and is frequently denied, minimized, challenged, disbelieved and ridiculed.

In this presentation I share what helped me to move forward with my life by growing in my awareness and acceptance. In awareness and acceptance to be able to get into action to create hope. Create hope one day at a time.

To Create My Best Life while Living with an Invisible Disability, a Little at a Time and One day at a Time

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

John Bytheway

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

Albert Einstein

After the Presentation

Christine Bailey (**Cleveland Clinic**) who invited me to share the presentation of support and hope with their **Long Covid-19 support group members** said:

Can't thank you enough for taking your story and turning it into so many positives for other people. You do a GREAT job of interacting with the group and getting them to participate!

Already received an email comment:

Thank you, Christine, for the meeting today! God Bless and have a great weekend! The guest speaker was inspirational, and very kind to share with us.

Testimonial:

Even though your brain and life may have been changed by illness or injury, Craig Phillips shares his universal message of hope that you can rebuild and create your second chance to live. Craig has had a profound impact on both my work as a hospital bioethicist and as a family caregiver for six members of my family. My family members have had strokes, dementia, brain injuries, multiple sclerosis and other life-changing illnesses. Craig's insights have helped them find their way through the mental and physical changes they are experiencing.

Craig can help you see a path forward. Life may not be the same as it was before but that doesn't mean it can't get better and still have meaning and purpose. Whether you are just now beginning to find your way through a new injury or illness or you have made some progress but are feeling stuck, Craig can help you see a path forward. Walking through the emotional and medical challenges are made easier when you feel understood and empowered. Craig has walked this path and he knows that although we are all coping with different challenges, we share the hope for a new life that is full of joy.

Thank you, Craig, for your inspirational talks.

Viki Kind Clinical bioethicist, award-winning author and family caregiver

Presentation also Shared

I also shared the same presentation with / to **Cleveland Clinics "Head's Up, No Boundaries" Brain Injury Support Group** on March 8, 2023.

Because of the beneficial content, Christine asked me to share the presentation with their Long Covid-19 support group.

Background of Relate Ability

I lived with an invisible disability for 39 years, until I was able to begin to confront my denial. My brain injury happened in 1967 when I was 10 years

old. I sustained an open skull fracture, with right frontal lobe damage, a severe brain bruise, with brain stem involvement.

I remained in a coma for 3 weeks.

Once my external wounds healed, I looked normal. From that point in time the impact of my brain injury became invisible. Invisible upon the struggles that I faced socially and vocationally. Living with an invisible and often misunderstood disability was like being in a dark room, with no light switch.

Light switch to turn on to give "light" to my life, well-being and relationships.

Light switch to turn on to be able to accept my reality. Light switch to be able to stop feeling stuck. Light to be able to enhance my life, well-being and relationships. Light to be able to create and experience hope in my life.

Disappointment and Discouragement

I experienced disappointment and discouragement because people in my life were not able to accept my reality. I experienced disappointment and discouragement, because I did not realize that I could do something different. Something different to be able to get different results in my life.

I experienced disappointment and discouragement because I thought I was the one to blame. Blame for what could not be changed or accepted. In the process I turned my disappointment and discouragement on myself. On myself through anger and in the process, I became and stayed depressed.

What did not Pan Out

In my experience, it took me 10 years to get my undergraduate degree with 2 universities and 1 community college. It took me 3 ½ years to obtain my graduate degree with 2 graduate schools. I obtained a master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling from Univ. of Kentucky, in Lexington, KY in 1990.

Hitting many Walls before I could Accept

In my experience, I had long history (22 years) of getting and losing jobs, both non-professional and professional jobs. This cycle continued until I was found to be unemployable after 2nd Dept. of Voc. Rehab Evaluations.

I went through 2 Department of Vocational Rehabilitation Evaluations. One in Florida and one in North Carolina. After my 2nd Vocational Evaluation in NC, my Vocational Rehab Counselor reported that I was unemployable.

I applied for SSDI 2 times in Florida, which were both denied. I applied the 3rd time in North Carolina. My 3rd SSDI application was approved in North Carolina after my Voc Rehab Counselor said I was unemployable in 1999.

Grieving what I Could not Change

In my experience, I had to grieve what I could not change. What I could not change before I was to be able to begin a new journey. A new journey to create hope in my life in ways that would work for me (my new normal).

First, I had to confront my denial. I had to be angry at what I could not change. I had to try to change what I could not change. I had to experience depression over what I could not change to be able to move forward.

Despite All

Despite all my hard work, both academically and vocationally, I found myself like someone all dressed up with no where to go. No where to go because I was unable to keep a job due to my brain injury and my invisible disability. Consequently, I experienced many dark nights of the soul.

I went through many dark nights of the soul, because of what I could not change. Could not change the impact of my brain injury and my invisible disability. Could not use all that I had prepared to accomplish in my life.

But I am glad that I did not give up

Although I could not change the reality of my invisible disability, I am glad that I did not give up. In my experience, I had to figure things out on my own after it was reported that I was unemployable. In my experience, it took me another 7 more years of trying to find a way that would work for me.

Work for me to be able to use my gifts, talents and abilities to people who wanted what I had to give. Work for me, that I could develop and refine.

If interested, click on this link to read my article and the back story.

[Comprehensive History of Second Chance to Live](#)

My Perseverance Paid Off

On February 6, 2007, I figured things out. I created **Second Chance to Live** to share my passion of determining to not give. My passion to encourage people who are living the invisible disabilities to not give up.

“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

To encourage the creation of long-term hope in individuals living with the impact of invisible disabilities. To encourage individuals who are living with invisible disabilities to create with and through their whole person.

Through their mind, body, spirit, soul and emotions, a little at a time.

Proved them Wrong

In the past 16 years I have written **2092 articles**, **10 eBooks**, created **450 video presentations**, **41 posters** and **24 keynote presentations**.

Although I was told that I could not work as a motivational and inspirational speaker I have become a motivational and inspirational speaker.

During the past 35 months I have given presentations to groups, universities and hospitals **117 times**, throughout the United States.

Be Encouraged – Things Just Take Time

There is light at the end of the tunnel. The process just takes what it takes. The process of finding and beginning to use my gifts, talents and abilities took lots of time. Walking in my tunnel; seemed dark, but I did not give up.

Walking in your tunnel may take time. Your tunnel may seem black too. But don't give up until you see the light. The light will appear. More will be revealed to you. You will see the light and you will find your purpose.

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

Babe Ruth

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

Thomas Edison

“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

“Purpose is about a process and a journey, not a destination. I can not 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

Recovery and finding what works just takes time. By not giving up and staying committed to creating hope. Creating hope in our lives.

Creating hope one skill, one skill set at a time and one day at a time.

For more **information** and **insights** into my process and journey living with the impact of an invisible and long-term disability, click on these 2 links:

[Autobiography in Bullet Points](#)

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

To share what helped me to see the light. The light at the end of the tunnel. The light to find my “way” through hope, I created the below 11 zoom presentations.

Empowering the individual, not long Covid 19.

I created these presentations to inspire hope. Inspire hope in an ongoing recovery process in one’s mind, body, spirit, soul and emotions. Hope in *individuals who are living with invisible and long-term disabilities.*

Whether they are living with a brain injury or with long Covid-19

I am available to give these presentations through zoom. I live in the US, on Eastern Standard Time zone. Click to see my availability: **[Availability](#)**

Creating Hope through Neuroplasticity

[Creating Hope one Skill and Skill Set at a Time](#)

Quotes that Encourage me. May they also encourage you.

“Big things have small beginnings.” Prometheus

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

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

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

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

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

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

"If your actions inspire others to dream more, to learn more, to do more, to become more, you are a leader." John Quincy Adams

"Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgement that something is more important than fear." Ambrose Redmon

"The three most important ways to lead people are... by example... by example... by example." Albert Schweitzer

Not everyone will understand your journey. That's OK. You're here to live your life, not to make everyone understand." Banksy

"Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail." Ralph Waldo Emerson

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

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

**"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 Olympics**

