BRAIN INJURY

Winter 2023

HOPE MAGAZINE

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Welcome

Publisher's Introduction

HOPE
MAGAZINE

The Voice of the Brain Injury Community

Winter 2023

Publisher
David A. Grant

Editor
Sarah Grant

Our Contributors

Donna Becke
Patrick Brigham
Amiee Duffy
David A. Grant
Sarah Grant
Sarah Jackson
Lori Lee
Al Rocco
Jeff Sebell

Welcome to the Winter 2023 Issue of HOPE Magazine

Winter has arrived, bringing with it a time for reflection and a fresh perspective, particularly for those of us in the brain injury community. In this issue, we bring you stories of resilience and hope to brighten the shorter, winter days.

Our contributors, both long-term survivors and newcomers to the brain injury journey, share their experiences with honesty and courage. Their stories are a testament to the strength and adaptability of the human spirit, offering inspiration and comfort during this introspective season.

If you're new to HOPE Magazine, we extend a warm welcome. Our community is inclusive and supportive, uniting all who are affected by brain injury. We believe in the power of sharing experiences to educate and connect.

As you navigate the winter months, let this issue be your guide and companion, offering a dose of inspiration and a reminder of the resilient community you're a part of. Stay warm, stay hopeful, and enjoy the read.

David A. Grant
Publisher

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is light despite all of the darkness."

–Desmond Tutu

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Cycling is Brain Health

Al Rocco

Cyclists are among the most likely individuals to experience a concussion. My personal journey began with a bike crash on NJ Route 9W in 2015, caused by a highway paving defect. Suffering from a fractured clavicle and a concussion, despite wearing a helmet, I was rushed to Englewood Hospital's emergency room. There, I learned that a record number of cyclists had been admitted that weekend due to the same issue. The hospital had even contacted the Alpine, NJ Police Department to close the road.

This incident marked the start of a three-year struggle to heal from my concussion. The challenges were immense: brain fog, constant hissing sounds, slowed perception, and unbearable noise sensitivity. Simple tasks like reading a computer screen for 45 minutes necessitated equal rest time for recovery.

> “Simple tasks like reading a computer screen for 45 minutes necessitated equal rest time for recovery.”

Despite consultations with doctors at four major medical centers in New Jersey, the root cause of my extreme fatigue remained a mystery. After surpassing the 30-day mark with my symptoms, I was told recovery might be unattainable and was diagnosed with Post Concussion Syndrome. Numerous neuropsychological and hearing tests were conducted, resulting in extensive reports on my dysfunctions, yet no effective therapies were suggested.

The doctors prescribed various stimulants to help me function and maintain my technology sales job, especially critical with my eldest daughter's college tuition looming. My search for solutions led me to "The Ghost in my Brain" by Clark Elliot, PhD., introducing me to vision therapy. Although it was beneficial, it didn’t completely restore my health.

Nearly three years into my ordeal, my spouse discovered the UPMC Sports Concussion Program through a friend's recommendation. This program seemed promising, especially after seeing their classification for fatigue concussions on their website. UPMC's approach differed significantly. Within six months, they managed to address my issues effectively. The team, led by Dr. Micky Collins, developed a comprehensive recovery plan involving cardio exercise, calisthenics, and exposure to busy environments. They even encouraged me to resume cycling as part of my brain therapy.

The contrasting perspectives on concussion recovery were stark. On one hand, several hospitals I visited in New Jersey viewed the recovery as a complex and challenging process, suggesting patients adjust to a new, limited life. On the other hand, UPMC Sports Concussion Program followed a well-defined, almost guaranteed recovery path. My experience with UPMC was so transformative that I started referring other concussion sufferers to them. For instance, one patient who had consulted over 100 doctors in ten years since her boating accident reported significant improvements within sixty days of visiting UPMC.

The journey taught me the importance of appropriate therapy in concussion recovery, including vision therapy, balance/vestibular therapy, exercise therapy, and exposure therapy. For those not finding relief locally, I recommend considering UPMC, albeit with an appointment due to their high patient volume. However, it's crucial to be wary of misinformation and quick-fix supplements available online. Genuine recovery requires accurate diagnosis and targeted therapy.

In conclusion, the path to recovery may be challenging, but it's filled with hope. With the right support and determination, regaining full health is not just a possibility but a realistic goal. Your journey to 100% recovery is a testament to resilience, and remember, you are not alone.

Meet Al Rocco

Al Rocco is retired from a thirty-year career in technology-focused B2B sales. He's a proud father of two adult children and is married to Carolyn, his steadfast partner through various challenges. An avid cyclist, Al rides 100-150 miles weekly with the Bicycle Touring Club of North Jersey. His professional background includes roles at companies like 3Com, nCipher, Apple, and Texas Instruments. Al holds degrees in Economics and Anthropology from Cornell University, after graduating from Regis High School in NYC.

My Grocery Store Dilemma, Part 2

Sarah Jackson

This time, I made it to the checkout, barely. Little did I know, though, my struggles were about to begin. Surely, the employee who was helping must have thought something was wrong with me. If only he knew.

Let me retrace my steps, starting from the beginning when I had the "household" grocery list in one hand and the "recipe" grocery list in the other. Dealing with my grocery store dilemmas, or GSD as I like to call it, I think I've figured out the answer to my GSD.

Marching through the store, this time as if I knew what I was doing, I headed to the back of the building, the freezer aisle - a new tactic to ease the burdens of my GSD (remember?). This way, I'm not walking aimlessly through all the aisles thinking, "Why am I here? That looks appetizing," and grabbing items I do not need. By starting in the back of the building, my brain isn't overwhelmed with the many choices and selections bombarding me with questions that may or may not be relevant to my GSD.

> “This way, I'm not walking aimlessly through all the aisles thinking, "Why am I here? That looks appetizing," and grabbing items I do not need.”

I believe I'm off to a great start with my new tactic... well, I have a tactic... which is a start (we'll see how it fares).

Hope Contributor Sarah Jackson and Family

My new tactic includes not one, but two lists, which may either help or hinder my GSD experience. I soon realize that adding the "recipe" list to the "household" list is slowing me down. I'm walking down the milk aisle. Yes, the milk aisle again, where all my troubles began a year ago, but let's not go there. I need milk for the "household" and eggs for the "recipe." Struck with the realization that we have eggs at home, usually bought from a corner store because they are cheaper, I hesitate. The eggs here at the grocery store come in larger quantities and are on sale. "Hmmm...?" While debating internally over which store offers the better price, I choose the carton on my right. Not because it's the better deal, but because I fail to distinguish the better price. But since everything in my cart costs $5, I figure it makes sense to get the one that costs $5. Moreover, since I'm right-handed and right is usually my lucky side, I figure I can't go wrong choosing the eggs on my dominant side. In addition, the eggs on my dominant side contain more eggs, so the price comparison just makes sense - the carton containing the most eggs costs more money. Ok, moving on...

I do a quick scan of both lists to get out of this grocery store soon. The cheese is in this aisle too. I'm pretty sure I don't need cheese, but with all the colorful price tags, I'm pretty sure it's on sale. I decide I better get some.

Again, I quickly scan both lists and realize tater tots would be in this aisle. They're not on the list, but the kids would like them. I walk up and down the cold-storage aisle three times, thinking, "Surely, they can't be located elsewhere. I must have missed them." On my fourth pass down the aisle, very slowly, I see an employee in a red shirt. "Perfect. Just who I need." After asking where the tater tots are, she points and says, "Right behind you." Dumbfounded, I roll my eyes at the stupidity of the situation and conclude I've been here too long.

Assuring myself I have funds for these luxury items (because groceries are expensive these days), I head to the checkout. Stopping to check my online bank account to pay for this fiasco, I also wonder when I'll have to complete such arduous tasks again.

But the GSD experience isn't over yet. As I'm unloading my items onto the self-checkout register, I see the hat on display on an end-cap that my daughter wants for Christmas. "Wait. Cancel everything.

I'm getting that hat." I pick up my stuff and head to the display. "Wait, was it this hat or that hat?" I grab the one I think she wants and head back to self-checkout. "No, I better get the other one." Retracing my steps to replace the hat, I grab the correct one and head to my checkout spot.

"Ok. I'm ready." I successfully follow the prompts but am confused when the screen asks for Member Identification. "Really?" I don't need to describe the arduous task of getting an employee's help to clear this situation. However, I'll just say that I was glad I made it home that day.

The GSD experience continues in my kitchen.

Unloading the groceries from the countertop to their respective places in the kitchen sounds easy, especially compared to this recent GSD experience. However, when transferring the bag of pretzels to the cupboard, and the entire contents fall out the bottom, I think my day can't get any better. That's when I realize I need to make time for myself, rather than all the urchins (pets included) in my household.

Time for yourself doesn't mean time at the library, gym, or mall. Rather, it means time to sleep, rest, refuel, refocus, and re-energize. It's in moments of silence, stillness, and serenity where real growth occurs. The simulation needed (or not), the synapses, the rewiring of your brain needed... to heal, mend, recover, and get through.

Meet Sarah Jackson

Sarah endured a serious Traumatic Brain Injury at the age of 15 due to a car accident involving a drunken driver. This pivotal moment in her life set her on a path of both personal challenges and profound growth. Determined to turn her experience into a force for positive change, Sarah has actively shared her journey with others.

Through her website, www.sarahjspeaks.com, as well as in schools and organizations nationwide, Sarah offers insights and hope.Her story of hope is also captured in her book, "You're Getting Better Every Day," which has become a source of inspiration for many. Sarah's commitment to spreading awareness and providing support embodies her dedication to helping others navigate the complexities of life after a brain injury.

A New Perspective

Donna Becke

In March of 2012, I suffered a concussion that led to Severe Occipital Neuralgia. Left untreated until February of 2013, I eventually underwent major surgery to sever nerves in my spine, aiming to alleviate my pain. Now, I'm navigating the complex path of nerve regeneration.

This journey has been filled with pain, agony, tears, life changes, and moments where hope seemed lost. Yet, there have been times of serendipity, when the world appears to pause, revealing the beauty in the smallest details I never noticed before. I've come to cherish the feeling of breathing in the crisp morning air, recognizing for the first time the pleasure it brings.

The affection from my grandchildren - their kisses and hugs - now feels even more profound. These moments become my anchor during the times when the struggle feels unbearable. I remind myself that it's okay to forget, to not remember everything. This slower pace of life has allowed me to notice and appreciate what I previously overlooked.

> “This slower pace of life has allowed me to notice and appreciate what I previously overlooked.”

There are moments when I yearn for my old life, longing to do the things I once took for granted. The frustration of "being sick of being sick" creeps in, but these feelings pass more quickly now. I gather my strength, reminding myself of the blessings I still have.

Living with a brain injury can be a lonely experience. It's easy to feel misunderstood, especially when others can't see your pain. I've learned the importance of taking control in these situations: slowing down, saying no, making adjustments, and importantly, asking for help. I've come to accept that I'm not the same person I was before my injury. Parts of me were lost in this three-year journey, but I've also gained a deeper inner peace. My eyes are open to the beauty in the minutiae of life, and my capacity for forgiveness and love has deepened.

I'm grateful for the family and friends who understand my struggle and have supported me through it all. Their understanding is a blessing amidst the struggle and agony.

To those suffering daily, I hope you find moments of beauty and peace to cling to during your darkest days and nights. They can be a source of strength and a reminder of the enduring spirit within you.

Meet Donna Becke

Donna Becke, a Kentucky resident, has shown remarkable resilience since her concussion in 2012, which resulted in Severe Occipital Neuralgia. Her path to recovery, marked by a major surgery in 2013, has been a journey of both challenges and serendipitous discoveries. Today, Donna cherishes the beauty in life's small moments and the deep connections with her family. Her experience has taught her the importance of slowing down and seeking support when needed. Embracing her journey with strength and grace, Donna finds solace and joy in the company of her loved ones in Kentucky.

Brain Injury HOPE NETWORK

You're Invited!

The HOPE Network Brain Injury Support Group

Join us the fourth week of every month for our online Brain Injury Support Group. All are welcome: Survivors, caregivers, and anyone looking to be part of a supporting community.

Watch for dates, times and Zoom login information on Facebook or Instagram!

Shattering the One Year Myth

David A. Grant

As the years continue to pass, I have gained something that I wasn't capable of early on after my injury: a perspective that comes with time.

Like many others who share my fate, I become reflective around my brain injury anniversary each year. It's a time to take stock of where I am today compared to where I was. Now, I allow myself to look to the future with hope, a realistic hope that I will continue to heal.

But there was a day when someone stole my hope, leaving me completely and utterly devastated.

> "Now, I allow myself to look to the future with hope, a realistic hope that I will continue to heal."

I'm a big fan of taking personal inventory. A year after a teenaged driver struck me while cycling, I decided it was time for neuropsychological testing. I wanted to understand my deficits to have a starting point for the next chapter of my healing. After hours of grueling testing over several days, I sat with my wife, Sarah, and the neuropsychologist to review the results. It was clear that my assessment was not quite what we expected.

"David, you are in the bottom five percentile in areas of complex problem solving and verbal recall," he said, as dryly as if giving driving directions. This fact was shocking enough, but more sucker punches to my soul awaited.

"You are permanently disabled, and any gains from here on will be small at best," he shared, as my wife and I tried to comprehend his diagnosis.

Keeping a stiff upper lip, I asked about scheduling a neuropsychological test a year out, hoping to use this first test as a benchmark for future gains.

"There is no need; your gains will be insignificant at best," he authoritatively responded. As our visit ended, there was one final hope-stealing shot.

"Most brain injury survivors see an IQ drop. You were very intelligent before your accident. Even losing some of your IQ, you should get by relatively okay now," he stated as we prepared to leave.

Many years have passed since that meeting. I've heard the same misinformation repeatedly among other survivors: after a year, you're as good as you're going to get. Check your HOPE at the door. No optimism needed. Go directly to brain injury jail, do not pass Go, do not collect $200. Just grin and bear it. You're lucky to be alive.

Balderdash!

As time passes, I recognize this advice as old-school science. Old-school brain science was simple: after a year, gains would be small. Thankfully, new-school science, embracing neuroplasticity and challenging the belief that recovery has an end game, is now dominant. It recognizes the hidden power of the brain and body, asserting that as long as you have a heartbeat, you will continue to heal. This is a science of hope.

> **Old-school brain science was simple: after a year, gains would be small. Thankfully, new-school science, embracing neuroplasticity and challenging the belief that recovery has an end game, is now dominant.**

One of the first to challenge old-school science was Dr. Jill Bolte-Taylor. In her book "My Stroke of Insight," she discusses measurable gains up to the eight-year mark. Many years ago at a conference in Maine, a doctor and parent of a survivor continued this new narrative: "We got it wrong when we told you recovery was over in a year."

I hold no ill will, anger, or resentment towards the doctor who temporarily stole my hope. He was a product of his time. As the medical community evolves, more professionals are letting go of the one-year myth. The Dark Ages of brain injury recovery are fading. My own life reflects these long-term gains. At two years out, my vertigo almost ceased. At three, I could work beyond 2:00 PM. At four, I read books again. The list goes on.Today, I have real hope based on my experience and emerging science. I know I'll never be who I was, but where I am going is so much more important than where I was.

Meet David A. Grant

David A. Grant, a resident of Salem, NH, is a brain injury survivor who has turned his experience into a source of inspiration and advocacy. He is the publisher of Brain Injury Hope Magazine and a frequent contributor to Brainline.org. Additionally, David regularly contributes to the "Chicken Soup for the Soul" book series. Since his brain injury in 2010, he has authored several books, sharing his journey with written works that offer support and insight to others.

My Journey to Regain Wellness

Amiee Duffy

As I continue on my journey of health and recovery from my brain injury, I've been inspired to delve into diet and supplements. I'm currently on prescribed medications for headaches, fatigue, and executive function issues, and while they help me cope, my aim is to thrive, not just survive.

My exploration into supplements actually started six months before my brain injury. I began taking a multi-vitamin, D3, and krill oil. Post-injury, I continued these and added magnesium and turmeric. During a discussion with my neurologist, I learned these supplements weren't harmful, though there was no solid evidence of their benefit. He did suggest adding 400 mg of B2 vitamins daily, as recent research supports its role in brain health, potentially reducing fatigue, depression, and improving memory.

> “With a busy life of work and three children, I needed an easy way to include more fruits and vegetables in my diet.”

It's tough to say whether the supplements are making a difference. My condition has improved since my accident, but it's unclear if the improvements are due to the supplements or natural recovery. Nonetheless, I'm not ready to stop them yet. After two months of taking these supplements, blood tests at my annual physical showed the best results I've had in years, particularly for inflammation linked to my chronic fatigue. My doctor advised continuing what I was doing.

This led me to research diet changes. With a busy life of work and three children, I needed an easy way to include more fruits and vegetables in my diet. South Shore Organics, which delivers weekly organic produce, became my solution. It varied my family's diet with vegetables like squash, leeks, and kale.

Breakfast used to be a challenge for me, but green smoothies have become a daily staple. I joined a 30-day challenge and even bought a book on it. Preparing fruit and greens every Sunday for the week ahead has become part of my routine. Initially, I'd set up everything the night before to make mornings easier. These preparation strategies are crucial in post-brain injury life.

While I've made significant dietary changes, like cutting out alcohol and soda and using healthier cooking alternatives like coconut oil, I'm still on my way to regaining wellness. I plan to integrate an anti-inflammatory diet more fully into my life. However, it's important to clarify that these changes haven't returned me to my pre-accident state, but they're steps towards continued recovery.

As I navigate the road to recovery from my brain injury, I've realized the importance of being proactive in my health journey. Diet and supplement choices have become integral parts of this process. While I haven't fully regained my pre-accident health, the dietary changes and supplement regimen have contributed positively to my overall well-being. It's a continuous path of discovery and adaptation, highlighting the need for patience and persistence.

Meet Amiee Duffy

Since sustaining my brain injury, I've been on a journey towards recovery, focusing on diet and supplements. I'm currently balancing prescribed medications with a regimen of B2 vitamins and other supplements. I've also embraced a healthier diet, including organic produce and green smoothies. This journey is about more than just coping; it's about thriving and discovering new ways to improve my health.

Tips for Those Bad Days

Lori Lee

It took me over four years and many counseling sessions to gradually accept my new self, most days. I've compiled a list of strategies that help me cope, hoping they might also assist others on their tough days.

Sunglasses and Headphones - Post-injury, bright lights and ambient noise became unbearable, causing me physical discomfort. I started wearing sunglasses and headphones for tasks like grocery shopping, which were challenging due to the store's bright lights and noise. At home, I continued using headphones, playing soothing music to reduce headaches and neuro fatigue.

Alone Time - As a single mother on disability, finding alone time is tough. However, I realized its necessity during my severe migraine episodes. I now dedicate time weekly, or even daily, to disconnect completely - no electronics or distractions. This quiet time allows me to process my emotions without judgment, whether it's crying or appreciating nature.

"...And That's OK" - I've learned to manage my anxiety by accepting things as they are. For instance, when faced with issues like car troubles, I remind myself, "that's OK," which surprisingly eases my stress. This approach has reduced my anxiety and improved my sleep, even on challenging days.

Meditation - Guided meditation has been immensely beneficial, helping me feel more in control and at ease. Despite my mobility and visual stimulation issues post-injury, meditation techniques have enabled me to walk more confidently, accepting my limitations and maintaining calm in stressful moments.

Grounding / Earthing - Initially skeptical about grounding, I've embraced it fully. Grounding, or connecting our feet to the earth, has been part of my life since childhood. My physiotherapist recommended walking barefoot to help my brain recalibrate my body's position. This practice, initially challenging due to balance issues, now brings me immense relief and a better sense of connection with the earth.

Networking - Joining Facebook groups or attending TBI support meetings has been vital. Drawing inspiration from others who've faced worse but overcame, I find comfort in shared experiences. It reminds me that I'm not alone in my journey.

Meet Lori Lee

Lori Lee is an essayist and horsewoman having ridden both English and Western. She is hoping to get back in the saddle next year. She is currently on disability and working hard on her recovery. She is getting back to her writing and moving towards being a life coach and advocate for adults, children, and families with TBI or anxiety and depression.

Learning to Fall

Jeff Sebell

Did you know that failure can be a beautiful thing? This concept contradicts what many of us have been taught from a young age. For those who have experienced a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), failure is a familiar obstacle in the journey to rebuild our lives. It's frustrating and challenging, but it's also an integral part of the process.

Initially, after TBI, we face failures in realizing we can no longer do things we once could. These failures are educational and crucial for our self-discovery. Following this, we enter a phase of 'practice failing' as we attempt to regain our lost skills and abilities. This phase is also essential, teaching us to relearn what it means to be human.

> “In an ideal world, we'd live free from external judgment and expectations.”

Thus, failing is a vital step towards living a fulfilled life after TBI. It's the first step on the road to success, yet acknowledging this is easier said than done. In an ideal world, we'd live free from external judgment and expectations. However, we are often our own worst critics, struggling to forgive ourselves for our failures, whether they are educational or part of practice.

Society tends to stigmatize those labeled as "failures," perceiving them as outcasts. This view doesn't recognize the distinction between 'living as a failure' and the act of failing. To truly get your life together, sometimes you need to fail.

Consider a novice baseball player facing a complex pitch for the first time. Without prior experience, hitting the ball is nearly impossible. Similarly, living life post-TBI is like facing that pitch – new, challenging, and requiring adaptation.

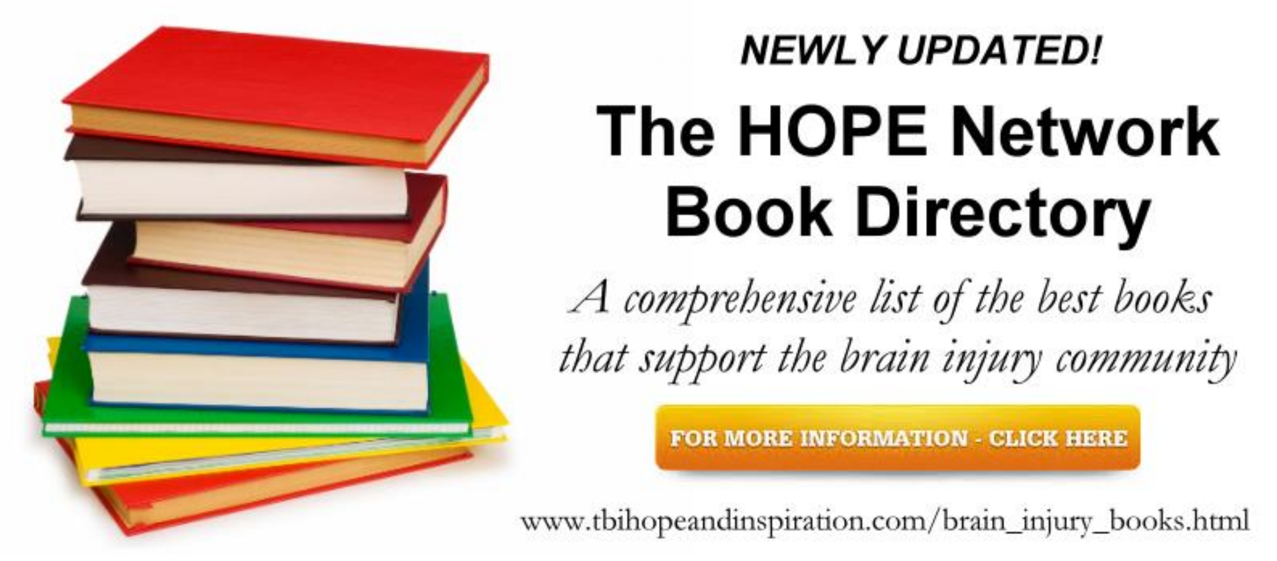
For those of us with TBI, failure is common in areas where we previously excelled. The key is to question why we cling to old expectations. Why try to impress others or live up to a past version of ourselves? Beating ourselves up for not functioning as before is unproductive. Instead, we should embrace failure as a learning opportunity and a chance to get to know our new selves.

You don't have to revert to who you were before the injury. Embrace the change, try new things, and understand that not everything will be successful. Start with small risks and gradually increase your challenges. Each success builds confidence and knowledge.

The journey isn't quick or easy, but it's the only path forward. It's an opportunity to discover your strength and determination, to learn and grow beyond what you thought possible, all by accepting and learning from failure.

Meet Jeff Sebell

Jeff became involved in supporting other TBI survivors in the early 1980s through the emerging National Head Injury Foundation. His dedication led to his appointment on the founding Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Chapter of the Foundation. He also spoke at Massachusetts' first statewide brain injury conference. Since then, Jeff has continued to write and speak extensively across the United States, focusing on "living a fulfilled life after brain injury."



Traditions After Neuro-Changes

Sarah Grant

I had a recent conversation with my husband about some of the things we did before his accident and how we navigate those things today. Traditions came to mind because it's December here in New Hampshire, and Christmas, New Year's celebrations, and gatherings with people we don't usually see happen almost every day.

> “Before his traumatic brain injury, which left him with brain fog, PTSD nightmares, the random lack of filter, and exhaustion, we raced through the days leading up to Christmas.”

Before his traumatic brain injury, which left him with brain fog, PTSD nightmares, the random lack of filter, and exhaustion, we raced through the days leading up to Christmas like little kids giddy to see what Santa Claus would leave under the tree for them. We visited everyone; we threw holiday parties; we invited many friends and family to our home to celebrate, play games, bake cookies, and spend time together. We braved the mall, the bookstores, and restaurants, and we even went to the occasional First Night celebration, counted down to the New Year, and watched fireworks with a few thousand friends.

David was hit by a car while riding his bike in our neighborhood. His accident was in November, and we were so focused on making him comfortable and letting him heal that we didn't notice that his lingering symptoms from the accident might be forever. Thanksgiving came and went. In hindsight, it was my first glimpse into what might have been a red flag. We still had five kids at home, so things were always busy. After the cleanup, we took our family picture after dinner, and everyone returned to their everyday lives except David. He went to bed. It took weeks for him to recover. Weariness was always front and center of our daily lives.

Thanksgiving was quickly followed by Christmas and New Year's, where we repeated the "lights are on, but no one is home" story. He was always exhausted. He was easily startled. (This one is difficult with lots of kids in the house.) His PTSD nightmares continued, and I put the brakes on large gatherings. We stopped attending concerts. We stopped spending time at other people's houses. He doesn't remember any of that first year or the second one. We stopped doing lots of things. Today, he looks at the pictures from that time and says he can see that something was clearly wrong.

As the years passed and holidays were celebrated, we got better at navigating our traditions. When we invite people to our home, the invitation includes a start time and an end time. This adjustment has been vital to David's enjoyment of these gatherings. I've been able to figure out that his threshold for "peopling" is four hours, and as his advocate, I'm able to enforce the end time with our guests. We sit on the edge when we go to restaurants or movie theaters. It's the theater's back row for us or a quiet booth in the rear of the restaurant. We're never in the middle of the action anywhere. The only concerts we attend today are those with seats - something I thought only older people did. If the shoe fits, right?

We've created new traditions to replace the old ones, and they're not terrible. We've had celebrations before the holiday, at a restaurant, instead of having everyone at our house. My son hosts some of the holidays and does the majority of the cooking, so we only need to bring a couple of dishes and desserts.

Our world has gotten smaller, but in a big kind of way. The new traditions we've created are more than just adjustments; they're a commitment to each other and our family. Through this, we've found strength in facing happiness in the simple moments. Our story is not just about adapting to life's twists; it's a source of hope for others on similar paths, showing that amidst change, there's always room for joy and growth.

Meet Sarah Grant

Sarah lives in Salem, NH, with her husband and three cats. She is an advocate for caregivers within the brain injury community and co-facilitates a monthly online caregiver support group. Sarah can usually be found spending time with her family or outdoors, enjoying life with her husband, David.

News & Views

By David & Sarah Grant

We are constantly inspired by the resilience and courage we see in our community. Each edition of HOPE Magazine brings forth stories that reaffirm the strength of the human spirit in the face of adversity. We've observed how brain injury survivors navigate their new realities with remarkable grit. Their journeys, though diverse, share common themes of struggle, adaptation, and ultimately, triumph. It's not just about the physical and cognitive recovery; it's about rediscovering oneself and finding joy in life's new rhythm.

What strikes us most is the incredible support network within our community. From family members to professionals, each plays a crucial role in the healing process. It's a reminder of how interconnected we are and how each person's recovery journey can inspire and educate others.

As we look back on the stories shared since 2015, we're reminded of the power of hope and the importance of sharing our experiences. These narratives aren't just individual tales; they're a collective source of strength and motivation.

To all our readers, your stories of resilience light the way for others navigating similar paths. Let's continue to support, learn from, and inspire each other.

With warm regards,

David & Sarah