

IMPACT



PATHWAYS AHEAD
DECEMBER 2016



HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM BRAIN INJURY CANADA

Dr. Norman Doidge – My Hero and Doctor of Hope!



On October 27, 2016 there was a feature on The Nature of Things on CBC about Dr. Norman Doidge and his research and book about The Brains Way of Healing.

For anyone who has experienced a brain trauma, Dr. Doidge provides hope and has changed the verbiage surrounding brain trauma like:

- “this is as good as it gets” or
- “the brain does not heal” or
- “no, we don’t have a treatment for autism that works”

and changes the words to:

1. Let’s try Bioflex Laser Therapy or
2. The PoNS™ Device or
3. The LED light helmet for PTSD

I was initially introduced to Dr. Doidge’s book *The Brain That Changes Itself* almost 8 years ago, and it was the first time that I actually saw my brain injury in print. When I read the case studies presented in that first book, I was able to piece together my brain injury and put the practice of neuroplasticity into my daily recovery.

Dr. Doidge’s new book *The Brain’s Way of Healing* provided a scientific view of all types of brain trauma based on the neurons in the brain miss-firing.

While watching the Nature of Things segment it became apparent, that technology has caught up with brain trauma, and is providing a new and exciting avenue for recovery for all types of brain trauma.

- For anyone who has experienced a brain trauma in the past, it is not too late.

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- For the caregiver who is looking for answers for recovery, kudos for all the research you have done so far for the person you care about.
- For all physicians who are involved from diagnosis to recovery you can now provide hope and a better way.

If people are being diagnosed today with any type of brain trauma here are the links that will be important during their recovery.

CBC Nature of Things – The Brain’s Way of Healing. <http://www.cbc.ca/natureofthings/episodes/the-brains-way-of-healing>

Dr. Doidge’s Books The Brain’s Way of Healing and The Brain That Changes Itself. <http://www.normandoidge.com/>

Dr. Kahn with Bioflex Laser Therapy <http://bioflexlaser.com>

Paul Bach-y-Rita, M.D founder of the The PoNS™ Device <https://tcnl.bme.wisc.edu>

Dr. Margaret Naeser in Boston uses a LED light helmet to treat PTSD victims. <http://www.cbc.ca/natureofthings/features/can-led-light-heal-the-brain-of-ptsd-victims>

Paul Madaule from the Listening Centre in Toronto in the treatment of Autism <http://listeningcentre.com>

Our work is just beginning but thank you to Dr. Doidge and other professionals for not giving up on us.

Thanks from a Brain Injured Person

Jean Oostrom is the creator of New Brain Living as a place where people with brain injuries and the people who care for them can find answers. New Brain Living started out as a project to make some sense of her own brain injury in 1997, and now is making a difference for many brain injured people and the people who care for them.



Jean has coined herself “the voice for the brain injured person” and provides information “from the brain injured point of view” so people can find answers as they “learn to live with their new brains” after all types of brain trauma.

The following recovery options are available at the New Brain Living website www.newbrainliving.com

Five Answers to New Brain Living – The First Step to Learning to Live With Your New Brain

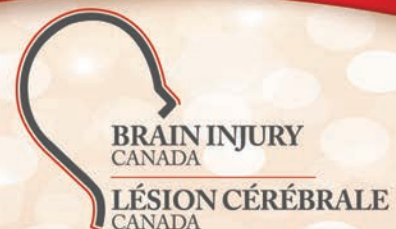
New Brain Living Book

New Brain Living Blog

Twitter @NewBrainLiving

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/newbrainliving/>

*Wishing you the best of the
Holiday Season!*



Message from the Co President and Editor of Impact - Barb Butler

Hope and Peace and Love

We are now in the twelfth month of the year. The last month, the final month before we turn the calendar page and find as we always do a new year. This is what happens every December, it comes as no surprise to anyone that once December is over, the year is over and we begin a new year in January. Followed by February, March, April, you know how it goes... until December and then back to January. It isn't a complicated system of time keeping and yet it thrills me every year when we reach the end and glory be- we get to start again! It is a long time but in a way it isn't a long time. Your time is limited, don't waste it living someone else's life or allowing others to judge the life you are leading. Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown out your own inner voice. Most importantly, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. You are the only one who can do you. You are the best at being yourself!

For me December brings Christmas, for other it brings other celebrations such as Hanukkah, St. Lucia Day, Fiesta of our Lady of Guadalupe, Three Kings Day and numerous other celebrations of love and peace and joy. Whatever you do or however you do it I



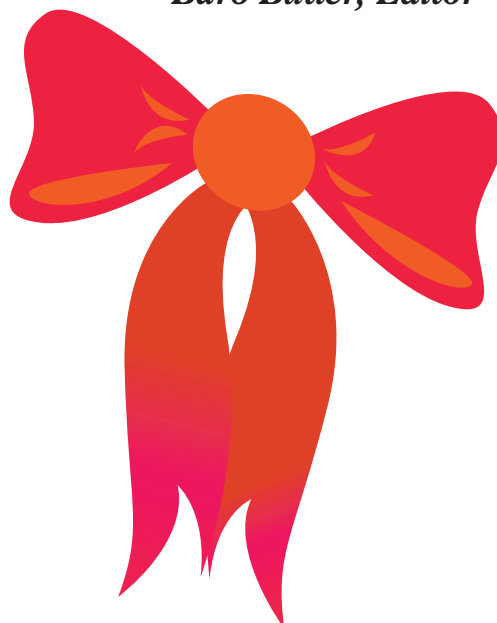
Barb Butler


hope you are with people you love and who love you.

On behalf of the board of directors and staff of Brain Injury Canada our wish for you is happiness. Stay safe and be at peace with yourself. 2017 is almost here. 2016 is over. Today is your now. Yesterday is over, 2016 will soon be over. Your tomorrow and 2017 are yet to come. Grab hold of today, this moment, this is your now.

Enjoy.

Barb Butler, Editor





Tyrone was 32, three years out of graduate school and enjoying a successful career when brain injury struck. He spent 27 months in three hospitals, in the first three of which, he was totally mute. However, aggressive therapies in a rehab program have worked miracles. Fortunately, his setbacks were temporary and not cognitive. His balance is still compromised, but improving.

(This is the first in a two-part series on alcohol and brain injury).

ALCOHOL AFFECTS YOU EVEN MORE AFTER A BRAIN INJURY by Tyrone Bell

Whether one has suffered a brain injury or not, alcohol sometimes has a harmful impact on an individual. However, the impact is even more far-reaching after a brain injury. Since a diffuse (overall) brain injury and the use of alcohol have similar effects on the brain, it is only intuitive, that drinking alcohol after a TBI will simply further the assault that the TBI had in the first place. The alcohol further magnifies some of the cognitive difficulties in areas such as judgement, memory, thinking, the ability to make decisions plus balance and coordination problems.

Alcohol use increases the chance of having a brain injury. This organic chemical is metabolised by the body. In the process, it dulls the senses. A person under the influence of alcohol is therefore more likely to make very faulty decisions. The numbers suggest that up to 50% of people with TBIs got injured while in a state of drunkenness. There are cases where long term abuse of alcohol, causes brain injury in the first place. There is such a thing as an alcohol-induced seizure. Simply put, it means that the long-term chemical impact of alcohol on the brain, poisons the brain's cells and other elements of the nervous system.

It is a false notion that alcohol relaxes a brain



TALKING WITH TY

injury survivor and therefore lessens the chance of having a seizure. There may be a calming effect but the negative potentials outweigh the positive. Excessive alcohol consumption may damage cells of the brain and nerves. This could give rise to a seizure or some other form of complication. Because alcohol and trauma may have the same effect on the brain, drinking alcohol after a brain assault, could result in doubling the offense, resulting in a seizure.

To get a clearer picture of the effects that alcohol has on a normal human brain, let us do a little exercise. Hold up the five fingers of one hand, so that the fingers are straight, the arm is bent at the elbow and the palm is turned towards your face for you to see it. The entire hand represents the whole, intact human brain. Bend the thumb and forefinger for them to curl downwards. These represent the damaged section of the brain of a cognitively impaired person after the effect of a brain injury. Three fingers remain. These therefore represent the part of the brain that is still working normally. Assuming that an Individual would consume the same amount of alcohol on every drinking occasion, he or she has a smaller part of the brain on which the same amount of alcohol will act. The effect is therefore likely to be more consequential.

BRAIN INJURY CANADA
SEMI-ANNUAL CONFERENCE
SAINT JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK
APRIL 19,20, 2017

SHINING A LIGHT
ON
BRAIN INJURY



SNEAK
PEEK

BRAIN INJURY CANADA | LÉSION CÉRÉBRALE CANADA

A Sneak Peek at an exciting up & coming conference!

Shawn Jennings
session is **Locked
In Syndrome:
Reflections on
my Journey**

**Also appearing
Suzanne McKenna,
Cecile Proctor and
Michelle Bartlett!**



Jason Harps - This is
**one employer's story of
how hiring a person who
suffered a TBI changed
his work culture and his
personal life.**



Jason Harps is Vice President of Operations of Bona Building and Management Co. Ltd. based in Ottawa. He will share how, his work culture, along with his own personal views have been radically altered by one man, Justin McKenna. Justin is a person who lives with a brain injury and has been hired by Bona Building and Management. Change has happened on every level since hiring Justin, Jason will tell you. He will also tell you why Justin has changed their business and their family's lives for the better

Find full details coming soon at
www.braininjurycanada.ca.

*Make sure you attend this
premier conference on
ABI in Canada*

Word Salad, by Vicki Homes

Word Salad is a term used by speech pathologists, neurologists and various other professionals to describe the condition of mixing up your words. This is another challenge that I live with on a regular basis. When I say regular, I mean 3-4x a month. But recently it happened much closer together, on Sunday May 8 and then again this morning, Tuesday May 10.



Word Salad is not to be confused or compared to those times when most of us twist our thoughts around. Here is an example. “You are about to put the milk in the fridge and your child calls out, “What are you doing mom?”

Your answer, “I am just putting the fridge in the milk”

Word Salad is different. Our brain travels on a different path and the words that come out of our mouth are related to the initial thought. Perhaps the word we say starts with the same letter but it is not relevant. Or the word we say is related to the word we are thinking but what we say does not make sense.

I am sharing my experience to help others understand this more fully.

The first three examples occurred early on after my head injury and are things I actually said in 2012.

- 1) Put the vegetables on the TV (instead of table)
- 2) How are you enjoying swimming in your pillow this summer? (pool.)
- 3) The personal care worker commented how cool it was in the manse. (It was the end of May and 3 months after my accident). I replied, “yes it stays really cool in the winter”

Back to the two most recent examples, which occurred within the last couple of days and it

is now 4 years later. We were out for dinner with friends on Mother’s Day. Following our appetizers the waitress came to clear off some plates. My husband Dan was tucked in the corner. I looked at his small plate that he had used for his dinner roll and butter. I said to him, “Are you finished with your roll?” He looked at me because there was no roll in sight, but he knew what I meant. Immediately after I said it I knew it was wrong but that is where my brain took me.

Today I was at the post office addressing an envelope for express post. Behind me a gentleman was talking to a woman that was in front of me at the counter. She had just explained that she received two mailings to her from her daughter in Ontario. One of them was supposed to go to the other grandmother. In a quick joking manner she said, I wonder what it is. The guy said, maybe coupons and she laughed and said yes a package full of coupons.

I look back at my home address that I was writing and I had written 393... Oops. I had lost my focus. This happens frequently. I used to be able to run a large meeting of 20+ people and not only moderate the meeting well, but also keep track of who was saying what and keep things on track. I had a terrific memory as well.

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Today I have Word Salad. It is nothing that can be corrected and the doctors do not know whether it will ever get better. But this is what I do know and have discovered on my own.

Mix- ups occur more frequently when I am tired or overwhelmed.

Mix- ups occur when there is too much stimulation around me. (I.e. that is what happened in the restaurant and in the post office today). I can only focus on one task. Distractions interrupt my brain and it goes off in a different direction.

Is this a HUGE DEAL! In life there are many more serious illnesses and challenges that exist. I acknowledge that.

However, this impacts my life. This injury has affected my ability to work. It has affected my ability to socialize in crowds. It causes me to be anxious which leads to fatigue.

Those who have a brain injury, a stroke, anxiety and panic can relate to this. I am certain of it.

Those who don't I hope that I have given you a glimpse into our world and daily life.

No matter what dressing you want to put on it, it still is the same. It is called Word Salad and it does exist and we can't control it.

Vicki Homes is retired clergy living with a disability. Her brain injury occurred in 2012 following a slip and fall accident. This was a life changing experience which affected her ability to work, socialize and sleep.



She wrote this article in the spring of this year to honour Brain Injury Awareness Month. She is married to Dan and they reside in PEI. Their family lives in Ontario.

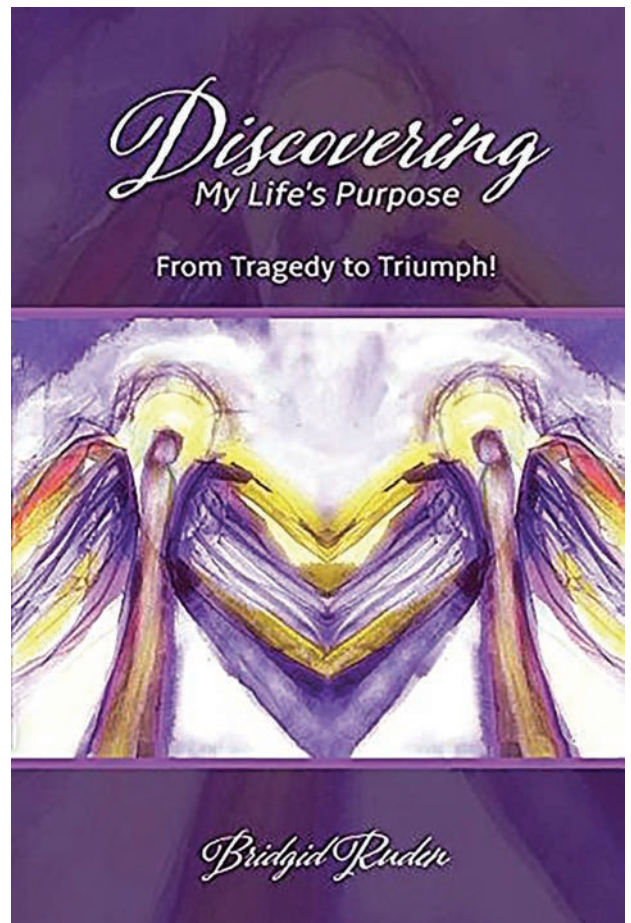
Hello Barb and all members of Brain Injury Canada

I presented my miraculous story at your annual conference in 2013; which was a fabulous experience. My new book, *Discovering My Life's Purpose: From Tragedy to Triumph* is now published, which you can view below. Canada BIA is honored in my book. I have received excellent feedback that I am so grateful for!

Sincerely,
Bridgid
Bridgid M. Ruden, ARNP
Inspirational Speaker,
Traumatic Brain Injury Survivor

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Put Safety First and Accidents Last!

Living a one hour drive from some of the best skiing in the world, I don't have to look very far to see ski enthusiasts of all ages getting excited at the thought of hitting the slopes now that the ski season has begun.

While skiing and snowboarding appeal to all ages, it is not a risk free activity. The Canadian Paediatric Society recently reported head injuries account for majority of deaths, serious injuries and significant disabilities that are sustained while skiing and snowboarding. Children between the ages of 7 – 17 have the highest risk of injury.

I want to change this.

A recent Statistics Canada report shows that only 68% of Canadians age 12+ wear helmets when skiing and/or snowboarding.

Did you know that over 50% of traumatic brain injuries are preventable?

While I believe health and safety should be an important aspect in everyone's life, I have a special interest in advocating for the safety of children. That is why I wrote Emma's Skiing Adventure, a children's book that incorporates safety, mixed with a bit of humor, into a not so typical ski outing. This is a book that opens the communication channel between adults and young children on the importance of being safe when skiing and/or snowboarding by wearing a helmet.

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that traumatic brain injury (TBI) will surpass many diseases as the major cause of death and disability by the year 2020. TBI not only affects patients, but also is a significant burden on caregivers and family members, as well as society as a whole.

Wouldn't it be nice if no one sustained a brain injury and there were no brain injury related deaths in the 2016/2017 ski season?



Emma takes the reader on a journey down the ski hill, where she collides with two bunnies. After the accident, they share an important message with her about wearing a helmet while skiing and snowboarding.

Emma's Skiing Adventure weaves a short yet compelling story, mixed with a bit of humor, that makes this message approachable for young children and their caregivers.

The annual incidence of traumatic brain injury is conservatively estimated at up to 600/100,000 in North America and Europe, with those five years and younger being at an increased risk. Emma's Skiing Adventure will open the channel of communication between children and parents on how everyone can take simple steps to be safe.

Denise Pelletier is a writer, public speaker, advocate, Human Resources Practitioner and traumatic brain injury survivor and thriver.

www.denise-pelletier.com

About Our Cause: Acquired Brain Injury

In an instant a life is changed, forever. Every day, we participate in activities that produce endless risks for sustaining a brain injury: car accidents, a fall from a bike, or a blow to the head. It is estimated that thousands of Canadians incur a traumatic brain injury (TBI) and mild traumatic brain injury (mTBI), also known as a concussion, each year, the majority being young adults. Statistics indicate that the incidence of brain injury is two times greater in men. Brain Injury Canada strives to raise awareness of the incidence of acquired brain injury (ABI) in Canada.

A brain injury may make it necessary for the injured person to require full time assistance. Families often become the primary caregiver and support person. Many families are left to cope on their own. They sometimes have little understanding of the effects of the injury and the demands that will be made of them by an injured family member. Families need support from others who understand the effects of acquired brain injury. Brain Injury Canada provides a shared forum for the support of both families and survivors, and also advocates for the enhancement support services.

Prevention through public education, and safety legislation is the key to the reducing the occurrence of ABI amongst Canadians. Brain Injury Canada engages

in extensive public education initiatives through its many local community associations across Canada.

Medical and safety research is another key to addressing ABI. Brain Injury Canada endeavors to support and promote research in Canada and internationally.



Impact Pathways Ahead

is here to serve the readers and is published four times a year (Editor - Barb Butler).

We invite submissions: professional articles on rehabilitation, acquired brain injury, and injury prevention, personal interest, provincial and local association news, and profiles of courage.

Advertising rates per issue print and electronic exposure on our website

Business Card - \$100 • 1/4 page - \$200 • 1/2 page - \$300
2/3 page - \$400 • full page - \$500

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