

Neuroplasticity, Setting Goals, Repetition and Creating Hope After Brain Injury and Stroke Keynote Presentation

Craig J. Phillips MRC, BA Second Chance to Live

“Our disappointments and discouragement do not have to limit our ability to create a good life for ourselves.” Craig J. Phillips MRC, BA

My traumatic brain injury, car accident, in 1967 when I was 10 years old. Open skull fracture, right frontal lobe damage, a severe brain bruise with brain stem involvement. Coma for 3 weeks. Fractured left femur (thigh bone), traction 7 weeks, Spica (full-body) cast for 5 months. 2 EEG's, battery of psychosocial testing. Was not supposed to succeed beyond high school academically. Learned how to walk, talk, read, write and speak in complete sentences. Tutored at home in 5th grade. Mainstreamed back into elementary school in the 6th grade. Graduated on time with my high school class in 1975. Went on to get my undergraduate degree in 10 years (2 universities, 1 community college). Obtained my master's degree (2 graduate schools) Rehabilitation Counseling. Credentials CRC. 20-year history of getting and losing jobs, client with 2 different State Department of Vocational Rehabilitation. 2nd Vocational Rehabilitation evaluation determined that I was not employable. Applied 3 times for SSDI, the 3rd application approved. Felt like someone all dressed up with nowhere to go. A lot of disappointments and discouragement despite all my efforts.

Created Second Chance to Live 7 years after it was determined that I was not employable. I did so on February 6, 2007 to share what helped me to recover mentally, physically, spiritually and emotionally after my brain injury.

“Inch by inch, life's a cinch. Yard by yard, life's hard.” John Bytheway

After we Sustain a Brain Injury or a Stroke

What Was Once Familiar

We May be Discouraged

Give Up on Our Hopes and Dreams

Tendency to focus on Symptoms, not Solutions

The Good News is that We don't Have to Stay Stuck

We Can Create Hope in Our Lives after Brain Injury

Building Blocks to Create Hope in our Lives

“Big things have small Beginnings.” Prometheus

Nerve Conduction

Communication

Corpus Callosum

Creating New Neural Pathways and Brain Reorganization

Nerve Cells Die

Damaged Nerve Cells are not Dead Never Cells

Healthy Nerve Cells connect to Damaged Nerve Cells

Connections between the Left Hemisphere and the Right Hemisphere

of Our Brain through the Corpus Callosum

Damage to the Right or Left Sides of Our Brain

Important to Understand

**Damage to the Right side of our Brain affects the Left Side of our
Body**

**Damage to the Left side of our Brain affects the Right Side of our
Body**

**Unaffected Side of Our Brain can Help Restore the Affected Side of
our Body**

My Brain was Damaged on the Right Side of my Brain

Which Side of You Brain was Damaged

My Brain was Damaged on the Right Side

Your Brain May have Been Damaged on the Left Side

Right Side – Left Side of Body

Left Side – Right Side of Body

Accepting the Limitations of my Brain Injury, but Not Being Stopped by Them

Not Being Stopped

Accepting the Limitations of my Brain Injury Does Not Mean that I Like Them

Accepting my Limitations Just Means that I Do not have to Be Stopped by Them

Accepting my Limitations Gives me the Ability to try Something Different to get different Results

Accepting My Limitations Gives me the Ability to Find a Way that will Work for me

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

Free to Move Beyond

I free to Move beyond what I am led to believe about myself (my diagnosis) to run my own race.

I am free to Move beyond what I am told that I can accomplish (prognosis) so that I can find ways that work for me.

I am free to Stop judging my efforts and I Learn at my own pace.

“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 and say “We’ll just have to see”. Dick Fosbury (**Gold Medal** winner High Jump)

“Absorb what is useful. Discard what is not. Add what is uniquely your own.” Bruce Lee

Definition of Neuroplasticity

The ability for the brain to create new neural pathways and brain reorganization through repetitive mirrored movements

My Encouragement to You as I Need to Remember

Start Now and Don't Give Up

Set a Goal

Skills and Skill Sets

Improving the Quality of Your Life

Beyond a Diagnosis

Beyond a Prognosis

“Baby steps turn into miles when put together.” Craig J. Phillips MRC, BA

Living Beyond Limitations one Skill and Skill Set at a Time

Moving Beyond Limitations

Moving Beyond the Confines of a Prognosis

Find a Way that Works for You

To Build a New Life

Tenacity

Persistence

Not Giving Up

Exercise to Learn and Re-Learn Skills One Skill and One Skill Set at a Time

**Let the Journey Begin
Repetitive Mirrored Movements**

Both Sides of Brain Communicate

Start Slowly, but Don't Give Up!

Skills and Skill Sets

“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

The Process Just takes Time, so Don't Give Up

Just Takes what it Takes

Achieving Your Goal

Don't be Discouraged

Elephant Riddle

Keep Chewing

Small Successes

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

Little by Little We can Achieve What We

Never Dreamed Possible

Dream Possible – Stay Positive

Celebrating Small Successes – Inch by inch

Not Judging Our Efforts – Progress not perfection

Running Our Own Race, Staying in Our Own Lane

Tortoise and the Hare -- Slow and Steady wins the Race

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

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

Although the Process May Seem Slow at Times Have Fun

Have Fun with the Process. What you Enjoy doing You will Stick with through times of Discouragement.

Although Progress may Seem Slow at time, Don’t Give Up. You are Making More Progress that you Realize.

“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, because we did not give up.” Craig J. Phillips MRC, BA

The Principle of Baking Cakes and Eating Elephants

One Bite at a Time

Life Goals one “step” at a time

Gather Ingredients to Bake Your Cake

Combine Ingredients

One Skill and One Skill Set at a time

And Keep Chewing

“Big things have small beginnings.” Prometheus

“Everyone is trying to accomplish something big not realizing that life is made up of little things.” Frank A. Clark

My Process and Journey using the Principle of Neuroplasticity through Martial Arts after my Brain Injury

My Journey with Neuroplasticity Began

1997 Using Different Martial Art Disciplines

**Muay Thai Kick Boxing, Western Boxing, Filipino Stick Fighting, Kali,
Jeet Kune Do and Wing Chun Drills**

To Train and Develop through Endless Repetitive Movements

Large and Small Muscle Groups

Gross and Fine Motor Skills

**How I Use Repetitive Mirrored Movements to Create New Neural
Pathways**

**Stick Fighting, Knife, Western Boxing muay Thai & Wing Chun Drills
Created September 2, 2021**

**Hand Eye Coordination and Precision Drills using Fine Motor Drills
Created September 12, 2021**

**Upper/Lower Body Coordination Drills to Improve Focus, Balance and
Agility Created February 14, 2022**

In My Experience I Needed to Exercise Diligence to Succeed

Born to Win and Succeed after a Brain Injury

Plan

Prepare

Execute

Succeed

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

**Plan, Prepare, Execute, and Succeed in Ways
That will Work for You**

Commit to Succeed One Day at a Time

**“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**

Commitment to me involves loyalty, first to myself. Commitment encourages me to stick with a goal, regardless.

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.

“Regardless of Your Lot in Life You Can Build Something Beautiful on It.” Zig Ziglar

To Achieve what will Improve the Quality of our Lives and our Well-beings One Day at a Time

By Applying Diligence in the Training Camps of Life after Brain Injury

Ingredients of a Successful Training Camp to Create Hope

Hard work or Work-ethic

"Something requiring lots of effort to do, either physical, mentally or emotionally; labor; toil." Your Dictionary.com

Hard work to me means being diligent, to accomplish a task or a goal. Hard work or a work-ethic can be likened to running a marathon, not running a sprint.

“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

Determination

“is a positive emotion that involves persevering towards a difficult goal in spite of obstacles.

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.

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

Drive

“There are three major components to motivation: activation, persistence, and intensity. Activation involves the decision to initiate a behavior...

Persistence to me 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. External motivation only last until the threat is removed. Internal motivation is sustainable because of the individual’s internal desire to achieve.

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

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

For me, discipline means that I keep working on my craft, tweaking and taking away; adding to and making what works, work for me.

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

Fortitude

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

For me fortitude means that I commit to pursuing my dreams and my destiny. That I stay focused on my vision and mission. That I remain true to myself.

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

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

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... Persistence means believing in myself.

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

Tenacity

“an unwillingness to yield or give up, being dogged, stubbornly, persevering and steadfast” Wiktionary

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 not 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, do the footwork and let go.

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

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

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.

“My mother said that if you are a soldier, you will become a general. If you are a monk, you will become the Pope. Instead, I was a painter and became Picasso.” Pablo Picasso

My Use of Martial Art Disciplines to Set Goals and Create Hope

Friends videoed me to show and document the progress made to increase new neural pathways and brain reorganization. Click:

[Neuroplasticity through Martial Arts Disciplines August 2013](#)

[Neuroplasticity Demonstration August 2014](#)

[Brain Injury, Neuroplasticity and Personal Gains August 2015](#)

[Balance and Coordination through Repetitive Mirrored Movement 2016](#)

[Brain Injury Recovery and Repetitive Mirrored Movements 2017](#)

[Improving Our Brain and Body’s Ability to Excel after Brain Injury 2018](#)

Due to a shoulder injury and then Covid, I was unable to create a demonstration in 2019 and in 2020.

[Stick Fighting, Knife, Western Boxing muay Thai & Wing Chun Drills Created September 2, 2021](#)

[Hand Eye Coordination and Precision Drills using Fine Motor Drills Created September 12, 2021](#)

[Upper/Lower Body Coordination Drills to Improve Focus, Balance and Agility Created February 14, 2022](#)