

# **Adaptive Yoga For Stroke Recovery**

## **- Stacie Wyatt**

## **Adaptive Yoga for Stroke Recovery: A Comprehensive Guide**

### **Introduction**

Welcome to our comprehensive guide on adaptive yoga for stroke recovery. In this article, we delve into the therapeutic benefits of adaptive yoga for stroke patients and how it can aid in the rehabilitation process.

### **Understanding Stroke Rehabilitation**

Stroke rehabilitation is pivotal for aiding stroke survivors in regaining independence and improving their quality of life. While traditional rehabilitation methods are crucial, integrating complementary approaches like adaptive yoga can enhance the overall recovery journey.

### **The Therapeutic Benefits of Adaptive Yoga**

Adaptive yoga is a modified form of yoga that accommodates individuals with varying abilities and physical limitations. For stroke patients, adaptive yoga offers several therapeutic benefits, including:

- **Customized Modifications:** Adaptive yoga instructors tailor poses and sequences to meet the unique needs and abilities of stroke survivors, ensuring safety and effectiveness.
- **Improved Mobility:** Gentle, modified yoga poses help improve mobility and range of motion, addressing common post-stroke challenges such as muscle stiffness and weakness.
- **Enhanced Mind-Body Connection:** Adaptive yoga emphasizes mindfulness and body awareness, fostering a deeper connection between mind and body, which is essential for stroke recovery.

- **Emotional Well-being:** The calming nature of adaptive yoga promotes relaxation and reduces anxiety and depression commonly experienced by stroke survivors.
- **Community Support:** Participating in adaptive yoga classes provides stroke patients with a supportive community of fellow survivors, fostering a sense of belonging and camaraderie.

## **Incorporating Adaptive Yoga into Stroke Rehabilitation**

Integrating adaptive yoga into stroke rehabilitation requires careful consideration and collaboration between healthcare providers and certified yoga instructors. Here are some tips for incorporating adaptive yoga into a stroke recovery program:

1. **Professional Guidance:** Stroke survivors should consult with their healthcare team and seek guidance from certified adaptive yoga instructors to ensure that the practice is safe and appropriate for their individual needs.
2. **Accessible Props and Equipment:** Utilize props such as blocks, straps, and chairs to make yoga poses more accessible and comfortable for stroke survivors with mobility limitations.
3. **Focus on Breath Awareness:** Emphasize breath awareness and gentle breathing techniques during adaptive yoga sessions to promote relaxation and stress reduction.
4. **Encourage Self-Compassion:** Encourage stroke survivors to practice self-compassion and acceptance, recognizing that progress may be gradual and non-linear.
5. **Celebrate Progress:** Celebrate small victories and milestones achieved through adaptive yoga practice, fostering motivation and a positive outlook on the recovery journey.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, adaptive yoga is a valuable and inclusive approach to stroke rehabilitation, offering a range of physical, emotional, and social benefits for survivors. By incorporating adaptive yoga into the recovery process, stroke

patients can enhance their overall well-being and resilience on the path to recovery.

Remember, adaptive yoga offers a personalized and supportive environment for stroke survivors to explore movement, mindfulness, and healing. With dedication and support, adaptive yoga can empower stroke patients to embrace their journey of recovery with strength and resilience.

## **Full Interview With Stacie Wyatt**

Stacie Wyatt is no stranger to how neurological challenges can impact life. As a mother of a child with a neurological condition from birth, she turned to adaptive yoga to help herself and others.

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### **Introduction - Stacie Wyatt**



Bill Gasiamis 0:00

Hello, everyone. Welcome back to another episode of the Recovery after Stroke podcast. My guest today is Stacie Wyatt, who amongst other things, is an adaptive yoga instructor who joined me on the show to encourage you to discover the benefits of adaptive yoga.

Bill Gasiamis 0:16

And I'm not just talking about being more active. This was a deep and meaningful conversation, which I thoroughly enjoyed. And I encourage you to listen to the end, as the highlights just kept coming.

Bill Gasiamis 0:28

Now just before we get started with the interview, allow me to share for a moment a little bit about my book, *The Unexpected Way That A Stroke Became The Best Thing That Happened: 10 Tools for Recovery and Personal Transformation*.

Bill Gasiamis 0:40

Within its pages lie the profound stories of 10 stroke survivors, each illustrating the transformative journey from adversity to personal growth, spanning topics from nutrition and exercise to managing the emotional aftermath.

Bill Gasiamis 0:55

This book serves as a guiding light for all those navigating the path to recovery. To discover more about this invaluable research visit [recoveryafterstroke.com/book](http://recoveryafterstroke.com/book). Stacie Wyatt, welcome to the podcast.

Stacie Wyatt 1:10

Thanks for having me.

Bill Gasiamis 1:12

Thank you for being here and requesting to be on the show. I love it. When people reach out and request to be on the show, it makes my life a little bit easier. It means I don't have to find people. And I love meeting people who want to help people. Tell me a little bit about your background.

Stacie Wyatt 1:30

Well, my background is sort of an interesting story I am a mom to three amazing human beings. And my middle child, my only daughter was born with multiple disabilities. And the first 10 years of her life were tough I wasn't very happy that this was what was given to me.

Stacie Wyatt 1:52

And I resisted it for a long time. And so I found I found a yoga practice thinking that would make me a better person and or make me stretch here my intention was initially that I would be more flexible. And I had no idea it would change my life in such amazing ways.

Stacie Wyatt 2:10

And I initially stepped into teaching yoga to people with developmental disabilities. And thinking that would be a bridge for my daughter and I and it it just wasn't for her. Like she wanted nothing to do with it.

Stacie Wyatt 2:24

But I felt so drawn to bringing yoga to people who couldn't access a traditional setting like they couldn't go to a yoga studio because there were barriers and maybe that was a disability or mental illness or income or size or age.

Stacie Wyatt 2:42

And so I knew I didn't want to just teach normal, super flexible, cute Yoga people, I wanted to reach a different population. So I began almost 17 years ago with that intention.

Stacie Wyatt 2:58

And as time went on, I found a great love and appreciation for people with traumatic brain injuries. Because I feel like they're living in everyday life all as

well. They've got a career family and in an instant, their life has completely changed, and I just felt like that.

Stacie Wyatt 3:21

That was my heart and soul. So I did some more studies and became more schooled in brain injuries and what that looks like, and here I am. And so my students now range from acquired brain injuries, traumatic brain injuries, dementia, Parkinson's, any sort of really neurological condition. And I serve hundreds of individuals every single month. It's it's crazy.

Bill Gasiamis 3:50

That is probably lovely. I know crazy you're using it in that way. But it's probably crazy good, right? It sounds like it is. Tell me about your daughter a little bit like what condition were you guys dealing with? When she was born? What was it that she had?

Stacie Wyatt 4:11

Well, initially, I just thought, is this how girls are like I had I had a son and I thought this is hard like she was hard. And as an infant now that I know what I know. Like I just never connected with her. She always was staring off into space.

Stacie Wyatt 4:30

And she never engaged in a way that like a baby does when you approach them in the little basket and they get all like wiggly and happy to see you there was none of that. And by the time she was two, some big differences were happening and language wasn't coming and she was very particular about things.

Stacie Wyatt 4:49

And so of course we got a diagnosis of autism spectrum, but that wasn't it and it took until she was 17 years old. So to identify that she has a very rare genetic change in her chromosome, one of the little rungs of her ladder is missing.

Stacie Wyatt 5:09

And the features of the syndrome very much look like somebody who has autism and other just developmental delays. So it's hard to explain like, yeah, she has tendencies like somebody with autism, but it's so much bigger than that.

Stacie Wyatt 5:26

Because there's some physical stuff that we didn't know about and cognitive stuff

that, you know, she's, she's this will be 30 in just a couple of weeks. And she's more like a 10-year-old, a pretty happy 10-year-old. Now that she has some strategies, and we've come to understand each other well, things are good. But it was hard. It was really hard.

Bill Gasiamis 5:47

I can imagine what. So what's it like, though, as a mum, you don't have any expectations that your kids are going to be "different" There's no other word for me to say different. You have one child who's born as expected.

Bill Gasiamis 6:05

And then the second one is a little bit of a challenge because you're not recognizing things. After all, you have no experience in that type of condition, you don't recognize things. So you stumble, and you fumble, and it's frustrating, and it's challenging.

Bill Gasiamis 6:24

At the 10-year mark, you kind of go I need to do something for myself out of here have you realized that you need some self-care, because caregivers tend to neglect themselves, especially if you've got three kids? Mums neglect themselves all the time.

Bill Gasiamis 6:42

But then when you're dealing with a child who's a little more requires a little different strategy. You're even more stretched, it's even harder. What did you do to support yourself for those 10 years? And then what was it like to get to this realization that you needed to do something more than just about your normal day?

## **Motherhood, and acceptance of a child with special needs**

Stacie Wyatt 7:08

Yeah, it was crazy. I was a very young mom, and young married mom trying to play the role of being a wife and a young mom. And I didn't understand myself, I chose to get married and then chose to have three little kids very early into my 20s.

Stacie Wyatt 7:14

And, you know, when there's such a stressor of being young, and financially struggling, as young people often are, and then you have this child that you don't understand.

Stacie Wyatt 7:32

And when she was in early, elementary age, I would take her to school, and there would be other moms with little girls that would take their child and kind of shy away from Lindsay. And I just thought, you know, this is so wrong. Like, I felt so different. I didn't have connections with other moms.

Stacie Wyatt 8:00

I didn't know any other parents of people with disabilities. And my marriage fell apart. My husband at the time just couldn't do it. He had that choice, I guess, to leave. So here I was a single mom with three kids and no education. And I was angry, I was toxic.

Stacie Wyatt 8:17

I was physically ginormously, heavy, energetically, spiritually heavy. I was a mess. And I found yoga. And I thought I loved this so much. I'm going to become a yoga teacher. And in my first yoga teacher training, the teacher was talking about suffering.

Stacie Wyatt 8:35

And being that I was young and full of what I thought I knew everything and had a little bit of ego. I went to him during the break. And I said, You don't know anything about suffering, my daughter, she suffers, nobody likes her, she looks different, and she doesn't get invited to parties.

Stacie Wyatt 8:53

And he just smiled tenderly and kind of leaned in and he said, who's suffering? And I just was getting furious. Like, you're not hearing me like nobody likes her, she has no friends, people stare at her, people stare at me, they think I'm a bad parent.

Stacie Wyatt 9:09

And I just kept going on and he finally got so close to me. He probably could have kissed me. And he said, who's suffering? And it was like a thunderbolt hit me. And I realized this was all about me. And I went home from that training, 14 hours,



went home, and I looked at her through an entirely different lens.

Stacie Wyatt 9:35

I looked at her through the lens that she's not suffering that she's herself, she's fine. She lives in happiness and joy. And I saw her as perfect. And when I did that, and I was able to see her and accept her and say yes, literally within a year my life changed.

Stacie Wyatt 9:59

I found my part purpose, I knew I wanted to do what I wanted to be doing today. And I went out into the world with a lot of information and a lot of heart to say, These people need to be seen and they need to be heard just as they are and, and really, I call that time in my life around when I was 30 as my great wake up, because I turned something off, turn something on in me that the anger went away.

Stacie Wyatt 10:28

Love came into my being I lost 80 pounds, I got lighter in my spirit I found myself and I often say that, that she was like this gift holding this door open for me. And her spirit was saying if you say yes, your life's gonna be unreal. And literally within nine months to a year of me saying yes to who she is, my life has just tremendously changed. And so while it was really hard, and I had very minimal support, it was the greatest thing that ever happened to me.

## **Adaptive yoga for individuals with brain injuries**



Bill Gasiamis 11:06

Sounds like the exact title of my book. I wrote a book called *The Unexpected Way That Stroke Became the Best Thing That Happened to Me*. And there's a chapter about exercise in there. And what I'm trying to do is encourage people to understand the benefits of exercise, but also demystify it so that they don't think that what exercises is running laps, or doing CrossFit or, you know, pumping massive weights or whatever.

Bill Gasiamis 11:37

That's not exercise that is necessarily useful for somebody who's had a stroke or has a neurological condition or something like that, that that can just simply sit on a chair, and be guided by a yoga teacher. And that says, you know, move this way, move that way, to the best of your ability to do this and do that. And you're, you're it's like, your path to finding your purpose.

Bill Gasiamis 12:10

Sounds like it came from going with the flow rather than fighting the current. And then once you discover that your daughter is this way, and she's probably okay with it, well, then that's when the learning has to come to you, who has to grow up and start acting like an adult, and then discovering, discovering the things about yourself that you need to improve on.

Bill Gasiamis 12:38

And those things. For me, it was a classic example. For me, I was 37. And I had to start my personal development. Although I had played in space a little bit, I just stopped my personal development at 37, when I had a stroke, because I was suffering. And suffering without purpose is terrible. But when you've got a purpose, and your suffering kind of is, as is given an outlet, the suffering tends to ease and the purpose comes alive.

Bill Gasiamis 13:10

And you find yourself in this space like me, after 300 episodes of the podcast so far, you find the space, in the space with something that you love doing. And it's easy to do, that might be a lot of work. And it might be a lot of challenges around but it's easy to do emotionally, mentally, spiritually, physically. And then, and then you've transformed this supposedly terrible situation, you know, the one that you thought was terrible, into an amazing opportunity for personal development and growth.

Bill Gasiamis 13:45

And then you're an example, to your family, to your friends, to your children, about how somebody might tackle a difficult situation. And then people look at you in awe and they go Stacy's you know, you're, oh my God, how do you manage to do everything or this supermom? You're this superwoman, you do yoga to do this. And it's like, you probably have a busy day, but you don't find it difficult to do these things. You find it rewarding purposeful and useful. And yeah, tell me how does that do that?

Stacie Wyatt 14:24

Yeah, and I often say like, what when I go to work, I get in my car and sometimes I have to commute 200, 300 miles just to knock on the door of a home or people who have traumatic brain injuries are living and I walk in a knock on the door and say, Hey, I'm here for yoga and, and I think this doesn't even work. This is such joy. And it's so amazing that I get to do this and it's I'm grateful that I get to do it.

Stacie Wyatt 14:51

I don't have to do it I get to do it. And I think there's a big difference in that a lot of people feel like going to work is something they have to do and I'm just blown Last, I am grateful that I make a living doing it. But the money is so irrelevant to me, I love it so much, I would do it for free. But maybe someday I'll go back to that I volunteered for four years before I actually started contracting with agencies, and I do eventually want to go back to that, model of just serving without financial gain, but right now it's paying the mortgage.

Stacie Wyatt 15:25

And it's good. And I think my experience with somebody who has an everyday normal life, whatever normal is, and an event happens, for me what I've come to realize with that population of brain injuries, particularly because it's such an instant, right, whether it's a stroke, and you're having a great day, and then boom, is there such a tendency in rehab to make sure the person can toilet, eat, walk, transfer, maybe get dressed, and my thinking when I see these individuals who are talking about grief and loss.

Stacie Wyatt 16:05

And their career is over their family life is over their ability to drive and be independent and cook a meal. And, and there's so much loss. And so part of the yoga that I offer these individuals is to find wholeness in what's new to them now,

not what was because this is an entirely different experience.

Stacie Wyatt 16:29

And so a lot of my yoga work, you know, I'm a big Stickler, and our western view of yoga, here in the United States is just so physical based, and there's a place for it, for sure. But there are seven other big parts of the yoga practice, that have to do with how we show up in the world.

Stacie Wyatt 16:50

And a lot of that is an understanding of who we are. And, so that's my gift to my students is helping them see that even if their body doesn't move the way that it did, or their memory or their language, or maybe they can't speak at all, but they use a device that they're still holding, there's still a deep purpose in them that we have to uncover and figure out what that is.

Stacie Wyatt 17:15

And if it's becoming some sort of advocate for fellow people that live in their house and helping somebody else to do everyday activities of daily living because they can like that might be your purpose, and let them see that they still have a place in this world for them to shine. And it's a lot of work. there are a lot of big emotions, and I get challenged sometimes by more exercise-based people who observe my work because they're thinking as well, can't they be doing more physically?

Stacie Wyatt 17:48

And like, Well, yeah, maybe. But right now we got to purge some of this pain, where they're never going to be able to get there. And, so that's really, what I'm passionate about the most is just really seeing individuals as they are today. And in fact, I rarely even want to know how their injury came to be if they want to share that. That's fine, but I don't inquire about it.

## **Importance of community in stroke recovery**



Stacie Wyatt 18:14

Because I want to see who they are at that moment on a random Tuesday. I don't need to know all that. Maybe it will come out in time. And it's relevant. And I need to know some things. But I try not to get too curious about their life before their events unless it applies to their health and something I need to know like a spinal injury or something, but I try to see them. And that's what they need. They need to not be seen as broken, disabled, half-paralyzed people, they need to be seen as whole. And I want to give that to them.

Bill Gasiamis 18:49

Yeah, that's an awesome gift. You know, what you said about the people who see you and say, can't they be doing more things, more physical stuff, that's, it is a great thing that the hospitals and rehabilitation facilities do is they can address walking and moving and standing and lifting and hand and shifting and all that kind of stuff that can address that. So they're good at that.

Bill Gasiamis 19:16

But then, and they're not resourced to handle the emotional side of recovery from any condition, you know, it doesn't matter who they are. I know that in a stroke, you're going to one of the things that gets missed out on a lot is the emotional side. Mental Health kind of gets a little bit of a look in physical does but the emotional side gets missed and you can't heal from any trauma. If you don't do what I call the three-tier kind of recovery, you know, emotional, mental, and physical.

Bill Gasiamis 19:51

You got to do all three and if you don't do one, I think emotional seems like it's

1/3 of the pie like it seems to represent 33% But I think the power of emotional healing is far greater than 33%. I think it gives way more back when you do the hard work go with the traumas face your demons, and overcome all that kind of stuff. Now, what I love about a group like yours is that people come there for something else, they think they're coming for yoga, and they think they're coming from movement, and all this kind of stuff.

Bill Gasiamis 20:25

And then because of the type of space that you have, is, it's safe. And there's an opportunity for them to share things they may not have normally shared with people who are like-minded with people who are similar to them, and people who have been through what they've been through maybe in a different format, but you know, have a similar trauma.

Bill Gasiamis 20:44

And then, and then it's like, these are kind of my people, you know, I was listening to somebody talk about immunity, and they broke the word down from they broke it down, like from community, to the words that make up that word. And what came back was common unity.

Intro 21:06

If you've had a stroke, and you're in recovery, you'll know what a scary and confusing time it can be, you're likely to have a lot of questions going through your mind, like, how long will it take to recover? Will I recover? What things should I avoid? In case I make matters worse, doctors will explain things. But, if you've never had a stroke before, you probably don't know what questions to ask. If this is you, you may be missing out on doing things that could help speed up your recovery. If you're finding yourself in that situation, stop worrying, and head to [recovery after stroke.com](http://recoveryafterstroke.com) where you can download a guide that will help you it's called Seven Questions to Ask Your Doctor about your Stroke. These seven questions are the ones Bill wished he'd asked when he was recovering from a stroke, they'll not only help you better understand your condition, they'll help you take a more active role in your recovery, head to the website. Now, [recovery after stroke.com](http://recoveryafterstroke.com) and download the guide. It's free.

Stacie Wyatt 22:09

Love it, love it. And it's interesting, like, like community, I have four pillars that I sort of teach to it. And this is sort of the method that I've crafted over my time

doing this. And the number one pillar that has to be part of the puzzle is community. And we always sit in a circle because I'm not the boss, I'm not the teacher, I'm not better than and so we gather around a living room or a kitchen table. And, there is that space to share and to be heard and to be seen. And I've had students in my practice who have been incarcerated and have done bad things.

Stacie Wyatt 22:51

And they come with a lot of identity and labels to those things. And in that moment, it's irrelevant because we're sitting around the kitchen table, we might even be having tea or coffee. And they're thinking they're going to do yoga. And by definition, yoga means union, it means to unite two things together. And so if I get resistance, like I'm not doing that, you know, crazy pretzel get on the floor yoga.

Stacie Wyatt 23:17

And so I asked her asking them some questions or you know, I get real close and say, can I see what color eyes you have? And there's an immediate connection because we're looking at each other. And then I'll say you just had a beautiful yoga practice with me. And then they laugh and go, Oh, it's not scary. It's not pretzel stuff. It's it's community. And so we do a check in every practice. How's your mind? How's your body? How's your spirit?

Stacie Wyatt 23:45

And the purpose of that is to be brave to be vulnerable and say, my mind is busy, my body sucks and my spirits in the dumps? Well, if somebody else is feeling the same thing, now all of a sudden you have shared empathy, you have shared compassion you have a home, I'm not alone. Oh, thank goodness, I'm not alone.

Stacie Wyatt 24:06

And so then we have this round robin, kind of how are you, and I try to do a check out after we do the other three things that I always do in the practice. And, at the beginning that drove my data for agencies who make decisions to say like, well, if something's happening, they came in very dysregulated and pissed off and upset and in pain, and they're leaving yoga feeling peaceful and joyful and grateful for what is happening.

Stacie Wyatt 24:37

And so for years, I took those data sheets and would hand them to the administrators who never came to the practice. Just so they could see that there's something magical that's going on in these 45 minutes that the least likely people to do yoga are showing up and they're shining in this practice.

Stacie Wyatt 24:56

So community is the number one thing that I Teach. And so when I have somebody observe me, and their questions, what can't they do more? Like you just missed all of this courage and sharing and growth, just so that maybe they could stand on one leg? Who cares? Like, who cares about that? That's part of it. But it's not all of it.

## **Volunteering after a neurological condition**

Bill Gasiamis 25:20

No, no, it's probably probably good to fail in front of other people as well, when you can't do that. Because there's a bit of a lesson there as well. It's like, nobody in that room, nobody cares. It's interesting what you said about who comes to your room.

Bill Gasiamis 25:35

With my podcast, I don't have any requirements for people to come on my podcast, you need to be somebody who either had a stroke or somebody who helps people who have had a stroke. In your case, for example, you might not specifically help or target to helping stroke survivors, but people who have neurological conditions are a pass for me.

Bill Gasiamis 25:55

Everything else that you've done in your life that you've been through, or whatever, like, it doesn't matter, I couldn't care less. But what I do, just want to know is that you're out willing to share a story that's going to help other people, that's all I'm interested in. And that makes the bar for attending this particular interview very low, and nobody has to worry about, Am I good enough? Am I going to be able to meet up to the expectations of the person hosting and all that kind of stuff?

Bill Gasiamis 26:26

No, just come and have a chat. You know, we'll talk about stuff. And we may not



talk about what you're expecting, there won't be any pre-prepared questions, it's just going to be literally, I had an I didn't have an agenda other than to share a recovery story so that somebody else might hear it and feel better. I also loved the thing that you said about how the community aspect of it is kind of the biggest part of it, it's your number one chapter in the book, and that's also about finding your right community, and the struggles that people will face.

Bill Gasiamis 27:03

Imagine a guy who's had, you know, been incarcerated, and now is coming to yoga, imagine what his friends and previous community or other communities would, you know, kind of look at him, like if said, I'm going to yoga, that a lot of people would get resistance. Some of the community that I talked about was, that what we need to do is find a way to increase the types and variation of the people that we hang out with, but also to scale back on some that we used to hang out with.

Bill Gasiamis 27:35

To find a way to maybe not cut ties and not be mean and nasty to people who don't serve you anymore, but just sort of spend less time in those spaces and start spending more time in other spaces. And I love what you said about volunteering because I did volunteering for about, I recommended it properly for about five or six years after my neurological condition, first sort of appeared. And doing that and not expecting to expect things in return. just changed my life for the better. So good. Volunteering is a strange thing, because you think that it's taking, you know, the old may think you're taking advantage of people they're volunteering, they're not getting paid, they're not doing so well, it didn't matter, it mattered not that they weren't getting paid. The only challenge I have with volunteering for the particular organization that I did, was that most of the people volunteering can't work at all, because they are stroke survivors. And I felt that maybe they could just reimburse a few more expenses to do that volunteering. And better than what they were doing, but they were limited in their funds. So volunteering does help and was a really useful service. And in the end, the volunteering that we were doing was making a difference in preventing stroke and supporting people who had loved ones who had a stroke. So it was still worth doing. But that was the beginning of my journey towards purpose, I think.

# Volunteering in hospice, experiences with loss and healing

Stacie Wyatt 29:13

Yeah, it's so selfless and once I you know, word got out of what I do, and then I became a brain injury specialist just to better understand the brain and, and things that happen inside the brain and how it looks so different. You know, you may have a TBI or acquired brain injury and so you get that label but it's also individual and so different and so when I stopped volunteering and not realm I found volunteering and hospice to be so fulfilling, and kind of replace that time and my job and hospice is rubbing people's feeds as they transition in their death. And it's, you know, people are like, Oh, how do you do that? It's so much love and it's such an honor and so I feel like volunteering can be very honorable for the volunteer like you've learned so much when you're not doing it for financial gain, you are totally in the presence of receiving, you think you're giving, but you're receiving and I love it. I think people should volunteer in some ways. If it's sitting with a neighbor, or picking up trash on your trail that you walk every day, just do something to better the world. And it's a ripple effect that happens for sure.

Bill Gasiamis 30:29

I'm curious now, can we touch on that conversation you a bihad t earlier, you said about massaging people's feet as they transition? So What's all that about? How did that even become a thing? I love the idea of it. But how did it become a thing?

Stacie Wyatt 30:43

Such a great question. Nobody's ever asked me that. Because I'm not a foot person. I don't like touching people's feet. I'm not a touchy person. But there's something that just came into my life. And so my first husband, the father of my three children, who opted that this was too hard, made that choice to carry on with his life. And, and that was okay, of course, I had anger.

Stacie Wyatt 31:12

But I did my best I did what I needed to do I moved forward, and let him be he ended up just not taking really good care of his physical body, probably had some mental illness and Reader's Digest version. He ended up passing away when he was just 47 years old and poor, right before he died. My children, my boys aged 22 and 17, were asked to decide to take them off life support as just young men.

Stacie Wyatt 31:44

And so I was supportive of them through that process. And we all took turns saying our goodbyes and so my young children, my young boys, as young adults had to that make that call. And it was gut-wrenching. And he ended up living for about 10 days. And the doctors had just anticipated he would only live a couple of hours once they extubated him.

Stacie Wyatt 32:11

And so in that 10 days, he was able to be cognizant enough to say I don't want to live please sign a DNR and so he did all of that. But at the end of his life, my oldest son got a phone call. And they said he's very, very close. Do you want to come and sit with him my oldest son called me in tears. And he said I can't do this again. I can't do it again. I can't say goodbye again.

Stacie Wyatt 32:41

And so the father of my children ended up dying alone. And, it just, you know, we had our differences, of course, and it was really hard to be left in the situation I was but there's healing that comes and I just felt such a strong internal need that nobody should die alone. And I reached out to hospice and said, You know, I think I need to volunteer I need I felt like maybe I just needed to understand death better.

Stacie Wyatt 33:11

And I found out later that nobody in hospice dies alone. There are little angels like me that go in if there are no family members, and they sit with people hold their hands, rub their feet, and do whatever we do. And, so that made me feel better. But what was so interesting was my first assignment with somebody dying, they gave me you know, here's your chart, go down the hall, it's the last door on the left.

Stacie Wyatt 33:39

It was the same room that my children's father died in. And that just made sense to me. It just felt right. And so that's how I ended up doing it is it wasn't that I felt like, I needed to make amends or anything like we had a great relationship at the end. And I felt okay. But I just felt people shouldn't be alone. At that time. They just shouldn't be alone. So I wanted to just touch people and rub their feet. So I love it. I love it so much. It's

Bill Gasiamis 34:12

fascinating what you said. So how many times would you have sat with somebody who passed?

Stacie Wyatt 34:21

Well, you know, it varies I had one beautiful man who I met with him every Saturday for 18 months, and I rubbed his feet every Saturday for a year and a half before he finally passed. And then there's some that you meet once and that's it. It just depends on how close they are, and how ready they are. There's a lot that we don't understand on the outside until you step into the world of hospice, but people have to be ready.

Stacie Wyatt 34:51

You know, the body might be ready, but there's a lot that happens on that spirit level. And to witness that what I learned is I want to Make sure my ducks are in a row spiritually, because it's, it's not pretty when you're struggling. And, so it's just inspired me to live a beautiful life and a life that's based on gratitude. And, you know, I tell my students, you know, we're going to pull out all the weeds in our heart that just take, just take up too much space, like resentment and bitterness, and just plant some other things in that space.

Stacie Wyatt 35:26

And so I try every day just to check in with my internal garden. And is there some disappointment that's kind of bubbling up and need to get rid of that because it's getting in the way of acceptance or peacefulness? And it's just a practice that I feel so strongly about to live our best life every day because we just don't know.

## **Coping with life changes, focusing on gratitude, and mindset shift**

Stacie Wyatt 35:51

And life's way too short to live with regret, bitterness, and a feeling of lack and limitation, because it's just like that. And so I tried to teach that and hospice has opened up my eyes to living my best life. And it's I've met amazing people that give you chills down your spine, that just, there's just something so beautiful, that I would have never experienced. So it's all good.

Bill Gasiamis 36:22

Far out, I guess I was expecting that part of it to come that part where it's, I don't know, if it motivates you, maybe you have another word for it. But it motivates you to get on with things in life. And to put things at ease and to put things to bed and to move on and to overcome. You know, a lot of stroke survivors might have had a fear of failure or something like that, before they had a stroke, you know, they might have had the fear of failure, I'm not good enough, or I'm not smart enough, or I'm not this or I'm not that.

Bill Gasiamis 37:02

And then sometimes what happens is stroke creates even more fear because if they weren't physically capable of doing something before, after stroke, they're probably less physically capable of doing it. And some people go through that whole life's over routine and all that type of stuff. And I don't know if it is, I don't know if it needs to be over. I know plenty, I know of plenty of people who have won gold medals at the Paralympics after the disability occurred.

Bill Gasiamis 37:36

And before that, they had never participated in sports, and we were never going to win a gold medal in the Olympics. In no way shape or form. Right? So how? How does seeing that part of life, the end of life? How does that change your perspective, your mindset of going forward from the person that you were, say, 10 years into the separation? You know, how do you see yourself as being completely diff? Are you completely different from who you were then?

Stacie Wyatt 38:15

Different.

Bill Gasiamis 38:17

I'm fumbling around trying to understand like, what the difference in you is compared to that person in the past.

Stacie Wyatt 38:25

I think the person in the past wanted so much control, I wanted to control everything. And here I had this child that I couldn't control, I had no control of what occurred to her or for her, if you look at it, for her, and for me, it was the greatest thing ever. And so I wanted to control and so as a young mom, you know, I color-coded all the toy boxes and made everything perfect.

Stacie Wyatt 38:50

And that was my control. And when I realized that, I gotta let go of the steering wheel. And I just gotta live my life in gratitude. Gratitude is one of the other four pillars that I teach. We finish every class with gratitude because we could list a laundry list of things that are wrong in our lives. But if we look at the blue sky, right there, we can see and discern color, or we can smell something, and a lot of you know, people with neurological stuff can't smell anymore, but they might remember the smell of cookies or an orange.

Stacie Wyatt 39:33

And so I tap into the five senses because that's the present moment. It's right now. So I might have the students look out the window, and tell me something you see, that's beautiful. I might say I need you to close your eyes and let's listen. And then there are birds or there's traffic, there's life around us. And so I think for me, it helps me to see like, I can't control everything, but I can control my reaction or my response to everything.

Stacie Wyatt 40:06

And every day we go about our life, there's going to be triggers, there's going to be pain points, there's going to be joy. And how do I respond to that, or react? And so the word react has action. And it's usually forceful. I react in anger, I react with a slam door, I throw something, I get mad, or I respond to it, by getting curious about it. And then I get grateful for it. And I think that's what shifted in my life was I, I don't have control other than I can control my thoughts, I can't control other people.

Stacie Wyatt 40:44

I can't control my body all the time, I suffer from chronic pain, and I just had my fifth hip surgery a few weeks ago. I can't control that, but I can control how I respond to it. And if I'm grateful every day that I can sit in a chair with not too much pain, and I can chat about what I'm passionate about, then that's okay. That's, that's what I can control in my mind.

Stacie Wyatt 41:12

So I try to finish my class with that, because people who have had a stroke or an event, might feel that they have no control. And, they do, they can control how they respond to things, and then we can control our outlook on life by being grateful. And a lot of times people want to get away with what I'm grateful for my friends, my family, my house, no, those are given.

Stacie Wyatt 41:41

Those are given. When she did go deeper than that. I want you to go deeper than just family, friends, and a place to live. So I might do follow-up things. Why is your mom important to you? Well, she takes care of me. Oh, great. So you feel understood? Well, there it is. And they're able to articulate better than just friends, family, and a place to live, it goes a little bit deeper into their being.

Bill Gasiamis 42:06

It goes way deep. And it just needs somebody to prod a little further and ask some more questions. You know, I know what you said about your hip, how difficult that could be my mum had hip problems. And she's had a lower back problem probably from when she was a child like when she was born. She's in her late 70s Now, and she had so much pain that she went from somebody in her 70s Who was walking five kilometers a day.

Bill Gasiamis 42:34

It's about two and a half miles a day she went to not being able to move pretty, pretty much off the couch because of so much pain, and she thought it was a lower back. And partially, the lower back was sort of starting to get to the point where it needed to be resolved through surgery. And in the process of trying to find the problem with the lower back, they did some scans.

Bill Gasiamis 42:59

And they found that she had a very arthritic hip, and she needed a hip replacement. And she couldn't go through those surgeries at the same time, she would do one and then go through the other one a year later. So she did the back surgery first. And that relieves some of the pain. But then it comes it's somehow brought forward all of the hip pain.

Bill Gasiamis 43:23

And she was so disabled by it, that she was in so much pain, it was probably the first time in my life that I've seen it depressed, you know, what I would call depressed? And she didn't describe it like that. But that's kind of how it looked. And I just said to her, why don't you take some pain meds? And she never took any pain meds for any of her issues ever. She has never taken any pain meds.

Bill Gasiamis 43:49

The doctors gave her a couple of she took them once it slowed down her bowels.

She said I've never taken them again. They stopped me from going to the toilet. I said, Okay, fair enough. And then I was just trying to get to the bottom of why she can manage when I know people who are suffering from similar issues back, or leg problems or knee problems, etc.

Bill Gasiamis 44:12

And they're and they're on pain meds. And she said, because there are so many worse things that can be happening to me and my family right now. And if the only thing that I have to deal with is pain, then I'm pretty blessed. That's pretty good. You know, that's all manage that. And when in time the surgery will come. And hopefully, if the surgery works, then the pain will be reduced and everything will go away.

Bill Gasiamis 44:39

Oh my gosh, like, how do you bottle that? How do you bottle that and then just hand it down to other people to deal with that? I just couldn't understand that. And I think it comes back to what was said about suffering earlier, you know, which is a quote, there's a quote that's been attributed to the Dell Lama, which goes, you know, pain is inevitable, but suffering is optional.

Stacie Wyatt 45:05

Yeah, for sure.

Bill Gasiamis 45:08

But people who might not have caught on to what I meant by that is suffering is in the head. Pain and physical pain and all that kind of thing is in the body. But suffering is something that's happening in your mind.

Stacie Wyatt 45:23

Yeah. And I felt like when I went back to my, my yoga teacher, and after he had opened up kind of took the blinders off of, my suffering, you know, I was choosing that I was choosing to see my situation with my daughter, and my husband, leaving me is just this misery when, in actuality, it was empowering. And it was good. And it was what needed to happen.

Stacie Wyatt 45:44

And, you know, I stepped into being an amazing advocate for her. And when she's doing tremendously well for 30-year-olds, and I needed to do that, and I probably couldn't have done that if he would have stuck around. And I don't know why



things happen, but it did. And, and I was no longer responding to the life I had, as suffering, I was responding to the life I had as an opportunity and a blessing.

Stacie Wyatt 46:15

And everything changed. And so if I can just pass that nugget on to the students that are in front of me that there's an opportunity in every situation, to be grateful to shine to do something with it, that sort of thing. Oh, I said, Well, what are you going to do with it? And so when we talk about like, the physical part of yoga, that brings up some frustration for my students who maybe are paralyzed, or, you know, there's a lot of, you know, anger, when I might suggest, can you put your arms above your head?

Stacie Wyatt 46:53

And students have said, you know, I can't move my left arm? Well, can I help you with that? Can I touch you? Well, there's a connection again, there's a community, there's an invitation to allow somebody to help. And for a lot of, you know, those harder guys in my world, all of a sudden, there's a softening. And so I'm, I'm lifting their arm for them. And they're feeling something that they haven't felt since their event because they don't get PT anymore.

Stacie Wyatt 47:21

They don't get, you know, physiotherapy, they don't get it that stretch, there's no funding for massage. And then they're like putty in my hands, like, Oh, can you do that again, can you do it again, I move their arm this way. And they feel something here, what I've done that they're not aware of is I've just taken their left hand and crossed that amazing midline to the right side.

Stacie Wyatt 47:44

And there's a little bit of neurons happening in the brain that they didn't even know was going on. And so I do that a few times. And all of a sudden, their anxiety, their dysregulation, their, whatever I call it, their pissed offeree kind of just settles down, because I've crossed the midline. And then we do that a few times, we might make a cake, make some frosting, I mean, it's all playful things.

Stacie Wyatt 48:09

I'm not going in and speaking Sanskrit, I'm just like, hey, you know, reach across, let's do some boxing. And I'm working that midline. And there's some organization happening in the brain. And then the physical pieces, they're feeling

a sensation they haven't felt in a long time, and they feel better. And, you know, I support their spine with a pillow if they're slumped.

Stacie Wyatt 48:33

And now all of a sudden, they can take a full breath, because they're not curled into this, you know, half fetal position. After all, now they can open up the diaphragm, well, that brings oxygen to the brain, and then there's clarity. And so of course, by the end of 45 minutes, they're going to feel different, but they don't even know what they're doing to know that it's going to be different.

Stacie Wyatt 48:33

Because I don't make it scary. Or say, well, we are going to follow me, and here's what we're going to do. It's just like, hey, can you touch my hand and touch your toe, not your other hand and we we make cake and frosting and I just make it something familiar to them. So a lot of the gentleman, we do referee signals, you know, we do touchdowns or whatever, you know, I got my little poster out and I learned all the signals what referees do.

## **Adaptive yoga and its benefits for physical and mental well-being**

Stacie Wyatt 49:24

And pretty soon we're doing referee signals, and they have no idea but it's fun and they're moving. And they haven't moved for a long time. And then there's laughter And look how funny this guy is. And look at you did that you lifted your leg and there's camaraderie and connection and (sigh).

Bill Gasiamis 49:43

I felt that in rehab, you know, everyone is about a week or two weeks or a month out of having a stroke, the worst thing that happened to them, and all of a sudden they're more interested in how well you're doing with your hand movements, or with your leg movement and they It's pretty stuffed themselves, you know, but they're going, hey, well done, man, and you don't know this person from a bar of soap and then they're just like, wow.

Bill Gasiamis 49:44

It's such an interesting situation to find yourself in is when, when everyone is supposedly suffering, everyone's in pain, everyone's got something, but

everyone's looking out to, you know, too, to pick you up, you know, to support you to make you feel better, and it doesn't happen at home on your own. It doesn't happen. Being at the house on your miserable suffering and worrying about what people think and all that type of stuff.

Bill Gasiamis 50:35

And I love how you suck in the men, you know, they're just so dumb, then, what do you got to do say do hand signals referee signals. Because when you said that, immediately, I felt like, that's me taking control of a situation telling people what to do. You know? No, that's not how it was. No, that's not a touchdown, though. This is Yeah, it feels like it's an authority, authority kind of thing. And I'm telling you what to do.

Bill Gasiamis 50:57

And you have to comply. And it's like, man, so simple, but the benefits are huge. And that's the thing is, I've done another two episodes on yoga, adaptive yoga. One with it doesn't matter, though. They're all about 30 episodes apart, something like that. And that's the whole point of the whole point is to try and get people to understand, it shouldn't even really be called Yoga, because it's, you know, not the yoga that we all sort of see.

Bill Gasiamis 51:32

But I love the fact that the word yoga is used because most people know what yoga looks like. And I love how then you sort of take the word yoga and just use it as a scam to get people in. And then you just change it and turn it into mixing the bowl and all that kind of stuff. It's got nothing to do with white tights and weird stretchy poses.

Stacie Wyatt 52:01

What's cool is they like, see, like, I can do something. So then there's the confidence that comes. And they can see, you know, that their brokenness, a lot of times we have very discouraged and broken and then you hear from your peers, no, you're not broken, you're amazing. And I feel something physiologically different in my body when I'm just getting those endorphins. And I'm moving and my neurons are communicating.

Stacie Wyatt 52:29

And I'm taking a full breath, and we do some, the third pillar of my practice is

breathing. And we're going to breathe together. Because when I breathe out, you're going to breathe in. And that means we're connected. Again, we've just shared breath. And so it always trickles back down to the union. You and me right now we're, we're practicing yoga because we're connected to pieces coming together.

Stacie Wyatt 52:57

And even if you come to the yoga practice, and you simply sit, and you breathe, and you ask and answer a question, that's okay. If they're not in a place to move their body, that's okay. There's no like, you have to do this. It's just come as you are, and you will be welcomed and seen. And so we do those four things. And we finish with a little checkout, there's always an opportunity to share, you know, how do you feel what's going on, or what's going on next week, what's next in your day.

Stacie Wyatt 53:30

And, you know, they're very curious about my life. And I'm very transparent with what's going on in my world. And, you know, I've been out of work for four months, because I had my hip replacement. And then week five, I'm doing great. All of a sudden, my leg swells up twice as big, can't walk on it, and have to go back and get the whole thing redone. have blood clots, I have an infection.

Stacie Wyatt 53:57

And so I promised them I'd be back. I'll be back in six weeks because everybody says it's so easy. It's been four months. And so I'm just now going back next week for my first kind of go back. And, and for these guys, a lot of the students, there's trust, you know, people say, Oh, I'm going to show up and do this with you. And then they don't show up. And so my heart has been just like, they need to know I am coming back because I promised them I would be back.

Stacie Wyatt 54:28

And I built a lot of trust in them. And so words out, they know I'm coming and it'll be great to see them again and just see how they've maintained their mindfulness, their gratitude, I'd left him with a little bit of homework. You know, I need to know what you're grateful for. And so we do a little contest like gratitude challenges and in December we do Karma Yoga, which is where I ask them to come up with a project to be of service to others.

Stacie Wyatt 54:59

People, and I'll provide all the stuff but you got to figure out what you want to do. And so a popular project is to bring muffins to the neighbor, and they don't even know their neighbor, which is a tragedy because you should know your neighbor. And so that's an opportunity for them to I bring the muffins, they package them up, and they go and knock on the door, in a wheelchair, what however we get there, and they say my name is so and so. And I'd like to give you this for the holidays.

Stacie Wyatt 55:31

Now all of a sudden, they're providing something to their neighbor. And we've just given away something good. And I've had two houses do this, where the neighbor then invites the residents to come over and watch football like there's a connection now. There's a purpose. And so it always kind of goes back to what are we here to do. And it's not to gain flexibility touch our toes or look good in yoga pants.

Stacie Wyatt 56:02

But it's to find I have purpose and value. And maybe I can move my arm a little bit with help or I bring a yoga strap and I tie it around this guy's paralyzed arm and I say pull. Now suddenly he can pull his arm. Well, he didn't know he could do that. And so now he has a skill that he didn't know he had. And so there's, you can just see confidence growing, and they come in eager every single week. It's cool. It's cool.

Bill Gasiamis 56:31

Yeah, it is cool. And even if you just teach them how to breathe, that is just the biggest gift. Before we started the interview, I told you a little bit about my week and how I took a fall a few days ago, today's Saturday when we're recording this for me. And it was on Wednesday at around 3 pm. So what I do for a living is painting and maintenance. And we've got a business that paints people's houses and I was climbing up the ladder of this scaffold. My left arm is my with deficits.

Bill Gasiamis 57:07

It's the one that is numb and doesn't feel things quite so well. And in the last 10 years, I've been up and down ladders and scaffolds a lot. It's always a little bit sort of scary my balance the issue normally. And I've taken a climb up this ladder, I've only got two rungs up. And when I was about to get onto the third rung with

my left leg, I went to grab the rung above my head with my hand, my hand rubbed that rung, but it let go. And sometimes my hand do that lets go of things and to stymie let go at the worst time.

Bill Gasiamis 57:43

And I took a tumble I fell backwards. And before I hit the deck, I I landed on a metal bar that was positioned horizontally, which was part of the scaffold, and I smashed my ribs, the back of my ribs on the right-hand side. And then I fell off the middle bar and then landed with my head on the deck. So I took two hits, you know, one onto the middle bar and one onto the deck.

Bill Gasiamis 58:13

So everyone who's watching and listening, I am okay, but I am in a lot of pain, it has been tough to sleep the last three or four days. And it's not going to get any easier for the next few days. But one of the things that I noticed the most is the inability because of the pain in my ribs and they're not broken, I had it looked at, and they're not cracked d, and there are no fractures or anything like that. A lot of bruising is the laughing, sneezing, coughing, clearing my throat.

Bill Gasiamis 58:43

That's all difficult and taking big breaths is difficult. That's impacted how my chest is feeling literally in three days because I haven't been able to breathe properly. And I'm avoiding taking large breaths with my ribcage. And I'm trying to minimize the amount of the ribcage expands. And I just feel like from that, that lack of oxygenation, like I feel more lethargic or feel more tired.

Bill Gasiamis 59:14

And it's probably also got to do with the injury and the fact that I'm not sleeping but everything has become harder. And what a gift. You know, giving somebody that gift of just being able to breathe more. Yeah. At yoga, what that does for energy levels, is their ability to feel like they can do something strenuous, better, their brain is better. The organs work better and r, and the digst, and gin work better. Everything works better.

Bill Gasiamis 59:44

Just by that what I'm trying to demonstrate to people watching and listening is just get onto YouTube, find a YouTube video that teaches you how to breathe, how to do deep breathing, and it hasn't cost you a single thing you didn't have to get

anywhere and all you need to do is talk for five minutes a day, and even if you only do five minutes every second day, and you still get this amazing benefit, and then you take that benefit.

Bill Gasiamis 1:00:08

And then you do something with it, you pass it on, you let other people know what you did. If you take that to yoga, or adaptive yoga, or whatever you want to call it, it'll just be an amazing thing that you learned that you didn't think was that important, like I'm breathing all the time, but not really, some of us aren't breathing all the time.

## **Adaptive yoga and breathing techniques for managing stress and trauma**

Stacie Wyatt 1:00:30

And they say that like the average Yogi breathes anywhere from 20 to 24 breaths per minute. So we're taking longer breaths, right? And somebody who, who doesn't practice yoga is taking fast, quick, like, very fast, very quick, Swift breaths, because we're gonna fight or flight, we're panicking.

Stacie Wyatt 1:00:56

So we're panting. And so if I can teach them to rise that elevator up and go slow, and to find a space between the inhale and a space between the exhale, where there's just this micro pause, well, then we go back to Viktor Frankl who's the greatest teacher ever, and says, between every stimulus and every response, there's a space in that space, we get to choose and in that choice lies freedom.

Stacie Wyatt 1:01:25

So we get a trigger. If we have a micro space, we get to choose, am I going to react or am I going to respond? So if I can teach how to breathe in that way, like take a breath and hold it for a second, you just created a space. And the more that we can create space in our breath, that creates space in our body, then we can create space in our mind, we can access coping strategies we can stop before we yell at somebody. Now I have space in all parts of my being. And when there's space, there's clarity and peace.

Bill Gasiamis 1:02:05

And you're responding instead of reacting.

Stacie Wyatt 1:02:09

Yes most of us live a stressful life. So we're constantly reacting, then you throw in a neurological condition where you don't feel like you have control, you don't know who you are, you're in pain you're in, you know, fear what's going to be my future. I'm 20 years old, and I got hit by a car and what you know, there, I'm here all the time, stress, fight or flight. And so even if for 45 minutes, we're decompressing that and creating space.

Stacie Wyatt 1:02:36

And so I might, you know, guide the breath, we're gonna breathe in for four, which is hard for brand new people, we're going to hold it for two. Now breathe out for B without for two takes a while to get there. But they're seeing that their physical body can do it. And then they're seeing like, Oh, I feel like this, like a lot of them say like, Wow, I feel like I got a bus. I feel kind of good.

Stacie Wyatt 1:03:04

Oh, yeah. And then what's happening to the chemicals in your brain? You're like, oh, I can handle today because I feel good. So it's all just, you know, another tool in their toolbox. And that's where I tried to tell them, you know, I'm not going to teach you how to stand on your head or stand on your leg and look good in yoga pants. I'm going to teach you how to be the best version of who you are today. And then hopefully you'll carry that into the next day.

Bill Gasiamis 1:03:36

Yeah, and that has a ripple effect that affects everybody in a positive way around you. So hopefully soon you'll be back at it. How far off? Do you feel like you are now?

Stacie Wyatt 1:03:48

Well, I did a couple of houses yesterday one house was a female, all people, women with traumatic brain injuries. So it was good. It was hard. For different reasons. All of the women are my age. And that's always a real eye opener to sit with other moms and grandma and just, you know, here I get the freedom to drive and to go about my life and they're living in a home where most of them are in wheelchairs, and they rarely get visitors. It's just hard. But it was good to be back.

Stacie Wyatt 1:04:23



And then I had an all-female house of older women with dementia. And I mean, I say this with the most respect ever, but they didn't even know I was ever gone. So that's okay. Like, they're like, Oh, you're here. It was so sweet. Like they didn't know it's been four months, but that's okay. They were happy to see me and I'll take it so it was good. And then next week, I start my full schedule back, and I'm ready. I like I've gained so much perspective, in my suffering with this hip stuff.

Stacie Wyatt 1:04:55

You know, I went in feeling the strongest physically that I've ever been in my adult life, I was physically ready and emotionally ready. And then I get a lot of complications. I'm in and out of the hospital a lot. And I had to get humble and I had to, again, what am I going to do with this? How am I going to learn what's made perspective, I was a girl who would track my steps, and I had to be it, you know, 20,000 steps a day, or I was not good. And I was lifting weights all the time.

Stacie Wyatt 1:05:29

And I don't even care now, I don't even care. And so that has been a huge lesson in me is how do I feel if I feel like walking, I'll take a walk, I still use a cane, that's okay. But I just think I've softened myself, I have very high standards for myself. And I've lowered them to where I am just happier. I'm not so rigid. And I have to I have to I have to I have to.

Stacie Wyatt 1:05:57

And, so I want to pass that on to my students to look at their own life, and what perspective have they gained in their own, you know, suffering, their pain, their discouragement, I've been very discouraged in my body's ability to heal, and what do we do with it? You know, how can we be better, so I'm excited to share some of that and learn from them.

Stacie Wyatt 1:06:23

I mean, they're the greatest teachers, their life's been upside down, I just had a bad hip, but I would like to be able to receive some wisdom from them because I do feel, although I'm called the yoga teacher, I feel like I gained so much from them, that I take their lessons. And the gift that my intention is always is as I receive a lesson from them, their wisdom, their courage, my job, I believe, is to be a conduit for them.

Stacie Wyatt 1:07:01

And so with their permission, I often write about their story, I share their insights into their injury, on a blog or in a podcast, or however, I get a platform to do that, because they're sitting in a house all day by themselves with no ability to share their story.

Stacie Wyatt 1:07:22

And if I'm so blessed to hear their story, I kind of have a divine responsibility to share that because I think we can all learn from them. I honor that, and I take it with a privilege to be able to share their story and, make a difference in people's lives had no idea that even these things exist in the world, you hear about stroke, but unless you're touched by it, what does that look like?

Bill Gasiamis 1:07:55

Same with any other condition that people go through, right? You heard about what are hip surgeries like, so? Yeah, whatever, okay, they put a new one in your back, you're good to go. That's not what it means. I save. My growth came from helping other people with the podcast as well, and providing that platform so people can share stories, I didn't realize how powerful it was gonna be.

Bill Gasiamis 1:08:19

But it was so powerful, and I got so much out of it. And then, and then I had another opportunity to grow, grow, and have some wisdom come my way when I was in a wheelchair for a little while when I couldn't walk. And then I realized, for the first time, I realized, ah, people who are sitting in a wheelchair who can't walk aren't just sitting down. There's way more to it than just sitting on their butt and getting through life with wheels instead of legs. And it's like, okay, you were unwise to the world, you are naive.

Bill Gasiamis 1:08:56

And that's okay. And it was okay that I was because I don't know what people are going through. Unless you're going through it. It's very hard to put yourself in other people's shoes, right? And life and see what it's really like. But, you know, wisdom came from that. And every time I have a fall I try not to make it a very bad one or a deadly one or whatever. I try to avoid them.

Bill Gasiamis 1:09:21

But I learned something I learned that I am still not my old self, you know, the one that was able to feel everything on the left side and all that kind of and then I

need to. It's a reminder, to take care, and be patient. Slow down at the end of the day. You know, it was 3 pm it was in the day we'd been going all day.

Bill Gasiamis 1:09:43

And maybe I was tired, who knows. So I love the things you share today. Thank you so much for reaching out to be on the podcast if people want to connect with you. Perhaps find out about where one of your classes might be or invite You to their location, where's the best place for them to go to connect with you?

Stacie Wyatt 1:10:06

Probably, email is always great. So my email, I'm always on the email, and very responsive to that. And also my Instagram. Instagram has a little bit of my personal life too. It's not just all business, I have a YouTube channel where I have a series of chair, and yoga classes that you can do at home, I have a dementia series, and I have an entire series on hip replacements because I think if we can teach what we know, and what we're going through, it can empower other people.

Stacie Wyatt 1:10:33

And my slant on hip replacement has been to heal mindfully. And while the doctors give you great advice on the physical side, your self-care changes, your habits change, and your emotions change. And so I tried to provide how to have some mindfulness in the healing process.

Stacie Wyatt 1:10:55

So that has been so much fun to share that. So YouTube is a great platform, I have a lot of content that's free. And you know, it might it might hit somebody's hard. There's a whole gratitude series 10 days of being grateful. And so that's a great place, Instagram or YouTube or an email is perfect.

Bill Gasiamis 1:11:13

Excellent. We'll all make sure that the links to all of your socials and all your contact details are in the show notes. For anyone watching and listening. If you want to connect with Stacie go to [recoveryafterstroke.com/episode](https://recoveryafterstroke.com/episode) That's where you'll find a transcript of the entire interview. Plus, you'll find the links to Stacie's socials, Stacie Wyatt, thank you so much for being on the podcast.

Stacie Wyatt 1:11:38

Thanks for having me. It's something I love talking about. So I appreciate all the great questions too. Nobody's asked those things. That's cool.

Bill Gasiamis 1:11:46

I'm glad I asked good questions all the best with the rest of your recovery and have a great start to next week and your new your next chapter in your yoga journey.

Stacie Wyatt 1:11:59

Perfect. Thank you so much. This was fun.

Bill Gasiamis 1:12:03

Thank you for being with us on today's episode for further insights into our guests and access to a transcript of this interview, visit [recoveryafterstroke.com/episodes](https://recoveryafterstroke.com/episodes). And to those who have already shared their feedback, your reviews are deeply appreciated. Your words not only sustain this podcast but also illuminate the path for others seeking solace and guidance in their stroke recovery journey.

Bill Gasiamis 1:12:30

If you're yet to leave a review, consider sharing your thoughts on iTunes or Spotify. And if you're watching on YouTube, drop a comment below, like this episode, and subscribe for future updates. Now if you're a stroke survivor eager to share your story, know that you are welcome here. unscripted and unfiltered. Your experience holds the power to inspire and uplift others facing similar challenges.

Bill Gasiamis 1:12:55

And for those with innovative products or services geared towards supporting stroke survivors, there's an opportunity to collaborate on a sponsored episode of the show as well. Simply visit [recovery after stroke.com/contact](https://recoveryafterstroke.com/contact). To explore this avenue further. Thank you once again for your presence and your support. Together, we navigate the journey of recovery one episode at a time until the next time, take care, and stay resilient.

Intro 1:13:24

Importantly, we present many podcasts designed to give you an insight and understanding into the experiences of other individuals' opinions and treatment protocols discussed during any podcast or the individual's own experience and we do not necessarily share the same opinion nor do we recommend any treatment protocol discussed.

#### Intro 1:13:41

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#### Intro 1:14:03

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#### Intro 1:14:18

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#### Intro 1:14:32

If you are experiencing a health emergency or think you might be call 000 if in Australia or your local emergency number immediately for emergency assistance or go to the nearest hospital emergency department medical information changes constantly. While we aim to provide current quality information and our content.

#### Intro 1:14:48

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