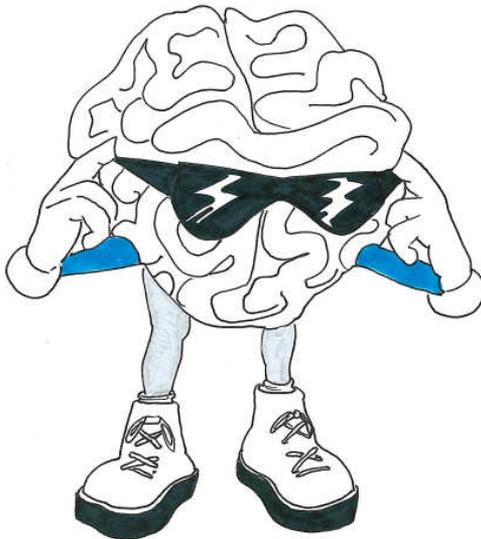


“Is This Normal?”

Expectations after Traumatic Brain Injury
and Helpful Tips



A guide developed by:
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Training Center on Community
Integration of Persons with
Traumatic Brain Injury

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Houston, TX

Expectations after TBI

After Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), most survivors (patients) and caregivers are ill-equipped to handle the path which lies ahead.

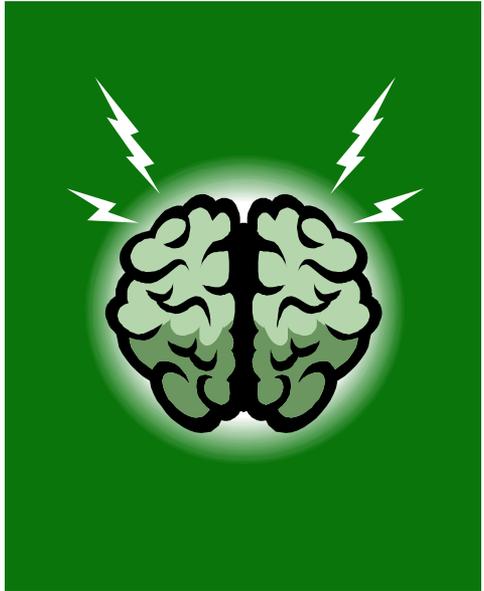
This booklet is intended to help the survivor and caregiver understand common problems and give helpful tips for success in recovery.

Enjoy!

Expectations after TBI

Most survivors of TBI have a variation of the following problems:

- Behavior/Psychological
- Role Changes
- Loss of Social Network
- Memory Problems



Behavioral/Psychological

Labile emotions challenge the TBI survivor and caregiver.

- Anger
- Fear
- Frustration
- Depression



Behavioral/Psychological

Anger



- Confusion
- Helplessness
- Misunderstood
- Treated as Invisible
- Loss of Control
- Lack of Contribution to family

Fear



- No improvement
- Ridicule from Outsiders
- Rejection
- Making Mistakes
- Relapse
- Themselves

Frustration



- Anger
- Fear
- Speech
- Inability to Control Body
- Memory Loss
- Physical Pain

Depression



- Why Me
- Isolation
- Loss of relationships-- friends and family
- Never be the Same
- Never get Better
- Worthlessness

Role Changes

- Inability to continue performing same duties in life.
- Unable to perform stereotypical functions:
 - Father
 - Breadwinner
 - Protector
 - Mother
 - Run Household
 - Nurturer
- Loss of self—no longer able to work or drive.
- Not able to care for children—instead need caregiver for survivor.
- Caregiver with dual roles of breadwinner and support system.



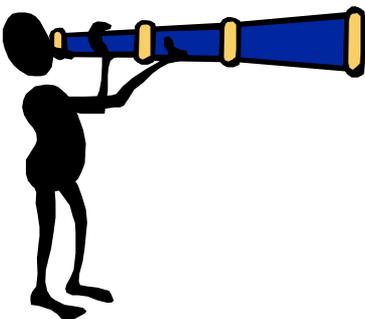
Loss of Social Network

- Friends and family are unsure how or what to say or do.
- Some friends and family are unable to handle all the changes a survivor must endure.
- Some friends and family are able to persevere and some disappear.
 - Friends
 - Fearful of the unknown
 - Uncertainty of survivors condition
 - Not able to cope with changes in survivor
 - Survivors
 - Inability to do things as before TBI
 - Lack of mobility and accessibility
 - Changes in speech
 - Changes in communication skills



Memory Problems

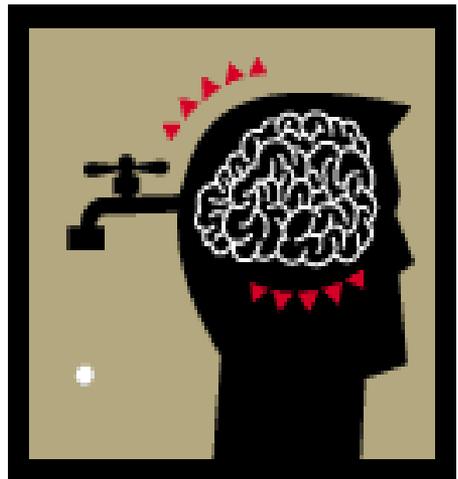
- ❑ Most survivors will go through 'Post Traumatic Amnesia'.
- ❑ Most will not recall the time spent in coma or facts leading to injury.
- ❑ Memory loss can involve long and short term memory; however, short term memory is usually most effected.
- ❑ It is difficult to remember conversations and details.
- ❑ Most survivors require 24 hour supervision during the initial phases of recovery secondary to the memory problems.
- ❑ Supervision is necessary for many reasons:
 - Turning off stove/oven
 - Falls/Imbalance



- Leaving home
- Taking Medications
- Productivity and Moral

Memory Problems

- Depending on the location of injury, the survivor may have physical as well as cognitive deficiencies.
- Physical, occupational, speech and cognitive therapy will be needed for recovery.
- Relearning how to do just about everything.
 - Walk
 - Talk
 - Swallow
 - Write
 - Read
 - Drive
- It's like growing up all over again.



Helpful Tips

- Keep a positive attitude
- Give the Survivor DAILY praise
- Laughter is essential
- Prayer works miracles
- Remember, the medical team is there to help the survivor recover, but only the survivor and God can make things happen.
- Keep the survivor involved in routine outings
 - Church
 - Visiting Family and Friends
 - Support Groups
 - Volunteer
 - Church, Hospitals, Community Service Projects
- Avoid put-downs or demeaning language and avoid people who treat the survivor in such a way.
- Get involved early with the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services.
- Attend Cognitive Therapy
 - Learn coping mechanisms and strategies
- Treat the survivor with dignity and respect.
- Remember they hear all that you say; talk directly with them even if they cannot respond.
- Have patience—recovery is individualized to each survivor—not one in the same.



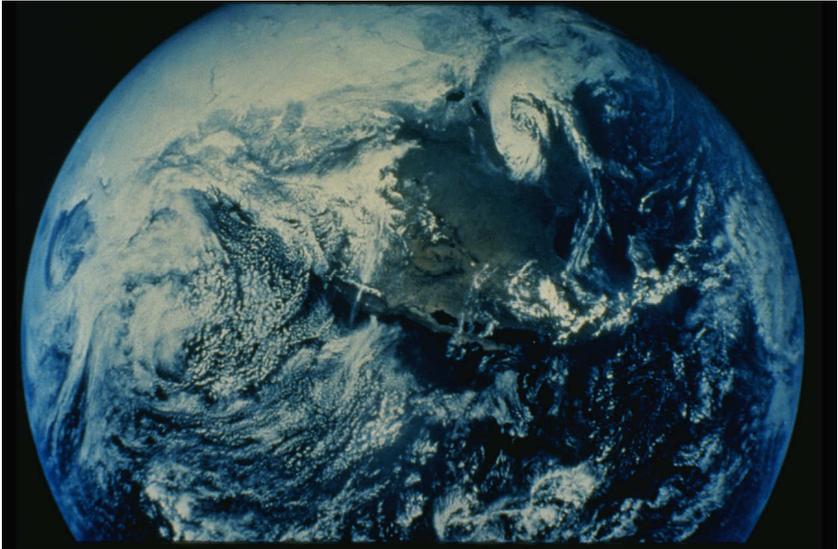
REMEMBER!



The Beginning...

- In most cases the booklet would conclude with “THE END”, in this case it is the beginning.

- Jason Ferguson TBI Survivor/Husband
- Susannah Ferguson Caregiver/Wife



Look at Me

Look at me on the inside,

I have nothing to hide.

Don't judge me for my appearance,

Honor my perseverance.

I didn't want to be put in this light,

And I won't go down without a fight.

Tell me that I can't accomplish something and I'll tell

you to go to hell,

Maybe not with words but with actions you can tell.

I just want to be happy can't you see,

We're all the same on the inside

Just minor discrepancies

Look at me for who I really am,

Look at me.

Peace, Jason Ferguson

Helpful Information

- www.biausa.org
- www.biatx.org
- www.tirr.org
- www.dars.state.tx.us
- www.tbicommunity.org

For additional copies of this pamphlet,
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This work was partially supported by funds from the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research in the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services in the U.S. Department of Education. Grant #H133B031117

