

for survivors of brain and spinal cord injury

NEURO CONNECT

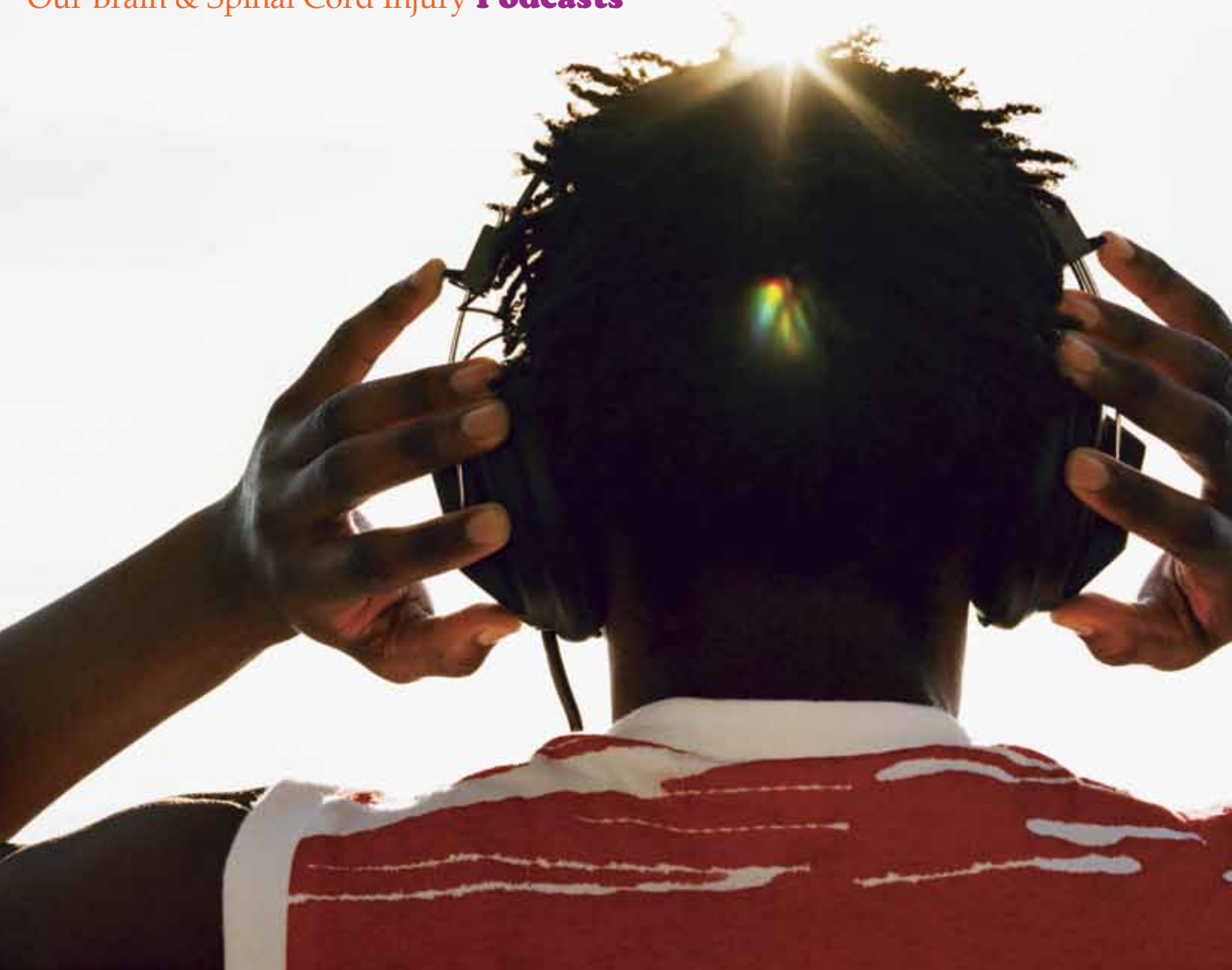
Volume 2 Issue 2 Summer 2010

Coming Home from Acute Rehabilitation

Goal Setting, Planning, and Achieving

Keeping Routine over the Summer

Our Brain & Spinal Cord Injury **Podcasts**



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Setting Goals..

and achieving them

For someone with an ABI or SCI, being able to set and achieve goals is an important part of rehabilitation. Goal setting and planning are important skills that will help the individual gain back their independence and confidence. This guide is intended to help individuals set, plan, and achieve their goals.

[click to set goals](#)



Step one: Choosing the goal

Think of your goals or plans in as much detail as possible. How would you like your life to be different? Where do you see yourself in five years? What about ten? What are your hopes for the future? Jot your goals down in detail. Is there anything you need or would like to change in your life? What about your health? Then rate your goals and their importance to you.

It is very important to be realistic about your goals and what can be achieved without underestimating yourself. You don't want to set yourself up for disappointment, but equally you want to push yourself. If you are helping someone else set goals, remember that a person is going to be more motivated if they choose or are involved in the process. Goals must be important to their life, should have benefits or rewards, and can be sustained over time.

Step two: Breaking the goal into smaller steps

Breaking the goal into smaller steps allows for the opportunity of many successes and learning experiences and reinforces the goal setting process. Many smaller goals also allows for continuous review and evaluation so that you may determine whether or not you need to readjust your goals and steps.

Prioritise your goals. You may have many goals but choose only a few goals to work on at a time so you don't burn out. You will be able to put more effort into achieving your goals if you are not overloaded and spread too thin.

Step three: Planning

Things to think about when planning how you will obtain your goals include: what am I going to do? When and how often will it happen? What resources or support will I need? How will you know when you are succeeding?

Step four: Reviewing the goal

Set a time to review your goals. Don't set this date too far away as you will want the opportunity to check progress and change strategies.

When reviewing your progress, write down what worked out and why it worked out as well as what didn't work out and why. Celebrate successes and learn from the process.

Step five: Setting new goals

Think about what you need to change based on your progress. Perhaps nothing needs to be changed, but you just need more time.

If you have completed a goal, make plans for a new one.

Step six: Identify barriers and work through them

There are many barriers to goals including poor habits and behaviours. Most people set goals but few people are able to follow through with them. Examples of behaviour that is difficult to change includes getting more exercise, changing eating habits, or quitting smoking.

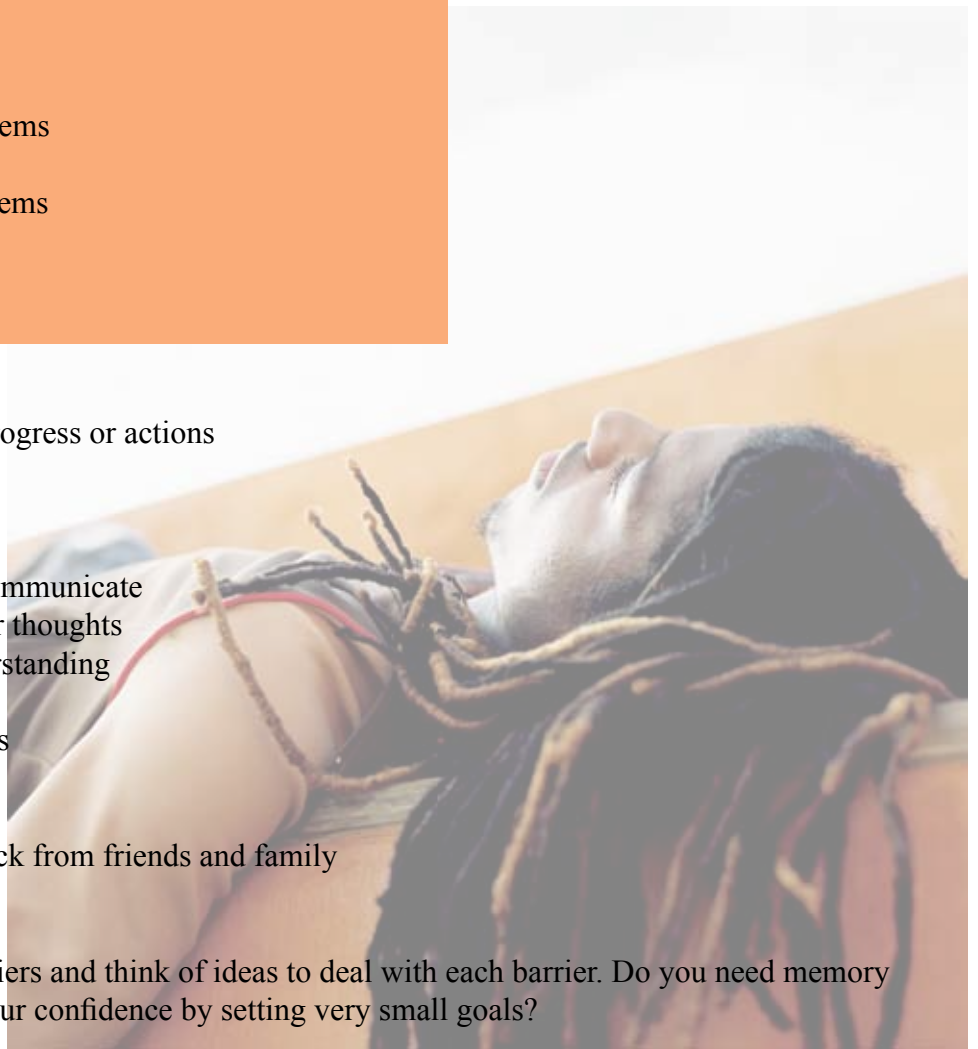
Someone with a brain injury may have different barriers including cognitive, physical, social, behavioural and communicative barriers.

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Cognitive Barriers:

Planning and organizational problems
Memory and learning problems
Attention and concentration problems
Fatigue and low energy
Behavioural and Emotional
Lack of motivation or initiation
Reduced ability to generate ideas
Poor impulse control
Reduced ability to self-monitor progress or actions
Low frustration tolerance
Depression or anxiety
Communication
Inability to articulate or clearly communicate
Difficulty communicating ideas or thoughts
Difficulty with reasoning or understanding
Social
Lack of time or financial resources
Low confidence in ability
Lack of social or family support
Lack of encouragement or feedback from friends and family



It is a good idea to write down barriers and think of ideas to deal with each barrier. Do you need memory strategies? Do you need to build your confidence by setting very small goals?

Goal setting, planning, and achieving is a long process and takes patience. Don't get discouraged if you don't progress as quickly as you wanted to. Take that as a cue to break your goal into smaller steps and/or give yourself more time. Never give up. You may hear stories about people who talked or walked again when they never were expected to- this is because they had persevering attitudes and never gave up on their goals.

[click to achieve goal](#)

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coming home



Bringing your loved one home after a serious injury is going to be an exhausting experience. As the primary caregiver, you're going to be dedicating most of your time and energy to helping your loved one rehabilitate. We have put together this guide to help you prepare for your new taxing, yet very honourable, task.

After being discharged from inpatient rehabilitation, your family member could wind up going to a variety of facilities or therapies depending on the severity of injury, medical stability or medical/ rehabilitation coverage. This guide is intended as a resource to help you ask the right questions, find the right answers, and help you and your loved one after inpatient rehab.

As it comes closer to the time for your loved one to leave inpatient rehab, a case manager, social worker, or another person at the hospital will help you plan and prepare for the transfer back home. You're also going to be working with a variety of other people to make a plan for home rehabilitation.

Some of these people are:

Occupational Therapist- functional goals such as cooking, chores

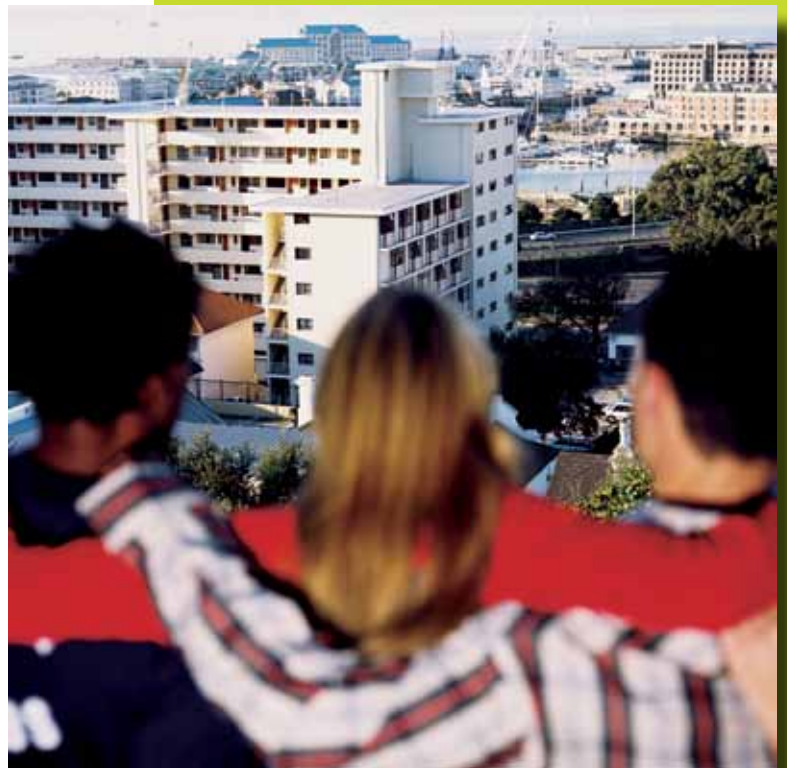
Physiotherapist- instruct you for making transfers (wheelchairs, walkers), safety, building endurance

Speech therapist/ Language pathologist- expression, language difficulties, swallowing problems

Social worker- information on funding and community resources

Psychologist- behaviour management

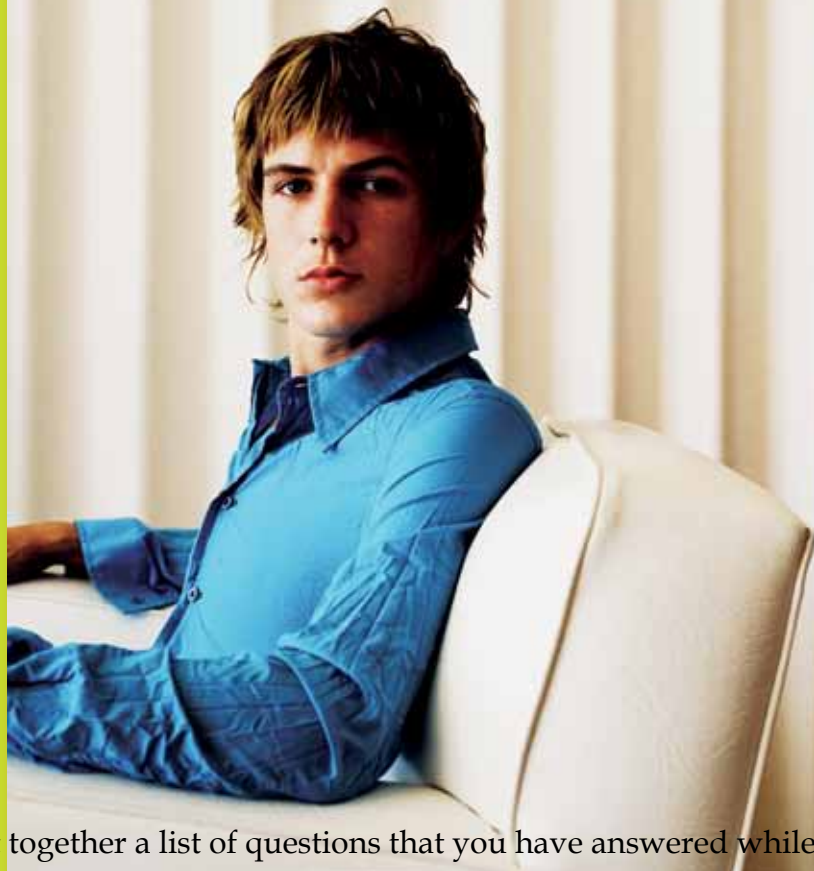
Cognitive therapist- memory, concentration, problem solving, etc.



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Take this time to learn as much about brain injury as possible. Make use of the hospital's library if they have one and ask as many questions as possible. Find out what cognitive, physical, and behavioural problems may result from the brain injury.

Another thing you will have to do before discharge is plan for outpatient therapy. The social worker at the hospital should help guide you. You should ask about occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, and rehabilitation support. A rehabilitation support worker can help your loved one with gaining independence, working on tasks given by other therapists (physical therapy, occupational therapy), making community outings, and giving you (the primary care giver) relief from your duties at a reasonable cost.



We've put together a list of questions that you have answered while preparing to take your loved one home:

What medications does my loved one need?

What should I expect from my loved one when they come home?

What can they and can't they do?

Do we need to make any home renovations?

What services is my loved one going to need?

When is my loved one going to be able to go back to school? What special requirements will they have?

How will I transport my loved one? Are there any services or coverage for this?

What daily routine should she/he keep?

What type of behavioural problems (ie. Aggression) could my loved one have?

How can I take care of myself and make sure I have time for myself?

One of the most important things to keep in mind is to take care of yourself. How can you be an effective caregiver if you are overworked and exhausted? Take the opportunity to have someone relieve you of your duties so that you can go shopping, do your errands, and relax. Consider counseling services if you need extra emotional support. And don't allow your loved one to take advantage of you- push them towards independence as that is what rehabilitation is all about.

trying travel



by Geills Merideth

British Columbia

She pushed the small bottle toward my face quickly and held it there. Her voice was terse. I could feel her suspicion.

“What’s this?”

It was more a demand than a question.

My mind jumped to an old SCTV comedy skit with John Candy, where he pushes his face right into the camera and pulls away again repeatedly.

I giggled.

She shoved the bottle closer to me.

“WHAT’S this?”

I laughed out loud.

“You’re joking, right?” I asked, looking at the clearly marked label and then at the airport security officer.

I should have retreated. Taken her seriously. Instead I giggled.

“Just answer the question.” She was angry now.

I looked at the clearly marked label again. I was becoming agitated too, reacting to her reactivity, and snapped:

“Your job doesn’t require you to read?”

Not a good move and I knew it as soon as I’d said it. Inappropriate. Since my brain injury, if I can’t get away from reactive people I begin acting like I was raised in the forest by wolves.

Both of us became quite heated, arguing about my bottle of face lotion, which was an appalling 20 ml over the size restriction for carry-on personal care items.

I was aware that I was digging myself in deep but I couldn’t figure out how to get out of it. Shocked that I was arguing over a bottle of face cream, I nonetheless defended my possession of it as if it were something valuable. She was not going to take my face cream.

She offered me a couple of options that would allow me to keep it. I could take it back to my checked bag and put it in there. You mean the bag that’s already on its way to the plane...?

Or I could mail it to myself. She pointed behind me: just go over there and find this envelope and fill out these forms and do this and tap dance here and jump through this hoop in another place.

My mind was swimming, I was no longer processing information, my carry-on had been completely unpacked and all my things, too many things, were strewn about on the conveyor belt.

She started unpacking the clear plastic bags I'd used to contain my toiletries. Apparently not airport issue and therefore wrong, a problem, a huge bad thing. Now she was just picking at me, looking for errors. I wondered how many terrorism-linked horrors had been committed because clear plastic bags holding deodorant didn't have government writing all over them.

"This is ridiculous," I said. "I can't talk to you, get me your superior."

She quickly agreed, probably as sick of me as I was of her, shoved my bag and its hastily unpacked contents at me and shooed me along to another woman. Now I was standing in the middle of the final security barricade, at the centre of a huge expanse of floor. My protest had backed up the security check-in so passengers were lined up all around the perimeter.

I noticed lights on the security barrier flashing now. Everything at the check-in had stopped. The other passengers were staring at me, quietly watching. The security officer in front of me, arms folded, was sternly lecturing me about the safety of the other passengers and the airport's responsibility in this regard.

More security guards—three men—were moving toward me: one on each side, coming from beside me and one moving swiftly in front of me. I was careening into full panic, perilously close to completely melting down. My mind jumped to Robert Dziekanski, who was tasered to death by Mounties at Vancouver airport two years earlier, following an insurmountable communication breakdown and argument that had escalated out of control.

Without conscious thought, my left hand shot up, palm facing outward, hand opened flat.

"Stop!"

It was a shout-plead. Speaking rapidly, scrambling to find the proper words, I blurted:

"I have a brain injury. I don't know what to do. I need your help. Help me."

Staring intently at me, piercing, searching for the truth of my statement, she hesitated then held her hand up. The security guards moving toward me fell back, flashing lights stopped, security checks of the other passengers resumed.

Again, with arms folded, she was talking to me. I was processing nothing. I told her I didn't understand what she was saying. I repeated myself: "I don't understand. I don't know what to do. Help me."

Finally she half turned, pointing at a spot behind her.

"You want me to go over there?"

She nodded.

"Then what? What do I do then?"

Glaring, her response was flat as she sighed deeply:

"You're finished here."

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As I walked to where she had indicated, the other passengers shuffled past me slowly, whispering, staring. I stood at the spot, looking around. Blur. Noise. Confusion. Cacophony and so much fear. I had no idea what to do. My stuff was a jumbled mess. Ticket and boarding pass clutched in my left hand; I was juggling my carry-on (minus face cream) with my purse in my right hand. Looking back at the senior security officer standing in the middle of the room (still glaring, waving me along), I hesitated until she repeated:

“You are finished here.”

I had been dismissed.

Banished to a corner by the edge of the security enclosure, I stood for a moment, trying to orient myself. Looking around in an attempt to figure out what to do next, I saw some passengers who'd been behind me in the check-in line and decided the best I could do was follow them. My boarding pass and ticket, crumpled from adrenalin-fuelled clutching, were flapping uncontrollably in my shaking hand.

Following the other passengers, walking down a corridor toward the boarding area, I felt stunned and disoriented. My anger had subsided and as with all reactive over-drive, I was drained, frightened, confused, exhausted.

I was having difficulty breathing and my legs were not holding me up properly. I felt like I was sinking as I walked.

Loss of impulse control and reactive outbursts always do this to me and so I spend most of my time avoiding them. I don't relate to this behaviour. It is foreign. An often-frightening intrusion upon how I want to conduct myself, my life. My rational mind becomes overtaken by fierce emotion before I am aware of it. I am blind-sided, as taken aback as the people around me.

Quickly sitting down on a bench in the corridor, I breathed slowly in and out a few times then began to organize my things, reflecting on what had just occurred, trying to make sense of it.

Passengers streamed by and I became anxious about the time – quickly repacked my carry-on and walked with wobbly legs toward the boarding area. I was completely humiliated. Horrified. I felt in physical shock. Just before boarding I bought a coffee – their strongest brew with an extra shot of espresso. It was all I could do to keep myself from sobbing.

As I recounted this experience to my son afterward, his concern was palpable. At my initial reaction to the security guard, my argumentativeness and sarcasm, he said:

“But that's not like you. You don't talk to people that way.”

Apparently, now I do. Such is the slippery landscape of life after brain injury.

What the security officer had said about the safety of passengers played in my head throughout the flight home. It disturbed me on a deep level. What about my safety? I was a passenger too. Why had no one from security, passenger services or the airport authority come to help me once it was obvious I was disoriented, incapable of understanding simple language, had identified my brain injury?

They had not known what to do any more than I had. They had been as reactive and fear-filled as I – this is the fuel for explosion. This creates danger where it might not have otherwise existed.

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PREPARING TO GO

It all started with a wedding invitation. In Banff, with dear friends – my second family, really. We had not all been together for the better part of thirty years. Scattered across the country, we had kept in touch, meeting in smaller groups when possible, visiting back and forth as we could. Close, yet always miles apart. Still, there remained a sense of family and this opportunity to be together was huge.

Regardless of concern from others, for me there was no doubt I would attend. The groom was the son of my friend Jane. Jane and I had tumbled through life together since grade nine, despite living far from each other during adulthood – almost always in different provinces, sometimes in different countries, worlds apart. However, attending required me to go back across the mountains where my accident had occurred, to revisit the last place I'd been before my brain broke.

Being catapulted over the side of a mountain, flying through the air in a speeding car projectile, is an experience of monumental proportion. It's not possible to file that away with old and forgotten events. This is a thing that stays with you, breathes with you, grows and changes as you do. It's a massive, living part of who you are forever afterward.

I had chosen to stay out of the big mountains for a while, to keep my feet solidly on the ground close to home during my rehabilitation. We all wondered what would happen when I went back. How difficult would it be to stand in Jane's house as who I am now, when the last time I was there was with a whole working brain, just hours before my life changed so dramatically? It was in my friend's house that my life had had its last day of normal.

I decided to fly over the mountains instead of travelling through them.

It was 2009 and not having travelled completely unassisted on a plane since before my accident, I had missed the political world shift, the abrupt changes brought by extreme reaction to global

terrorism. There was much for me to learn, absorb, remember. All my preparations needed to be made in the context of what I could or could not manage in relation to my ongoing brain deficits. While I would have all the support I needed once I arrived at the resort, navigating airports and the bus trip from Calgary to Banff could be tricky. There would be an onslaught of new information to assimilate in short periods of time.

I chose to leave from a small local airport, by-passing the hustle of the large international airport near me – with the intention of avoiding over-stimulation and its inevitable accompanying brain stall. I thought the best hope I had of accomplishing this trip without major upset was to minimize potential surprises as much as possible.

The Internet provided me with all the information I needed on new travel and packing restrictions. Over the course of six months I put together a comprehensive plan. I contacted the concierge at the resort with numerous questions about my room, what to expect, how to get there, etc. I printed this information out to take with me – step-by-step procedures to which I could refer as needed. A road map that would walk me through the entire process from my house to the resort and back home again. I even rehearsed packing. By the time it came to leave I felt familiar with every aspect of the trip I could imagine.

The scenarios I anticipated were typical, situations where things could go horribly wrong (lost luggage, missing a flight, etc.) and practiced different ways I might cope with unexpected or uncomfortable experiences. I created back-up and contingency plans.

The trip to Calgary went as smoothly as I could hope. Our small local airport, just one big room really, was easy to navigate. A place with which I am familiar, there were no hidden surprises, no unexpected twists.

A small over-sight was easily remedied: I had forgotten to put toiletries in clear plastic bags in my carry-on. My daughter scoured the airport until she found a couple of grocery store baggies in the airport-issue dispenser and packed them for me. The security people barely glanced at them.

Calgary proved equally navigable despite its much larger size. I stuck to my plan and easily found the bus to Banff.

continued next page...

I had come a day early in order to settle in, take my time, wander around the village, keep things as relaxed and easy as possible.

The wedding was exquisite. The ceremony took place on an outdoor patio with the Rockies as backdrop. My room over-looked the celebration, so I slipped in and out throughout day and night to pause, take the numerous breaks I needed for information processing, rest, to centre myself, periodically wind down from all the excitement.

After leaving the resort, I was grateful to discover that being in Jane's house again caused me no sad feelings. Buoyed by how easy the trip had been so far, how calm and comfortable I was feeling, I became over-confident about my ability to deal with solo travel – so didn't bother referring to my extensive lists while packing to go home. On the spur of the moment I decided to streamline the process, re-packing in a different way, completely forgetting about the new security rules.

Jane drove me to the airport, coming inside while I checked my bags. It went well enough, although I had difficulty understanding at one point. In stark contrast to what I would later experience with the security people, Jane's interpreter assistance, her calm and reassuring demeanor, diffused my anxiety so I was able to compose myself and focus with reason on answering questions the agent asked.

What stays with me about the Calgary airport departure fiasco is twofold: first, I am not ready to travel completely independently yet. For now I will need to take more thorough steps to protect myself and to support myself responsibly. Perhaps I will always have to travel with a buddy, in a group with people who know me well – I am unsure how that will play out at this point.

The second thing that still resonates is how woefully unprepared to deal with me airport security personnel were. I was shocked and alarmed by their high level of agitation and inability to calmly, reasonably, logically cope with the situation.

When I'm having difficulty I need assistance, not a shoot-out at the OK Corral. While others expect appropriate behaviour from me despite my brain injury deficits, I expect understanding from them. We are each responsible for our actions, despite circumstances or internal issues, so it's no more okay for people in positions of authority to behave aggressively toward me than it is for me to behave so with them.

Until people who deal with the public are better trained to understand the special needs of those who live with the aftermath of brain injury it is up to me to take charge of my situation every time I leave the house. This means that when I travel again I am going to have to take responsibility for the entire situation – a huge burden for me, very stressful and time-consuming and probably not even remotely fair. Nonetheless, it is what it is. We've got a long way to go as a society in terms of suitably recognizing and responding to brain injury. I have no intention of staying inside my house waiting for the rest of the world to catch up with my needs.

The airport fiasco highlighted for me the areas in my life, my self, that needed urgent attention. Consequently, I have spent the last year addressing my reactivity, inability to focus when under stress and loss of overall calm, aligning the way I want to behave in the world with the way I actually do.

While meditation, staying squarely in the moment and breathing through my anxiety have helped immensely, I have also taken steps toward openly acknowledging my brain injury.

I am becoming better at asking for help before things become tense or unravel. Letting people know from the get-go that I require their understanding and assistance often shifts the tone of the situation. In stores, for example, simply saying: "I have a brain injury and may need your help" seems to work well.

While not always successful in the way I'd like, for the most part the support I need is offered. And as it turns out, I have found strength in exposing my vulnerability.

I learned a long time ago that often the only way past the fire is to go through it. I need to put myself in relatively safe situations that have an element of, or potential for, unpredictability; experiment with scenarios,
continued next page...

Dear Diary

one survivors rehabilitation diary

by Cindy Reckzin

A big thank you!!!!

I am a survivor!!

I also need to thank Brenda, Sarah and Bryan D for their visit in the winter (even though I don't remember much of it, although I do remember getting a necklace from Bryan D, it was a cross pendant) as well as when I was released.

My best friend in the world miss mason, she flew up from Florida in the middle of winter only to have to deal with all that snow, and me being in the hospital in the condition I was in, gerry also made a fairly long trip from coburg, my parents, who are just so wonderful, were here every week-end, thanks to my sister karry who drove them from deep river to ottawa Thanks karry!! then there's Tom, the greatest boss and friend in the world, he was here every step of the way , and Brian didn't even lose his job for taking all that time off!, not only that, Tom gave Brian tickets to the Eagles concert!! front and center!!! they were absolutly amazing seats!!!!, Then there's deb, a real good friend, who was looking to quit her job at Wal*Mart, well guess what she was able to do that, I'm so glad I had a part in that, you see I had a conditional release, that was I wasn't to be left alone, or unsupervised, so she gladly took the responsibility, and things have had their moments here, but generally it is working out pretty well thanks also goes to the many patients at the rehab center that helped me out as well as pushed my chair along just so I could get some fresh air outside, (Mike, Craig, Tom, Cliff, these guys also watched the Stanley Cup Playoffs with me), there was also all the bingo nights, which is where I won my George, I just cannot say enough good things about the Ottawa Rehab Center, including outings as groups the tulip festival was incredible, as well as the casino, and they made every effort to include Brian in each of these activities



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behaviours, in order to stretch myself. The only way I am going to learn to navigate my life with a continuing level of independent competency is to take risks.

Each time I put myself out into the world I learn new and necessary things. I document what I have learned so that I can incorporate it into my experience. In this way I am adjusting – allowing my life to become larger again, while also adapting to my new limits. As a result, I am growing increasingly comfortable with who I am now.

Life is a process of becoming, if we let it.

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SUGGESTIONS FOR TRAVEL

- Contact airport security, passenger services or the airline with which you plan to fly. Explain your situation and ask for assistance: Is there someone on staff who can walk through the security check-in with you? Do they have a designated Disability department or staff person? Is there some other way they can help to you navigate their rules? Can a friend/family member/advocate accompany you through security or to boarding?
- Travel with a buddy. Check the airline to find out if they have a 'free seat' or reduced rate policy should you need a support person to accompany you. Make sure you understand all of the airline's requirements before you book your flight.
- Use the Internet. Check pertinent airports' website(s) – what is each one's security/baggage/carry-on requirements? Print this out and keep it with you.
- Whenever you talk on the phone with someone, record the name of the person & the date/time of the call. If corresponding by email, keep a copy of the email.
- Stick to your carefully worked-out plan regardless of how little you feel you need it. Avoid making unnecessary last minute changes. That's the best way to ensure you don't forget important considerations that can derail your peace of mind.
- Consider carrying a business card identifying yourself as a brain injury survivor. Always resistant to publicly identifying myself this way, I am now re-thinking that. Had I handed such a card to the first security officer before she began to check my things, I suspect the entire situation might have been completely different. Another brain injury survivor

recently brought my attention to the following card. I really like it and think that if I do start using it I will also put my doctor's name and contact information on it – both to lend authenticity to the statement as well as to give the recipient someone to call for verification and assistance:

I AM THE SURVIVOR OF A BRAIN INJURY

I may have problems with my memory, speech, balance or actions.

Your help and patience would be appreciated.

Please do not yell at me, talk too fast, move too fast or be aggressive toward me.

TRAVEL TIPS & TEMPLATES

Packing/organizing:

<http://www.braininjuryguide.org/PlannerPages.pdf>

<http://www.webmomz.com/resources-travel-packing-list.shtml>

<http://www.travellerspoint.com/packing-tips.cfm>

<http://www.webfoot.com/travel/tips/tips.top.php>

Travel tips for people with disabilities:

<http://seniorliving.about.com/od/travelsmart/a/disabilities.htm>

www.flyertalk.com/articles/travel-tips/travel-tips-for-people-with-disabilities-and-medical-conditions.html

Summer Fun

...keeping it cool with routine



Summer time is here and that means that school is out and summer vacations & trips to the cottage are here!

No more routine, no more waking up early and rushing off to school, time off from work, and hours on end to frolic in the grass...



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add us as a friend on Facebook to connect, get our postings, and keep current with us
our account is **PRIVATE** and we never give away any of our friends' information

Hmmm... that doesn't sound right for those of us living with children with an ABI, does it? No more school? No more routine?! Remember, many people with ABI thrive on routine- and that's why you may need to make a summer schedule. Here are our tips for making it through the summer:

Transition slowly...

It may be inevitable that your summer schedule will be drastically different than your fall/winter/spring schedule. Try to ease your child into it if you can. For instance, keep your child's sleep schedule the same if possible during the first week of holiday, have them wake up at the same time, get them dressed at the same time, feed them, and send them to bed on time. Slowly allow them to sleep in a little bit later and stay up a little bit longer.

Keep them busy...

Children are busy throughout the school year and need to be kept busy in the summer, too. There is nothing worse than a bored, restless child with nothing to do.

Keep them in a routine...

Routine is key. Try and keep a steady schedule for children throughout the summer.

When August rolls around...

Prepare your child for back to school by giving them plenty of time to get back into the school schedule. Start sending them to bed and waking them up earlier; give them their meals on the school year schedule. This will make hectic September much easier!



Therapeutic HORSEBACK RIDING

by Katie Palmer



Horseback riding is an excellent way to have lots of fun in the outdoors and it also provides great opportunities for individuals to build special bonds with horses – one of the earth’s most majestic creatures. Individuals with disabilities may think that they cannot learn how to horseback ride; however, this is simply not true. Persons with disabilities can enroll in therapeutic horseback riding lessons. Therapeutic horseback riding teaches individuals equestrian skills and horsemanship values. Overall, one of the primary goals of therapeutic riding is to enable individuals with disabilities to ride as independently as possible.

There are lots of benefits to therapeutic riding. For example, according to United Cerebral Palsy, (http://www.ucp.org/ucp_channel.doc.cfm/1/15/11383/11383-11383/2833), therapeutic horseback riding enables individuals with disabilities to enjoy the physical benefits of riding, as well as the socio-emotional benefits of developing relationships with their horses. Some of the socio-emotional benefits include improved self-confidence, improved risk-taking abilities, development of patience, increased self-control, and the expansion of locus of control.

In order to maximize the positive benefits of riding, make sure to also keep in mind important safety tips. First, always wear a helmet. Too many individuals with traumatic brain injuries reinjure themselves by failing to wear protective headgear. Second, remember to also wear the appropriate attire. This means wear closed-toe running shoes or hiking boots, full-length pants, and sleeved shirts. And finally, actively listen to the instructors. They are the ones with the necessary experience and knowledge required to facilitate safe riding. And be sure to have FUN.

choosing the right

General Practitioner



Finding the right doctor is a very important decision for everyone; however, the choice is perhaps even more important for those of us who have had a brain or spinal cord injury. In today's age fewer people have a family doctor, and even if they do they might not be experienced in the area relating to your injury. It is important that you find someone of which is both knowledgeable pertaining to the nature of your injuries and that you can also develop a good rapport with. You can ask for referrals from the medical staff you already know to start your search to find a proper doctor for you. It's a good idea to ask a lot of questions when considering a new doctor, plan ahead and write down your questions so you don't forget.

A starting point for your list of questions might be

- Ask if the doctor is taking new patients
- Inquire about the doctors' office hours
- Inquire about availability in an emergency, or a back-up physician
- Ask about the average wait during appointments
- Ask the number of patients booked per hour
- How long per visit can the doctor spend with you?
- **Ask about the doctors experience with people with your type of injuries**
- **Inquire if the doctor thinks that they are the right candidate to meet your needs and if not, could they refer you to someone else**

It is important to feel comfortable with your doctor. You want to have the feeling that they have enough time to handle your care properly. Remember that your doctor can't spend all day with you and at a moment's notice; however, a healthy balance must exist as to they do have to spend adequate time with you. It is critical to your rehab that your doctor is a good listener and wants to answer all of your questions. As a patient, you need to give as much truthful information to your doctor as possible in order for him/her to treat you to the best of their ability.



A division of Brain Injury Services

Respect Learning Independence



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Therapeutic Groups
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www.braininjuryservices.com
905-523-8852

rehab news

Toronto Rehab researcher's develop insole for seniors to help keep them from falling
(www.torontorehab.ca/news)

Major helmet manufacturer being sued in British Columbia after a boy suffered ABI- remember to be aware of different helmet safety standards and how to wear a helmet properly

Bloorview Kids Rehab brings art and gardening to children in inpatient care (picture below)

Saskatchewan Government posts top 10 reasons not to drink alcohol after an ABI. We have listed some of them here:

- “after a brain injury, drinking alcohol or using other drugs can cause a seizure”
- “people who drink alcohol or use other drugs after a brain injury are more likely to have another brain injury”
- “people who begin or continue using alcohol or other drugs after a brain injury don't recover as quickly or completely”
- “people who have had a brain injury often say or do things without thinking first. This problem is worsened by using alcohol and other drugs”
- “people with brain injury are more likely to feel low or depressed. Drinking alcohol (a depressant) or getting high on other drugs makes depression worse”

The brochure can be found at: <http://www.health.gov.sk.ca/abi-alcohol-drugs>



BOGOROCH & ASSOCIATES

PEACE OF MIND WHEN YOU NEED IT MOST

Nothing is more devastating than being severely injured in a car accident. And when you're least equipped to deal with it, you're suddenly overwhelmed by all the complex legal and insurance issues, standing between you and what you're entitled to. **No one should have to face that alone.**

That's why the most important decision you have to make is choosing the right law firm to help take care of your interests, at the time when you **need it most.**

At **Bogoroch & Associates**, we make protecting your interests our personal commitment to you: to ensure that you and your family obtain **justice**, and **receive all the benefits and compensation you deserve.**

We will move **quickly** and work tenaciously on your behalf: building a solid, successful case and **seeking the best possible settlement**, in the **shortest** amount of time.

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With the leadership and personal involvement of **Richard Bogoroch**, we are committed to earning your confidence and trust, with **clear, direct information** and **straight answers** — to whatever question you have.

That's why choosing **Bogoroch & Associates**, to provide strong, effective and compassionate legal representation, is the right decision for you and your family, to give you **peace of mind when you need it most.**

To find out more about what we can do for you, or arrange for a free consultation at your convenience, please contact us at: info@bogoroch.com

Ask for our **free brochure**, "**What to do in Case of a Car Accident**", available in several languages.

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“As a team Bogoroch and Associates delivered. From the beginning to the end I was treated with the utmost respect ... My medical needs, my rehabilitation and reintegration into the work force were all supported and accounted for...Because of all of you I have been able to continue to enjoy my life and all it offers...
THANK YOU.”

*Mrs. D. Z.
Orangeville, Ontario*

“After our son's very serious car accident, we were so overwhelmed with the tragedy that we didn't know where to look for help. He suffered a severe brain injury and we were advised to look for legal help. We went looking through several larger and smaller litigation companies and we agreed on Bogoroch & Associates because of the clear and direct information, warm atmosphere, and personal involvement of Richard Bogoroch that we received when we first met.”

*The B. Family
Richmond Hill, Ontario*

“Please accept my most sincere gratitude in regards to making my number count and giving me the much needed validation to continue with my journey in overcoming this mysterious illness called fibromyalgia. You are truly the White Knight in shining armor, desperately needed to represent individuals who have these types of illnesses, and most certainly one of the many knights that I have needed to find hope where there was none.”

*M. H.
Brampton, Ontario*

“I really knew I had amazing lawyers once we got into that room. You fought for me and would not back down. I could never articulate how much I appreciate everything you have done for me. I am so grateful for all of your hard work. I count my blessings every day that I found your firm to fight for me.”

*K. C.
Hamilton, Ontario*

NORTHERN PERSPECTIVE

When it comes to Rehab Support Services, there are differences. Big differences.
And they start with Northern Perspective Rehabilitation Services



Rehabilitation and Therapy Support Services

Life Skills Development • Life Skills Training Centre • Special Events and Activities
Caregiver Relief / Respite Services • Therapy Dog • Workshops • Sensation Room
24hr Intensive Treatment Plans • Brain Injury Depression Intervention
Counselling Services

Services Provided at our Centre, in your Home, Online, Phone or Face to Face