

Brain Injury Press

Fourth Quarter 2023, Issue 257

OUR MISSION: to improve the quality of life for brain injury survivors and their families

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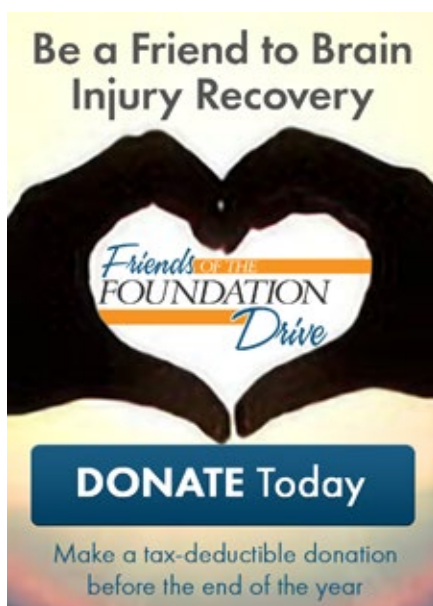
Keeping our community strong—together.

At the end of the year, we like to reminisce on the amazing work we have accomplished together as a community. We raised more awareness and funds during this year's surviveHEADSTRONG than ever before. We started new programs like our Thursday Meet-Ups, Family/Friend/Caregiver Support Group and our Community Forum. Our monthly Saturday Educational meetings have provided valuable information to our community. After 3 years, the SDBIF Friendraiser was a wonderful gathering of professionals, survivors and other friends of brain injury recovery. All this takes time, effort and dedication from our staff, collaborators and most of all you—the Friends of SDBIF.

This year's Friends of the Foundation Drive is focused on educating the public on all the programs and services we offer and fundraising to keep these programs and services going. We ask you to help us spread the word about all that we do and help us raise the vital funds for these offerings. You can do this in many ways, such as:

- **EDUCATE!** Teach your network of people about the services, programs and resources SDBIF offers.
- **ADVOCATE!** Raise awareness in your community about the needs of brain injury survivors.
- **COLLABORATE!** SDBIF needs you help to produce more resources and services for our community.

continued on next page



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Friends of the Foundation
Drive (continued)

- **CELEBRATE!** Every achievement needs to be shared and admired—to support each other AND raise awareness.
- **DONATE!** Whether \$5 or \$5000, every dollar goes directly back to helping our survivors and their friends and families.

Your gifts help SDBIF continue to serve our wonderful (and expanding) brain injury community. SDBIF offers many programs free-of-charge for our survivors and their families like our Helpline, Brain Injury Guide for Families, educational speaker meetings, scholarships, Day of Art, support groups for families, friends and survivors, and much, much, more.

Please consider being a Friend of the Foundation and DONATE today. We thank you all for supporting us and the work we do.

Below are a few ways your money goes directly to helping those affected by brain injury. **Be a friend of brain injury recovery and make a donation today, or share this with your network to raise awareness!**

ADVOCATE



\$15

Provides funding for 30 minutes of the SDBIF telephone helpline service to all those in need—we are here for you!

HERO



\$50

Pays for 1 hour of personalized resource consultation assessment and service for a brain injury survivor.

CHAMPION



\$25

Allows us to give away the SDBIF book, “Journey to Recovery—A Brain Injury Guide for Families” free-of-charge.

LEGEND



\$100

Funds our community programs, like: Monthly Saturday Meetings, Support Grps, Monthly Meet-Ups, Community Forums and more!

A Message from SDBIF’s Exec.
Director, Dr. Roslyn Knox



Hello Brain Injury Community!

I hope this message finds you in good health and high spirits. It’s with immense pleasure that I share with you the latest happenings and developments within the San Diego Brain Injury Foundation (SDBIF).

Our 2023 Friendraiser event was a resounding success, thanks to the incredible turnout of community professionals who joined us to network and show their support for the vital work we do to enhance services and activities for brain injury survivors. It was a testament to the strength of our community and the growing recognition of the importance of our mission. We’re deeply grateful to everyone who participated and contributed to this memorable occasion.

As we approach the end of the year, it’s time to celebrate together in the spirit of the holiday season. SDBIF is eagerly preparing for our annual Christmas celebration, a time when we come together to shine a spotlight on our inspiring survivors and recognize the unwavering supporters of SDBIF. This event is a heartwarming reminder of the incredible resilience of the brain injury community and the generosity of our supporters. Join us on December 16 (more information in the events section).

We’re also excited to announce that we are gearing up for the 2024 surviveHEADSTRONG Walk for Recovery. Last year’s turnout was our biggest to date, and we’re determined to make next year’s event even larger. Stay tuned for updates on our website and social media to stay “in the know” about this and other social engagement activities that we’ll be hosting in collaboration with our community partners.

In our continued commitment to serve our entire community, we’re proud to introduce a virtual Community Forum for North County survivors, caregivers, and providers. We want to emphasize that SDBIF is not limited to San Diego; we are also a part of the North County and Inland Empire regions. We provide resource services and virtual support meetings, working diligently to connect you with essential resources that will aid your recovery journey.

Moreover, SDBIF is dedicated to expanding our reach and providing resources and services for the Hispanic community and other under-served populations. We have materials available in both Spanish and English, and we’re proud to have multilingual Resource Consultants and volunteers who are here to assist brain injury survivors and their caregivers in improving access to care and services. This commitment to inclusivity is at the heart of our mission, and we look forward to making an even greater impact within these communities.

This year has been one of growth, resilience, and community support. As we look ahead to the coming year, we are filled with anticipation and excitement for the possibilities it holds. Together, we can make an even greater impact, bringing hope, support, and recovery to all those affected by brain injuries.

Thank you for being an integral part of the SDBIF family. Your continued involvement and support empower us to reach new heights.



The 20th Annual Friendriaser—3-Years in the Making—was a Beautiful Gathering!

It's hard to believe that it was three years ago that we were last able to gather for the SDBIF Friendraiser! Though our 20th Annual celebration had to be put on hold until this year, it was like no time had passed at all—over 100 friends of brain injury recovery gathered to reconnect, network and celebrate the achievements of survivors.

Mission Trails Regional Park was as beautiful as ever. Attendees were greeted to the beautiful melodies of the harp and hand-made flutes of Jon and Sabine Sherman of the Dryad Flutes. A beautiful sunset turned into a perfect, clear evening for star gazing through George Varga's high-powered telescope.

Old friends got to catch-up and new friendships were made. Inspirational artwork created by some of our survivors was on display for all to admire.

All while participants also bid on auction items, tasted local wines and listened to the amazing music of Tyler Stamets and Jon Hasz.

Besides the artwork of our survivors a big hit of the evening was the photo booth sponsored by Thorson Law Group. We want to express our gratitude to Thorson for sponsoring it. You can see the photos from the booth [HERE](#).

We couldn't have made this event happen without all of our volunteers—please know how much we appreciated all of you.

We look forward to seeing more of you at next year's event on **September 28, 2024**. Thank you again to all who participated and helped support SDBIF and our efforts to make a difference in the lives of our survivors and their families!

A BIG Thank You to Our Sponsors



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& Support Services



Our Brain Injury Survivor Artists, as always, were inspiring—sharing their artwork and stories of recovery. Thank you!

Deborah Consaul
Christina Hardy
Megan Hurley
Sam Laisure

Stevie McCarley
Kurt Rotzinger
Alana Shipman
Linda Stamets

Thank you to EVERY participant, sponsor, and supporter for making our 20th Annual Friendraiser such a special night!







See more photos in the
SDBIF Facebook Gallery
CLICK HERE



surviveHEADSTRONG 2024 is Around the Corner—Get Excited & Get Your Teams Ready!

It's going to be hard to out-do the success of surviveHEADSTRONG 2023, but we have the community who will make it happen! Come join us on **Saturday, March 23, 2024** as we celebrate Brain Injury Awareness Month.



Just as it has been for the last 17 years, the 2024 surviveHEADSTRONG will be hosted at **Mission Bay Park De Anza Cove**.

The Health Fair, and Check-in/Walk-up Registration will open at 8am. Once your whole team is there, head over to **get your team's photo taken** with this year's event banner. Be sure to check out all the different resources being shared at the Health Fair!

At 9am, warm-ups will begin on the hill next to the Start-Finish line. Around **9:15am, it will be time for everyone to gather at the Starting Line for the walk to start.**

Once you cross the Finish Line, help us celebrate the remaining participants as they complete their course. Or, if you missed some of the Health Fair exhibitors before the walk...not to worry, check them out when you are done. They



will be around to hand out small give-aways, information and answer questions.

Around noon, the Raffle will start. Everyone who registers will get a raffle ticket—so stick around, there will be some great gifts given out!

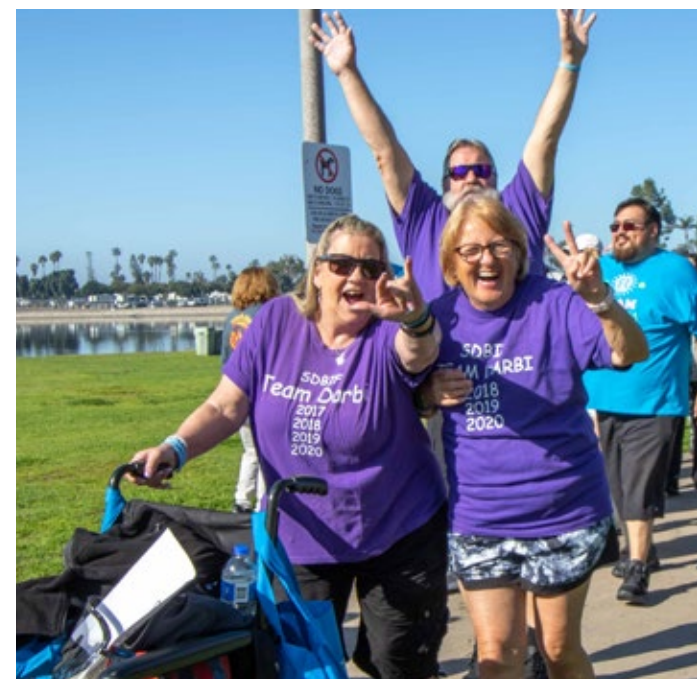
There will be sooooo much to do and enjoy! And we want YOU ALL there with your friends,



family and teams to make this the biggest celebration yet! Together, we are one, unified voice raising awareness for brain injury recovery.

So, create your teams or register with one. Then share your page with friends and family and ask them to be a part of YOUR celebration.

Even if someone cannot be at the event, have them donate to help you reach your →





fundraising goal...OR have them send you a video message of support...then share that with SDBIF! We want to show our network is vast and strong, but we need your help to do this.

Yes, the amount of money we raise is important, but really, this event is so special because

we get to unite as a community to celebrate EVERYONE's journey to recovery from brain injury.

So, let's start building buzz and excitement for what we anticipate to be the biggest and best surviveHEADSTRONG yet!



Create Your Team or Register for sH24 today!
CLICK HERE

Interested in doing more? Sponsor sH24!
CLICK HERE

Want to be an Exhibitor at the Health Fair?
CLICK HERE

Can't attend, but want to support us? Donate now!
CLICK HERE



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Personal Injury

If you or a loved one has suffered a traumatic brain injury, you may have legal remedies available to you. These can include money for medical expenses, long-term medical care and rehabilitation, lost wages, pain, suffering and emotional distress. Brain injuries are often difficult to prove, and require the experience and expertise of a qualified brain injury attorney.

Social Security Disability

The Social Security Administration (SSA) is governed by complicated rules and regulations. To understand them, you need to speak SSA language. In California and across the country, the SSA denies more than half (about 65%) of all initial applications for disability benefits. We understand how important it is to present a claim correctly from the outset, and your chances of obtaining benefits improve with the help of an experienced disability attorney.

To receive a FREE case review from an experienced attorney, please call:
(619) 338-9000 or toll-free (877) 700-3994

Howard House Gets Some Updates

Exciting things are happening at the Howard House, our residential home for dependent brain injury survivors. **We are bringing new life and energy to the home by fully renovating inside and out.**

The SDBIF was granted the home in 1986 to care for brain injury survivors that need level 4 and 5 care. Since that time we have provided a safe haven of care for 8 residents. We believe that residents deserve the best care and environment available to them, and we work to provide exactly that!

This fall we began updates and renovations to include a new heating and air unit, new appliances, and landscaping. We are creating an oasis patio and pool area, new activity room, painting and updating kitchen, dining, reading and TV rooms. The residents' rooms are each being painted and modernized with new furnishings and décor. The changes are already brightening our resident's daily outlook. The deck that wraps around the home and provides some of the best views of sunrises and sunsets over the mountains, is being refreshed and will feature calming sitting areas.

This beautiful home would be incomplete without ensuring that we provide experienced, qualified care. We are increasing brain injury training and continue to bring on quality administrative and support staff and therapists.

Lastly, as the holidays near, we are introducing the **Circle of Friends Tree**. You will be able to pull an angel from the tree, in person or virtually, to give a gift "from a friend" to a resident.

From the Residents and Howard House Team, we wish you Happy Holidays!



SDSD Launches Blue Envelope Program

The San Diego Sherriff Department has partnered with SDBIF and other organizations in San Diego County to launch the Blue Envelope Program (BEP).

The purpose of the program is to create a relationship between officers and citizens that are affected with a challenge, that let officers know that you may need an additional level of patience due to your injury. The program plans to expand to include all EMS personnel in 2024.

There are various blue envelope items that discretely identifies you as a participant of the program. Items include: stickers, lanyards, keychains, seatbelt covers, phone holders, ribbons, bracelets, and ID cards, along with a blue envelope that you can hand to officers.

You can participate in the program whether you drive, walk, board, or use public transportation.



Participants can pick up items at the SDBIF main office by appointment on Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:00am – 4:00pm. Items are free-of-charge and no registration is needed.

Every brain injury survivor should feel safe, calm and heard when interacting with officers. SDBIF is proud to be part of a program that provides resources and tools to improve your quality of life.

If you would like more information about the BEP **[CLICK HERE](#)**.

Join us at the SDBIF Holiday Party on Saturday, December 16, from 10-Noon, In-Person & on Zoom

We are excited to host our Holiday party at the new In-Person location, while simultaneously being broadcasted on Zoom!

There will be music, singing, good food, goodie bags for brain injury survivors, smiles and lots of fun to be had! So, join SDBIF and a bunch of your brain injury community friends for some fun-filled hours of holiday cheer!

See page 19 for the In-Person location and Zoom link details.



COMMUNITY NEWS

SDBIF Saturday Meeting Recaps & Video Links

JANUARY
2023



Social Security Benefits & Work Incentives

Aleyda Toruno
WIPA Project Director,
Disability Rights California

[▶ WATCH THE VIDEO NOW](#)

AUGUST
2023




Aging in Place—Recovery from TBI at Home

Darlene Pidgeon
MBA, RN, CAPS
Founder, Castle Maven

[▶ WATCH THE VIDEO NOW](#)

FEBRUARY
2023




Neurofeedback as a Treatment for Brain Injury

Divya Kakaiya, Ph.D.
Healthy Within

[▶ WATCH THE VIDEO NOW](#)

OCTOBER
2023



Adaptive Sailing for Brain Injury Survivors

Daniel Willan
Director Community Outreach,
Challenged Sailors San Diego

[▶ WATCH THE VIDEO NOW](#)

APRIL
2023




Mild TBI Post-Concussive Syndrome

Chloe Green Ph.D.
William Bernaldo, PT, DPT, NCS
Katie Bell, OTD, OTR/L, CBIS
Empower NeuroRehab

[▶ WATCH THE VIDEO NOW](#)

NOVEMBER
2023




Vision Changes & Rehab for TBI Survivors

Dr. Justin Matsuura
San Diego Center for Vision Care

[▶ WATCH THE VIDEO NOW](#)

JULY
2023



SDCCD Acquired Brain Injury Program

Rosa Monzon, M.S., CRC
Counselor & Instructor
SDCCD ABI Program

[▶ WATCH THE VIDEO NOW](#)

Want to see all of SDBIF's videos?

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COMMUNITY NEWS

SDBIF & Community Upcoming Events

SDBIF EVENTS

December ZOOM Family & Friends Support Grp
Friday, December 8, 2023 from 2-3:30 pm (PST)
Only 15 spaces are available—[REGISTER HERE](#)

December ZOOM Survivor Peer Support Grp
Friday, December 15, 2023 from 2-3:30 pm (PST)
Only 15 spaces are available—[REGISTER HERE](#)

 **December Saturday Mtg—Holiday Party!!**
Saturday, December 16, from 10-Noon (PST)
ZOOM: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5019416338>
NEW IN-PERSON: San Diego Writers Ink office
in Liberty Station, 2730 Historic Decatur Rd #204,
San Diego, CA 92106

January ZOOM Family & Friends Support Grp
Friday, January 12, 2023 from 2-3:30 pm (PST)
Only 15 spaces are available—[REGISTER HERE](#)

January Saturday Speaker Series Meeting
Saturday, January 20, from 10-Noon (PST)
ZOOM: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5019416338>
NEW IN-PERSON: San Diego Writers Ink office
in Liberty Station, 2730 Historic Decatur Rd #204,
San Diego, CA 92106

January ZOOM Survivor Peer Support Grp
Friday, January 26, 2023 from 2-3:30 pm (PST)
Only 15 spaces are available—[REGISTER HERE](#)

****NEW IN-PERSON SATURDAY MEETING LOCATION****
SD Writers Ink Office
Arts District of Liberty Station, Barracks 16
2730 Historic Decatur Rd #204
San Diego, CA 92106

3RD-PARTY PARTNER EVENTS

ALVARADO / PALS MEETINGS
MORE INFO: alvaradohospital.com/pals
(619) 229-7362

Online Aphasia Class—Mondays @ 10 am (PST)
Art Class—1st & 3rd Wednesday @ 2 pm (PST)
Clay Class—2nd & 4th Wednesday @ 2 pm (PST)

NEUROLAB 360
MORE INFO: neurolab360.com/free-services
(760) 704-8237

In-Person CogFit Group—1st Wed @ 10:45 am
In-Person Adaptive Yoga—1st & 3rd Wed @ 12 pm

In-Person & Online Aphasia Group—2nd & 4th
Friday @ 11 am

SCRIPPS STROKE & BRAIN INJURY
MORE INFO: Deborah Pimstone, 760-633-6709
pimstone.deborah@scrippshealth.org

In-Person & Online Survivors & Loved Ones
Support Group, 2nd & 4th Tuesdays, 2:30-3:45 pm





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Ten Years in the Making— Donovan Cronkhite’s Story of Brain Injury Recovery

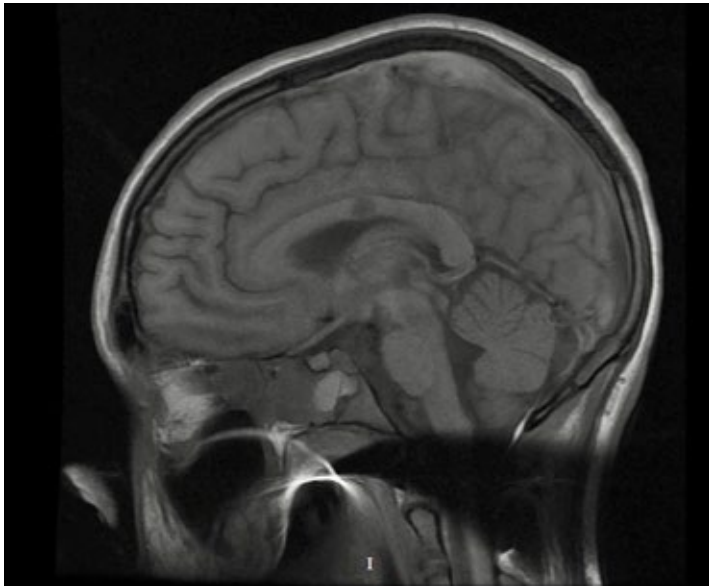
Written By Donovan Cronkhite
for neuwritesd.org on October 12, 2023

10 years ago, I was in a medically induced coma. On life support, my life rested in the hands of the incredible staff at Rady Children’s Hospital, San Diego (RCHSD). On October 8th, 2013, I suffered a severe traumatic brain injury due to a suicide attempt: I had jumped 3 stories from the parking garage at Parkway Plaza Mall here in San Diego. In previous articles, I have mentioned aspects of my injury and the epilepsy that resulted from it as it related to the topics of the articles. In this article, however, I will be centering the discussion of severe traumatic brain injury (TBI) around some of the ways in which it has affected me. Welcome to my life.



SEVERE TBI

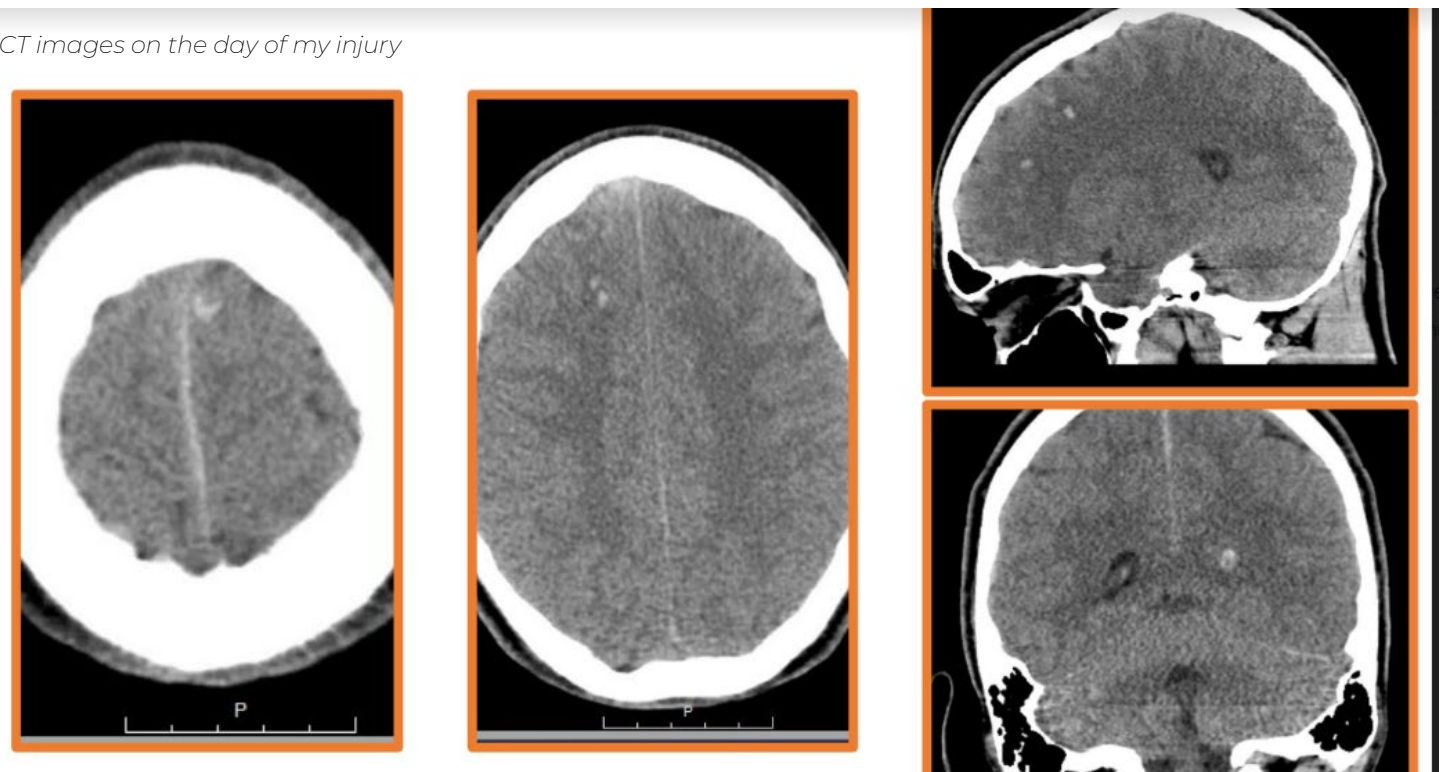
Of the 16 diagnoses I had upon admission to the emergency department at RCHSD, the most significant was a diffuse axonal injury (DAI). A DAI is a type of severe TBI that results from a process known as shearing in the brain. Shearing occurs when the two hemispheres of the brain shift contralaterally—moving in opposite directions along the mid-section of the brain, known as the corpus callosum. As its Latin name, Callous Body, implies, the corpus callosum is a thick structure connecting the two hemispheres; it is comprised of the axons of many, many neurons, which make communication between the hemispheres possible. Shearing breaks up these axons, injuring the neurons connecting the hemispheres and resulting in widespread damage within the brain.



MRI taken a few weeks after my injury

Here I have some CT and MRI images taken soon after my injury. The blurred parts of the MRI image towards the center show evidence of shearing. In addition, the bright white portions of the CT images represent accumulations of blood, known

as hemorrhages. These also contributed to the extent of my injury. Had the emergency staff not implanted what is known as an intracranial pressure cup (ICP) to relieve the pressure from the excess fluid within my cranial cavity, my brain



would have been displaced and squished down by the fluid, and the extent of my injury would have been much worse, potentially even fatal.

SPASTICITY

Sustaining a severe TBI has many consequences, which include physical disabilities, difficulties with sensory processing, cognitive impairments, and behavioral disorders. A common physical limitation that occurs after DAI is known as spasticity, or an abnormal increase in muscle tone and stiffness, which results in rigid movements and can cause issues with ambulation (walking), speech, and swallowing, and may have some discomfort/pain involved. In an individual with spasticity, their muscles remain contracted and stiff, and resist being stretched (2). Spasticity is caused by damage to neural pathways responsible for muscle movement and coordination.

Treatments for spasticity range from therapy to muscle relaxant medications, such as Baclofen. Baclofen is prescribed orally for patients with spasticity, but to get desirable effects in some

people, higher doses must be used sometimes. However, higher doses of baclofen taken orally usually have side effects such as feeling sleepy, tired, dizzy or weak, feeling nauseous, headaches, blurred vision, and problems sleeping (3). For those who require higher doses to treat their spasticity, an alternative delivery method is available, which is to use a surgically implanted pump to continuously supply the spinal cord with Baclofen, allowing for the use of higher doses without side effects. Known as an intrathecal baclofen pump, this device is a round implant about the size of a hockey puck used to store about 6 months’ worth of medication, and it delivers it to the spinal cord intrathecally—in the cerebrospinal fluid that fills the space between the spinal cord and the tissue that surrounds it—via a catheter. Baclofen relaxes the constant contraction of the muscles, so this method of treatment helps restore fluidity in the individual’s movements and eases the tone in their muscles. However, not everyone can go through with this surgery (such as myself). Actually, I had a surgical injection of Baclofen a few weeks ago (09/26/2023) to test if it would work for me before going through with →

BRAIN INJURY IN THE NEWS

Adult Upper Limb Spasticity



Flexed elbow



Clenched fist



Flexed wrist

Adult Lower Limb Spasticity



Equinovarus foot



Plantar flexed foot/ankle



Flexed toes

the implantation of the device. Results: it helped somewhat, but the side effects of the surgery itself (lumbar puncture) were severe enough that I'd rather not go through that again. I've gone 10 years without it, and all the while graduated from high school with honors and UCSD with a bachelor's degree in Cognitive Science, I think I can function perfectly okay without it.

Recently, however, advancement in the treatment of spasticity has used Botox injections in regions affected. Because botox relaxes muscles, it helps relieve the stiffness caused by the constant contracture to aid in movement. This is why Botox is used by people who want to look younger, by relaxing the muscles, you are reducing wrinkling of the skin (when I told one of my teachers in high school I was going to have Botox injections in my legs, he joked around and said I'm going to

make my legs look younger).The effects of botox injections used to treat spasticity last about three months (at least from my personal experience).

COGNITION AND BEHAVIOR

A patient's cognitive abilities and behavior following a brain injury are something taken into account when physicians go to assess a patient's likelihood and degree of recovery (prognosis). Many different effects on cognition and behavior can occur, and one behavioral side effect from severe TBI is known as neuroagitation, which, as I will mention, can actually give us insight into the mental state and recovery of a patient.

Neuroagitation refers to disorders of consciousness caused by severe traumatic brain injuries usually early on following their injury, shortly after emerging from a coma. These disorders of consciousness,

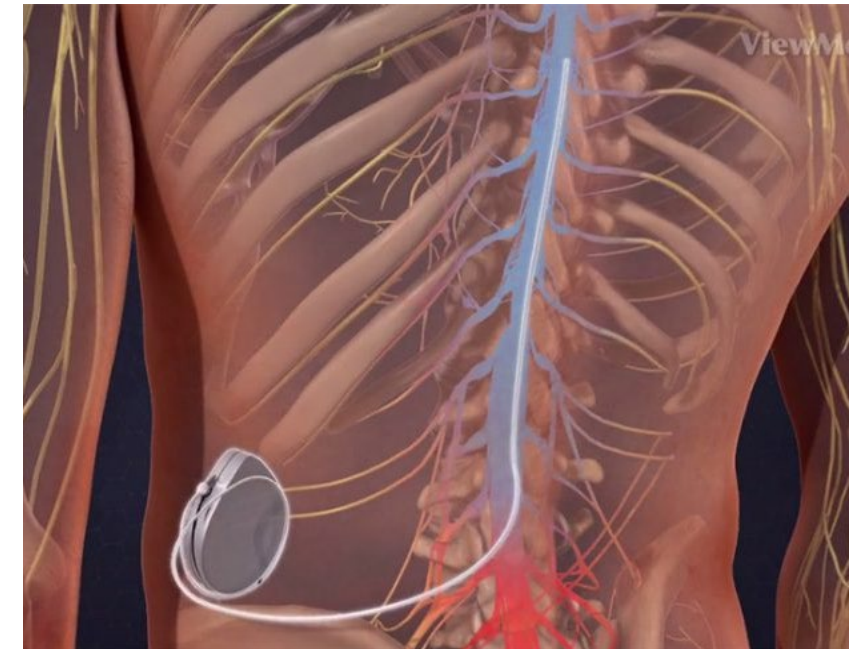
BRAIN INJURY IN THE NEWS

oddly enough, are usually good signs. They represent one of the first signs of returning of consciousness in a comatose patient. Research has evaluated the link between neuroagitation and the recovery of consciousness following severe TBI, as these behaviors represent goal-directed behaviors, rather than the non-purposeful movements sometimes encountered in patients in comatose states.

Now, here is a funny story that I tell all the time, and though it's a story I tell just as something funny, it does have value and actually meant a lot about my state of mind at the time. As I said earlier, I was in a medically induced coma around this time last year, when I was in the pediatric intensive care unit (PICU) at RCHSD, for about a month. They had started weaning me off of the sedative medications that kept me in this coma, and one day what would be my future rehabilitation doctor came in to assess my eligibility for the severe TBI rehabilitation program. He gave a dire prognosis: that I would never be able to speak or move again. What he did not know, however, was that I was hearing every word he said, because I was completely aware. As my mom told me, I began to cry (my long-term memory formation was not engaged yet at this point, so I don't remember this).

The next time the doctor came in to do rounds (Can you look at me? Can you lift your arm? Can you lift your leg?), I completely ignored him. After seeing this, and after the doctor left, my mom rushed to me, "Donovan, were you mad at him?" At the time, I could not speak. However, we had devised a system for me to communicate: for yes, I would raise my left arm, and for no, I would raise my left leg (I could only move the left side of my body at this point). So, I raised my left arm in response "Donovan, that's the head of rehab! You have to show him what you can do!"

After pleading with the doctor, my mom was



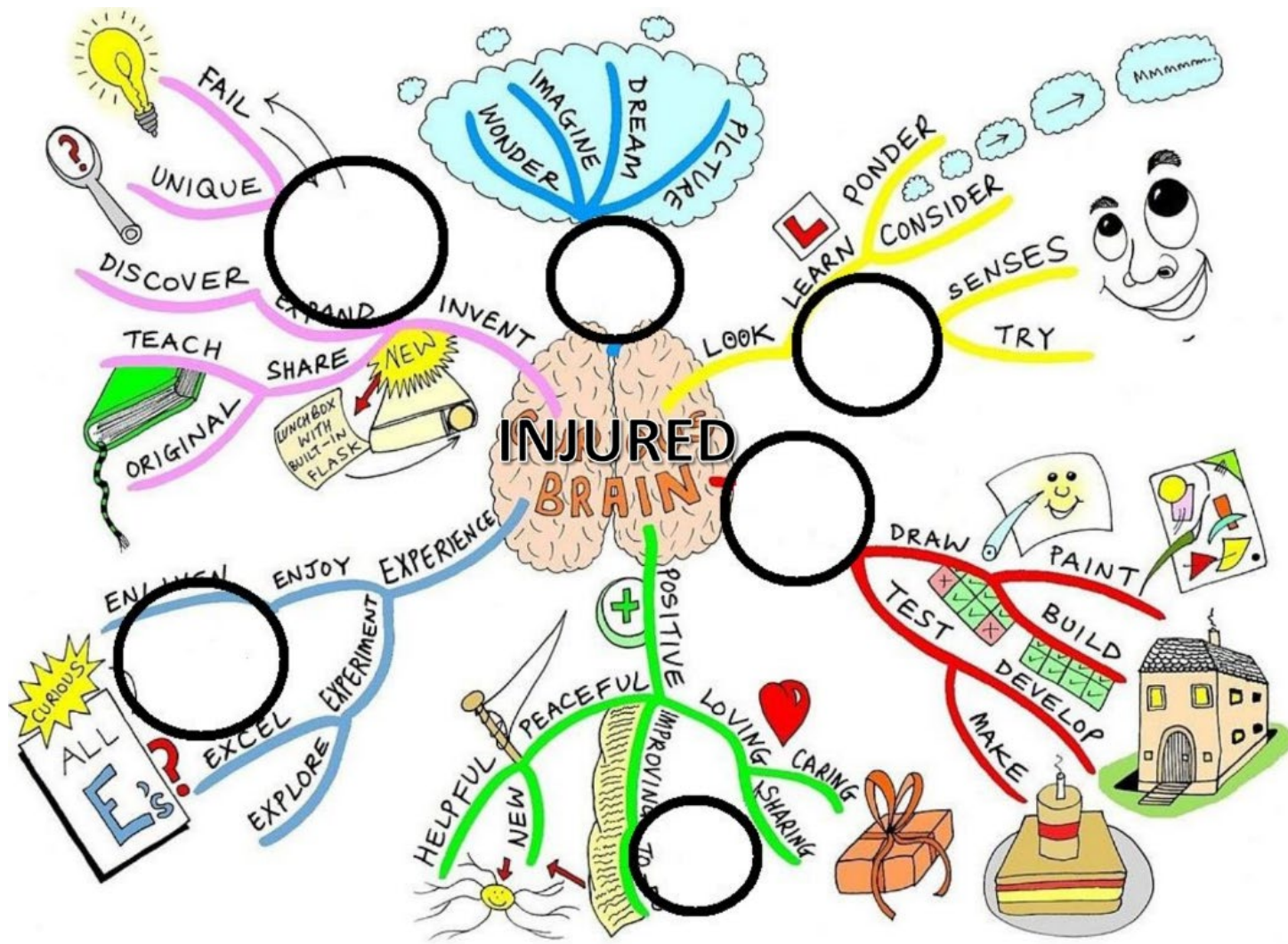
able to get him to come back into the room and repeat the exam: "Can you look at me?" My eyes dart towards him. "Can you raise your arm?" My left arm flops up. "Can you lift your leg?" I briefly raise my left arm. Continuing, this time he asks me, "Now, can you hold up a finger for me?" to determine fine motor coordination. I think you can imagine what finger an angry teenager would hold up. Yes, I flipped off the head of rehab at RCHSD. The room erupted in laughter, including from the doctor who I had just flipped off.

Funny story aside, as discussed earlier, this meant much more than showing the angsty teenager that I was. By displaying an agitated response and a purposeful movement, it indicated my level of consciousness, or rather, that my consciousness was still there. That I was still there.

TIME IS FUNCTION

For traumatic brain injuries, a slogan is used to describe recovery prospects: "Time is Function". This is to say that the sooner the brain-injured patient gets into recovery and rehabilitation, the greater their prospects for recovery of function are. This is because the brain's natural healing →

BRAIN INJURY IN THE NEWS



process, known as neuroplasticity, is greatest early on in recovery. Neuroplasticity is the brain's ability to respond to the environment and stimuli it receives, and "rewire" itself accordingly. In rehabilitation, continued recovery of function is possible by repetitive performance of exercises that promote the strengthening of the proper neural circuits. Therefore, the reverse is also true: the longer it takes for the patient to enter recovery and rehabilitation, the worse their prospects for recovery are.

Speaking of which, following brain injury, there is a general pattern of recovery that most brain-injured patients follow, timewise. The slogan time is function still applies here, but based on how

long it has been since the injury, we can predict what we can expect for recovery progression. For the first 3 months following a brain injury, we see daily improvements in the patient's condition. 3-6 months: weekly improvements. 6-12 months: monthly improvements. Then, greater than 12 months after injury, spontaneous improvements start to diminish. Once patients reach the 2-year mark post-injury, spontaneous recovery generally ceases. However, this does not mean the individual is stuck like they are at that point forever. What I mean by saying spontaneous recovery is that improvements due purely to the passing of time cease. Improvements can still be accomplished by going to therapy and strengthening the desired neural circuits by continual practice. This is

BRAIN INJURY IN THE NEWS

because your brain's neural plasticity never ceases: it's how we do so many things in our day-to-day lives, even if you are not brain-injured. Learning, making new memories, making associations, and forming habits, all require a plastic brain.

CONCLUSION

Now, what I have covered in this article is only beginning to scratch the surface of the consequences of TBI, and it has only begun to scratch the surface of the story of my recovery. Not only is every brain injury unique, given the complex structure of the brain and the myriad of ways in which it can be injured but the severity of an injury can vary greatly determined by certain factors at the time of injury as well. The severity of

an injury and these other factors also determine the consequences of the brain injury.

Although I have a jovial and cavalier attitude throughout this article, I would be remiss if I were not to underscore the importance of our awareness of the consequences of TBI, because TBI can and does affect so many people's lives—tens of millions per year, actually. Not only does it leave many with lifelong disabilities, but a sizeable portion of those who suffer TBIs die because of it. In fact, approximately 70% of pediatric trauma-related deaths are from severe TBIs. This being said, it is imperative that we spread more awareness of the consequences of TBI, and bolster prevention efforts. We owe it to our brains.



About the Author Donovan Cronkhite

After sustaining his brain injury, Donovan was determined to prove his resilience. With the prognosis that he was never expected to speak and move again, he has been a source of inspiration for others through public speaking and continues to show that anything is possible.

He has volunteered with the San Diego Brain Injury Foundation for many years in various capacities. He was even one of SDBIF's featured artists at their annual Friendraiser in 2018 and 2019.

His artwork gave him an outlet to express his creative side while using brain injury as a central focus in his artwork.

Beyond his artistic and public speaking endeavors, Donovan graduated from UCSD with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Cognitive Science with a specialization in neuroscience. Proving, again, that his brain injury does not define him, but pushes him to achieve even more.

Now, he is concentrating his love for neuroscience and commitment to educate and raise awareness for brain injury into his freelance writing for both non-scientific and scientific audiences. To read more of his articles, [CLICK HERE](#).

If you would like to get in touch with Donovan, you can find him on [LinkedIn](#), or you can reach out to SDBIF at info@sdbif.org.



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