

Addiction Diabetes And Stroke - Loyd James Fox III

In this episode of the Recovery After Stroke Podcast, you'll hear how Loyd navigated the intersection of **addiction, diabetes and stroke** and how he found the strength to overcome adversity. This is a must-watch for anyone facing similar struggles or looking for inspiration on their own journey towards recovery.

Highlights:

00:54 Introduction

04:09 The Off And On Stroke Symptoms

12:20 The Five Foods To Avoid After A Stroke Course

16:33 The ER Doctor The I Disliked The Most

24:09 What It's Like Being On The Other Side?

26:40 Laughter Is The Best Medicine

33:49 Addiction Diabetes And Stroke

45:14 Gratitude And Forgiveness

53:19 The Hyperbaric Chamber And How It Works

1:04:04 Finding New Perspective: Life After a Stroke

1:11:09 Finding Your Tribe

Transcription:

Loyd James Fox III 0:00

I've got this doctor who's doing the stroke scale on me. And he's asking me if I can see his fingers wiggling. And I'm trying to tell him. No. But I have history of diabetic neuropathy with laser surgery on my retinas. That has ruined my peripheral vision. So I couldn't tell you if I was having a visual stroke. Because I can't see until about here. He wasn't listening to me. I'm probably sure the bill is gonna be huge for a doctor that did nothing for me. Just weightless fingers.

Intro 0:41

This is the recovery after stroke podcast, with Bill Gasiamis, helping you navigate recovery after stroke.

Introduction - Loyd James Fox III



Bill Gasiamis 0:54

Hello, and welcome once again to the recovery after stroke podcast. This is episode 239. And my guest today is nurse, Jim Fox. In our discussion we discuss Jim's journey of living with type one diabetes, overcoming addiction and healing after an ischemic stroke. Jim Fox, welcome to the podcast.

Loyd James Fox III 1:15

Hello, how are you?

Bill Gasiamis 1:17

I'm well thank you, Jim, tell me a little bit about what happened to you.

Loyd James Fox III 1:24

November 13th, of 2022. I woke up, started a fire by woodstove. And then I went back to bed. And then I woke up, tried to use my cell phone. And I wasn't able to use fine motor control to type in a message to my wife good morning, because my wife's a registered nurse also, we're both nurses. So she works at an ICU I used to work in ER. So we've got a little bit of history medicine.

Bill Gasiamis 2:09

So you couldn't type the good morning message?

Loyd James Fox III 2:14

I could not know. At the time, I realized that I was having problems with speaking too I was going to talk to my dog of all things. And I was garbled. So I knew at that time that I was having a stroke. I absolutely knew it. So I got up, try to call 911. And the thing about it was is that I didn't even attempt to use my left hand it

was my right hand that I had the stroke in so on my right side.

Bill Gasiamis 3:03

It didn't occur to you to just swap over the hands for a moment.

Loyd James Fox III 3:07

No. So the kicker is that I was having a stroke throughout the day before. So it was coming and going, so I went to lunch from work got to my truck. And when I got out to the street, I pushed on the gas pedal. And you wouldn't think that there's fine motor control with your gas pedal.

Loyd James Fox III 3:40

But I pushed my foot down and the truck jumped out in the street. And when I went to turn the wheel, it slipped out of my hand. So I had to grab it with my left hand. And then I was able to grab it with both hands and then figure out like what the heck is wrong with my truck?

Bill Gasiamis 4:08

It was the truck.

The Off And On Stroke Symptoms of Loyd James Fox III

Loyd James Fox III 4:09

It was the truck. And I've heard you talk to other people on your podcasts about how they drove and it was always something else. Look, I've been trained in emergency medicine certified emergency room nurse trained in the NIH Stroke Scale, Cincinnati Stroke Scale educated. I drove home, once I got home, the symptoms resolved.

Loyd James Fox III 4:43

So it was coming and going. Had lunch, drove back to work. And then it was my pen. I didn't put two and two together. My didn't wasn't writing, I wasn't writing with my right hand. So often on off and on, I currently work as a dialysis nurse. And I was getting patients off. And when I got out of my chair, I stumbled.

Loyd James Fox III 5:25

And it just went from there. I had a little slurred speech, but I'm a type one

diabetic also. So I have symptoms like that when my blood sugar's low. So I had something to eat. The speech went away, I went home, and I was really tired. Mind you, I get up at 3am to go to work at 4am and then work a 12 hour shift and come home.

Loyd James Fox III 6:00

Came home went sat the backyard. I mean, it was like 55 degrees out and I just sat there just thinking, what is wrong? I had this feeling of doom. I have this feeling of I've never told my wife this. So she probably gonna watch this and listen and go Oh, shit. So I went to bed, and I slept all night. And I got up the next morning, my wife had gotten to work. She got up at 5:45 to be at work at seven o'clock. And she was at work. I couldn't call 911 so she called 911.

Bill Gasiamis 6:50

Hang on a sec. How did that happen, though? Because you couldn't type the message to her. You couldn't speak to the dog, how did she actually understand what was happening?

Loyd James Fox III 7:04

So in the middle of that, I know I'm kind of piecemeal, my brain is still just, this is so new.

Bill Gasiamis 7:15

So I'll guide you.

Loyd James Fox III 7:21

In the middle of it, I was able to type a message to her. By that time, I switched to my left hand. And I texted her stroke. And my son who's 16 comes out of the room. Just before all that. And he said good morning and I'm kind of grumpy in the morning anyways.

Loyd James Fox III 7:59

And I grumbled at him. I said good morning, but it was a grumble because I was slurred speech. So went into the kitchen, got something to eat, went back to his bedroom. And then he came out with his phone and said Mom wants you to smile. And at that point, I smiled and was able to speak kind of smiled, stuck my tongue out, put my arms out. You put your arms out one way and then you hold them up and you've been through the deal.

Bill Gasiamis 8:39

The stroke test.

Loyd James Fox III 8:41

So she said I called 911. So, the ambulance gets here, the fire truck gets here. I'm not sure if they do that in Australia.

Bill Gasiamis 8:58

They don't but we're very familiar with the fact that you guys have your fire trucks loaded with paramedics I believe.

Loyd James Fox III 9:07

Some places have paramedics. I'm not sure about city of Shasta Lake, I'm not even sure if it was the city of Redding or the city of Shasta Lake that developed I live right on a line of cities on I could throw a rock at the city of Redding and I have Shasta Lake on the other side where I live.

Loyd James Fox III 9:29

So it could have been one or the other. So we have them i i squeezed their hands. I did hold my hands out and then the ambulance drove up just after the firetruck got there. I walk out to them was having weakness in my left leg. But I was able to control it kind of you know because I can't believe I did it. I just, I walked out there, I could have fallen and hit my head and ended up with the bleed. But I'm so stupid.

Bill Gasiamis 10:11

You're normal, it's what we all did. There's so many stroke survivors have done something like that. But I get it, I get that comment that you made about yourself, you know, you're so stupid, but you're having a stroke, like, it's okay. You know, your brain is not really working the way that it needs to be.

Bill Gasiamis 10:32

But there is another part of you. That's work. And that's the part that's getting you moving to go towards help, right? So you are being proactive towards your support and your recovery because you're moving towards help you've done all the right things, even though they've been in a haphazard way. Or they haven't been efficient or whatever they haven't been.

Bill Gasiamis 10:56

They're still all the right things, you know, stroke, you typed you became involved in that part of the process, which was you know, to test whether you're having a stroke or not the FAST signs that everyone took you through and then you walked towards the ambulance if you had fallen, maybe you would have tripped maybe you wouldn't have hit your head.

Bill Gasiamis 11:23

If you had blacked out and fallen. You might have hit your head and then that would have been really dramatic. But you didn't so don't worry about it. You got there. And now you're about to enter the ambulance. Right? Is that what's happening or are you waiting for the ambulance to arrive because the fire guys are there?

Loyd James Fox III 11:42

I mean, they it was like the fire truck stop parked, they got out, they tested me. For what little they know. And then the ambulance pulled in and the EMT got out, opened the door the paramedic pulled the gurney out and set me down on it got me in the truck. My cute little neighbors come out. Like they're crying. Oh my god. They're so cute. Carl and Janet. I've been neighbors with them for 23 years.

The Five Foods To Avoid After A Stroke

Bill Gasiamis 12:20

Hi, everyone. Just a quick break and we'll be right back to the interview. As a stroke survivor, I understand the difficulties of finding the right information about post-stroke nutrition. So I developed a course The Five Foods To Avoid After A Stroke. While most people are talking about what to eat after stroke to support brain health and recovery. Very few are talking about what you should avoid eating after stroke.

Bill Gasiamis 12:43

If you want to support your brain to heal and you are curious about the five foods that may make matters worse, when you consume them, then this course may be for you. In the fun five series of interviews, you'll hear about what foods not to eat after stroke. But most importantly, why the interviews are done with a qualified nutritionist Stacy Turner and performance coach Matthias Turner.

Bill Gasiamis 13:07

In the more than five hours of interviews we discussed the five common foods that cause inflammation in the body and brain and how they could interfere with healing and how that could make fatigue worse. For just \$49. This five part series of more than eight hours of interviews will with full PDF transcripts. mp3 and videos will give you everything you need to know about the foods to avoid and why the modules include eight reasons to quit sugar after stroke.

Bill Gasiamis 13:37

Seven reasons to quit caffeine after stroke. Eight reasons to quit gluten after stroke, Six reasons to quit dairy after stroke, and six reasons to quit alcohol after stroke. So visit recoveryafterstroke.com/courses. For this and other specifically designed courses that are made by a stroke survivor for stroke survivors. Once again, you'll get more than eight hours of content.

Bill Gasiamis 14:03

All audio is downloadable in mp3 format so you can listen on the go. full transcripts of all the content to take notes on are available for download or so that you can read instead of listen presented by a stroke survivor for stroke survivors. also presented by a trained nutritionist and performance coach. You'll get 24-hour access lifetime access to the courses purchased and you'll be able to interact with me in the comments section. Go to recoveryafterstroke.com and check them out now.

Loyd James Fox III 14:39

So they were crying and said you're gonna be okay. I've had a stroke before Carl said you can get through this. So, we get to the ambulance, they put an IV in me they they put the EKG on me, they don't put oxygen on, they stopped doing that. But they did all the other stuff. They didn't give me aspirin because.

Loyd James Fox III 15:13

They couldn't tell that I was having a bleed or if I was having a clot. Yep. So ischemic stroke versus clot, so got to the emergency room. And my wife's there. My daughter's there. I have no idea how my daughter got there. But she was there. And then the intensivist was there. Because my wife is friends with the intensivist.

Loyd James Fox III 15:48

What's an intensivist?

Loyd James Fox III 15:53

The only work she does, is an intensive care, Doctor. So, I've got, I've got an ICU nurse, I've got an intensivist there. And please forgive me. But I'm gonna say, I get the doctor that I disliked the most out of all the doctors I've ever worked in, in the emergency room that I worked in that I helped run. And here this guy is.

Bill Gasiamis 16:28

And now and now that's on your mind when all this other stuff is happening.

The ER Doctor That Loyd James Fox III Disliked The Most

Loyd James Fox III 16:33

All this other stuff is happening. And now I've got this doctor who's doing the stroke scale on me. And he's asking me if I can see his fingers wiggling. And I'm trying to tell him. No, but I have history of diabetic neuropathy with laser surgery on my retinas. That has ruined my peripheral vision. So I couldn't tell you if I was having a visual stroke. Because I can't see until about here.

Loyd James Fox III 17:16

He wasn't listening to me, I'm probably sure the bill's gonna be huge for a doctor that did nothing for me. Just wiggled his fingers. But I got to the CT scanner. The neuro intensive care doctor that retrieves clots has been called in the CT scanner. I mean, I got the best care on the planet waiting for me I've got the A team.

Loyd James Fox III 17:53

They do the scan, they they kiss me die. They do this scan, and then they do another scan with an IV dye. And my wife comes back into tell me that it's not a bleed. But the doctor wants to look at the scans as they go through. So I have a we have a carotid artery that comes off our neck.

Loyd James Fox III 18:25

The vein there's two lines, the M1 is the first vessel that comes off the carotid on my left side is 90% occluded. So they decide that since I woke up with the stroke, I can't give them a time exactly that we're not going to do the TPA.

Bill Gasiamis 18:58

Too many hours have passed.

Loyd James Fox III 19:00

So many hours have passed. They couldn't tell. But the problem being was that the risk outweighed the benefits for the little symptoms that I had. Give the TPA, blow blood vessel, end up vegetable. Will treat you medically, you're talking you're walking I was able to transfer from the CT scanner table to the ER gurney so I've gone from the paramedics Gurney to the ER gurney, back to the emergency room. And still it's just so much it's like oh my God, this is really happening. So much is going on. So many things going through my brain.

Bill Gasiamis 20:05

Yeah.

Loyd James Fox III 20:07

So at this point, my speech is very slurred. I can agree with them I can. People are telling you that my speech isn't as bad as it could be. So we get transferred to the ICU. And we're going to do an MRI scan the next day. So I'm being admitted for observation. I'm going to start on Plavix, they gave me aspirin. I'm not sure if they gave me Lovenox or not. So much going on.

Loyd James Fox III 20:55

So we did that, we're doing all all of the hourly stroke stuff. But my wife has to go home, she's got to get some sleep. She's been up all day. And now it's 11 o'clock at night, the days just flown by. And I give her a kiss and she goes home. My kids are all gone. It's just me. And in this ICU room, the monitors is beeping, my blood pressure's 190 over 106. So it's called permissive hypertension.

Bill Gasiamis 21:44

What does it mean?

Loyd James Fox III 21:48

That means that we don't want to change one's blood pressure too fast, because your blood pressure's high for a reason. Our bodies do stuff. Not because it wants to because it's trying to get as much blood to my brain as possible. Increase the pressure, get the blood in there. So at this point, I'm slurring still. And like shit, so I take my phone out. I got earbuds in and I start playing music.

Loyd James Fox III 22:34

I can't even remember what music. Maybe it was pink that I was listening to. And I'm a big fan of Pink. She's way cool. I'm 54 years old. And I'm listening to Pink.

Right? And about halfway through the first song. This is weird. I start singing. I can sing the words to the music I know. But I'm having trouble with words. Forming to tell people how I'm feeling or how I'm doing.

Bill Gasiamis 23:18

Wow. But you can sing the song and you can't speak under normal circumstances as we are speaking now. But you can sing a song you're probably a terrible singer I don't imagine you're. But , nonetheless you do something that resembles singing.

Loyd James Fox III 23:38

I'm not singing way out loud, like Pink does. But I'm mouthing the words and it's coming out of my mouth. And I'm like, this is weird. So I told the nurse this. And she said, Well, I guess that's a plus. Right? You know, it's now three o'clock in the morning. And I'm not slept. Actually. I'm not going to sleep all night. I just can't.

What It's Like Being On The Other Side?

Bill Gasiamis 24:09

What's it like Jim? What's it like to be on the other side of the hospital bed? You're the guy that goes around and cares for people and make sure they're well, and now you find yourself on the receiving end of that care as a patient. Did you ever in your wildest dreams, imagine that you one day might be a patient in the hospital where you're so familiar?

Loyd James Fox III 24:39

Yes.

Bill Gasiamis 24:40

You did? It had crossed your mind?

Loyd James Fox III 24:45

The thing about it is is I didn't think it would be my brain. Okay, I thought it would be my heart. I've been a diabetic since 1976. I was diagnosed when I was nine. Look, I've taken care of lots of diabetics. I knew that it was gonna happen. I just did, living every moment that I can, as best I can.

Loyd James Fox III 25:20

I'm telling you that the sunny and roses and, you know, rainbows coming out of my butthole. And, you know, it's not like that I'm a normal human being I can be crabby. If my blood sugars are high, I can be an asshole. If my blood sugars are low, I can be violent. It's the diabetes.

Bill Gasiamis 25:49

Okay. So when you find yourself in that situation, is it comforting to know the medical stuff that you know about what they're doing next and how they're going about this? Is that good? Or are you overthinking the negative side of that because you've seen the some of the you know, some of the bad luck stories?

Loyd James Fox III 26:19

Bad luck stories. I've seen ugly, awful, horrible, things. I don't sleep because of those ugly, awful, horrible, things. If you want to call in the middle of the night, I'll be awake.

Laughter Is The Best Medicine

Bill Gasiamis 26:42

Are you generally a positive outlook kind of guy, or are you not that way inclined? I'm just trying to get a sense of what a nurse who has your history in helping other people and what you've seen goes about thinking about their own experience with a life threatening situation?

Loyd James Fox III 27:05

I know for a fact that I'm going to die. Right? We're all gonna die. It's part of the deal. I know things, I know that the worst things can happen. I always try to be upbeat and happy and joke and laugh, because I truly think there's really no better medicine than laughter.

Intro 27:44

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.

Intro 27:53

Like, how long will it take to recover? Will I actually recover? What things should I avoid? In case I make matters worse, doctors will explain things. But obviously,

you've never had a stroke before, you probably don't know what questions to ask.

Intro 28:08

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 recoveryafterstroke.com where you can download a guide that will help you it's called seven questions to ask your doctor about your stroke.

Intro 28:27

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](https://recoveryafterstroke.com) and download the guide. It's free.

Loyd James Fox III 28:47

Some of the stuff that I've seen and help people through to be able to laugh with them and joke with them. To get them through it helps. That in the question about the bed, a hospital bed.

Loyd James Fox III 29:08

I grew up in a pediatric ward at the same hospital that I'm in now. Lots of of the time in the hospital. Hospital experience as a patient 100%. You know, I I've heard you talk about how you went in for your surgery how you went in as the best patient that they'd ever seen right?

Bill Gasiamis 29:37

That was my intention.

Loyd James Fox III 29:39

That's it. When I'm in the hospital, I'll be the best patient you've ever had. I'll be nice. I'll be cooperative. I'll let you do what you need done. I will go beyond what needs to be done. And so the part about being under the other side of the bed is it's scary. It is scary. It's what it is.

Bill Gasiamis 30:19

I hear you, I get what you're saying in that you're expressing it differently to most other stroke survivors who have had a stroke who are not in the medical field who are not caregivers who are not nurses.

Bill Gasiamis 30:37

You know, most other stroke survivors go down the path of they can clearly tell me the you know, it was the time when they realized they were mortal. It was a difficult time it was all of this.

Bill Gasiamis 30:46

And they didn't have that, that years of experience of seeing good outcomes and seeing negative outcomes and seeing people pass away and the rest of it.

Bill Gasiamis 30:54

So we're not programmed to know that that's part of life. So when it comes our way, it's like, oh, this is unexpected, I didn't expect that this would ever happen to me.

Bill Gasiamis 31:15

Your experience is extremely interesting to me to listen to because you're a diabetic patient, because you're a nurse, you've got a whole much broader range of knowledge and information about a topic like stroke than the average person.

Bill Gasiamis 31:40

And your approach is really what is it? I mean, for me listening to your approach about we're all going to die and all that, it's kind of comforting, even though you're very gently matter of fact.

Bill Gasiamis 31:57

It's still kind of comforting to see that from you and to know what you know, and to have been through what you have, you seem to have an acceptance that most people don't have.

Bill Gasiamis 32:13

And it's a great skill, and it's why I'm going there to try and understand it. Right. It's acceptance. I feel like that's what it is, would you describe it as acceptance?

Loyd James Fox III 32:22

It's, acceptance, with a lot of gratitude involved. Because in 2010, and this is going to be an interesting story. 2010 my father had a massive stroke. So I have a familial history of stroke also. Massive stroke, intubated, they didn't know where his family was when he had the stroke, and it took a couple days.

Loyd James Fox III 33:06

And of all the things a girl I dated, when I first got my nursing license, was working in the ICU and saw my dad's name. And my dad was Lloyd James Fox Jr. My legal name is Lloyd James Fox III.

Loyd James Fox III 33:27

So they found out that it was my dad, they called my house. I was in the mountains, camping with my five year old son, who was just about ready to go to the kindergartens.

Addiction, Diabetes And Stroke

Loyd James Fox III 33:49

So he had the stroke, and then all hell broke loose. My dad was an alcoholic. And he passed that gene on to me. But I take things just a little bit beyond that. So at that point in 2010, I was taking opiates for shoulder injury that I got working in the ER and got hooked on him.

Loyd James Fox III 34:26

A doctor in 2014 decided that he was going to stop prescribing them. What does one do when he's got a candy machine at work that gives you whatever you want?

Loyd James Fox III 34:47

I'm not saying it's the right thing to do, but I ended up as a full-fledged addict and suffering miserably, because I didn't have what I needed. It was awful. It was God awful.

Bill Gasiamis 35:09

You were in withdrawal or not able to access?

Loyd James Fox III 35:13

Drugs during the beginning of the week of my work week. And then by the end of my weekend, I would be in withdrawals. So I got caught. I entered a program for nurses in California here that allows you to hold your license, so you can't work, really work on yourself, weekly counseling, weekly nurse support meetings. Weekly, or daily, for a year narcotics anonymous needs.

Bill Gasiamis 36:07

Okay, hang on a second, hang on a second. What you're telling me there is a need for a specific program for addicted nurses to be able to attend rehabilitation, while maintaining their license, going through this rehabilitation process to get to the other side. And then hopefully, be well enough to go back to work?

Loyd James Fox III 36:35

Yeah, doctors, nurses, dentists, pharmacists, lawyers.

Bill Gasiamis 36:42

That is fucking amazing. So instead of treating people who get addicted like criminals, and taking their license, their ability to practice away and the rest of it is supporting those people to get rehabilitated.

Bill Gasiamis 37:05

And get off the addictive substances and get back to work. Man, that is amazing. I absolutely love the sound of that. And, but I don't like the fact that you ended up there, or that there's a need for it. But what an amazing program.

Loyd James Fox III 37:27

Amazing, so much that when I got out of the program in 2018, I ended up with pneumonia. They gave me morphine, for air hunger. And it started all over again.

Bill Gasiamis 37:45

Hang on a sec, what's air hunger?

Loyd James Fox III 37:48

Air hunger is what you can get when you can't breathe. Morphine relaxes you enough to where you can breathe.

Bill Gasiamis 37:59

Okay. And morphine is it a long term solution to a long term problem? Or is it a short term solution to a short term problem?

Loyd James Fox III 38:12

Short term problem.

Bill Gasiamis 38:13

It's just a short term thing and then they just, it's something to help get you over the line. But do they know your addictive personality? And did you go there willingly? Or do you get concerned? I gosh, I'm going to be prescribed morphine.

Is that going to continue?

Loyd James Fox III 38:40

I thought I could handle it. I thought I had this and I could get through it. And I was wrong. I did the program twice, eight years. So get through the program. I've got enough gratitude that when I go to bed every night, I make list of what I'm grateful for.

Loyd James Fox III 39:17

From the smallest things of that I got kindling in my bucket because my son made it for me to the fact that I was able to get through the day without hurting anybody's feelings or break anybody's heart.

Loyd James Fox III 39:39

So back to the question of where I was sitting in that bed. I was grateful for the fact that I was sitting there alive I know I'm gonna go. I know that my life is shortened with my diabetes.

Loyd James Fox III 40:12

I'm not ready to go. But I've heard you say, God, higher power, the universe, whatever might be out there. I'm ready to go see if they want to take me. But if it's not my time today, let's get on with this.

Bill Gasiamis 40:43

Yeah, let's make the most of it. So it's quite the journey, diabetes at nine and then the challenges that you have to face with addiction and then the relapse and all that you're 54 now does it get easier? As you get older? Do you grow the resilience that you need to make the bouts of the things that you do that impact your life negatively?

Bill Gasiamis 41:40

Have you got to the point where you're decreasing the extent of the damage of the words damage, but the extent of the I'm going to use it anyway because I didn't have another word, the extent of the damage that you caused in that time when you're A addicted or etc. Do you know have you kind of become more skillful at moving beyond it and letting it go and dropping that behavior that causes the addictions and so on?

Loyd James Fox III 42:13

So this is the gist of it is that I used to think my dad was lying, that when he talked about his 12-STEP program, I thought it was a place that he just went to to drink coffee.

Loyd James Fox III 42:18

Right? If he had lived long enough, I would have to give him an amends for that. So about that feeling I had, but those were my feelings and you can't take it away until you walk a mile in someone else's shoes. You don't know.

Bill Gasiamis 42:49

They're legitimate. And they come from ignorance, because you don't know any better. And you make assumptions. And that's what happens. And I've learned that lesson as a stroke survivor.

Bill Gasiamis 43:21

There's no doubt that I judged people who spoke differently, walked differently. Then, quote unquote, somebody who was normal or physically normal. And then I had a stroke. And then it's like, oh, okay, what an idiot you were.

Bill Gasiamis 43:41

And it was a genuine, idiotic way to be because I was so ignorant. I had no life experience, I had never been through something that that impacted my ability to be myself.

Bill Gasiamis 43:56

And it was the most information that I had. So I did the best with it as I could. And I didn't seek out enough information to make a to make the correct decision about how I'm going to approach somebody or speak to somebody.

Bill Gasiamis 44:12

But that's one of the wisdom. wisdoms that come that came with having this episode. You know, 11 years ago, that's, that's one of the things that I gained from it, I gained the wisdom to not judge people and to and to give them the benefit of the doubt, and not to take not to take their behavior to heart and be personally wounded and offended by it.

Bill Gasiamis 44:41

Now, I can say that to you as a 48 year old, but there's no way I could put that sentence together as a 23 year old, of course. You know, I'm going to take that to

heart. Of course, I'm going to be wounded by their comments.

Bill Gasiamis 44:54

Of course, I'm going to think it's personal. I don't know but and you would have been similar you would have been in a similar situation. That's what your addiction taught you. Amongst other things. It taught you to have compassion by the sound of things towards your father.

Gratitude And Forgiveness

Loyd James Fox III 45:12

Yeah, so as for the, the wreckage of my behaviors, you walk through those, 12 steps, and they're my steps, if you want to go to a meeting, there's a meeting everywhere. So I recommend if you feel the need to go, go, but that's not the message I'm sending here today.

Loyd James Fox III 45:42

The message I'm sending here today is that I've got gratitude in, in everything I do. So my wife this is this is how well it's gone, is that my wife took off three months to walk me through and helped me with my recovery.

Loyd James Fox III 46:13

You know, you don't get that unless they really care. And I had always wondered about my, the amends I gave to her and asking her for her forgiveness.

Bill Gasiamis 46:29

Let's do the conversation that I really don't know how to do well, anyway, let's talk about karma. In a past life, you must have done some amazing things to get so lucky to get a wife like that, who has the background that she has, has that understanding that she has, who can support you and guide you through a situation like that.

Bill Gasiamis 46:53

I mean, that is such an amazing thing for somebody in your situation to have as a support mechanism, because many people who are addicts don't have that kind of support mechanism at home, they can seek out the best type of support they can out of the home, but then they may not have that additional layer of support.

Loyd James Fox III 47:23

Yep. So she's so supportive that she agreed to some pretty expensive treatments, you can't call them treatments, some steps I've taken to help heal my stroke. Over here to my right, I showed you earlier the hyperbaric chamber

Loyd James Fox III 48:02

\$14,000. I have a really, really good friend who used to be an ER doctor who now does rejuvenative medicine. And he gave me a list of things that you that you should do that I should do that he was doing.

Loyd James Fox III 48:33

Because he has a coronary artery disease, and he's trying to fix it. This was one of the things that he mentioned to me. But I kind of call them this is gonna sound funny, the Voodoo medicine because nothing's been proven that this works. I'm willing to take that chance.

Bill Gasiamis 49:07

Hyperbaric therapy is being used effectively for knee injuries and for other ailments, I know for sure there's even probably good research about it. And as a nurse, I know that you want to make sure most of the time that what you're doing and treat and how you're treating people and what you're prescribing.

Bill Gasiamis 49:28

There's scientific evidence and real good proof that it works and that it's not harmful and it's more helpful than harmful right. And now you're going into this space of out of the medical field, so to speak. Out of what you're used to.

Loyd James Fox III 49:47

I'm going right to that line.

Bill Gasiamis 49:51

I was gonna say and I see that in so many stroke survivors who will tell you that Reiki is rubbish until they have a stroke and then they straight up the Reiki practitioner, or they'll tell you that meditation is rubbish, and then they're meditating.

Bill Gasiamis 50:08

For me, I went down that path and I would have tried anything, I would have tried slapping two fish together, if I thought that there was a possibility that that might

make my recovery continue and be better.

Bill Gasiamis 50:23

So, I get it, like, I know that there's that desire to solve problems, and at least, you're going about it in a way that I think is quite reasonable. It's a recommendation from a doctor, the therapy is proven for other for other challenges.

Bill Gasiamis 50:46

And it's most likely not going to cause harm, it is going to cause some positive outcomes. And, if it doesn't necessarily heal your brain, in that specific spot is probably doing good to the rest of your body.

Loyd James Fox III 51:05

So this is kind of weird. Over the last two-three years, when I get little cuts on my hands or stuff, it takes a while for those wounds to heal. I have a blacksmith shop in my backyard basically.

Loyd James Fox III 51:37

And when I'm out there, hitting hot steel and stuff, I can get injuries. Well, my wounds on my hands are healing, like 10 times better than before I got this thing. So it's helping the wounds on my hand, or the scrapes on my legs to heal.

Loyd James Fox III 52:06

So I'm hoping that it helps in my brain. That we that being said, is that in China, Russia, Britain, I'm not sure about Australia. They pay for all kinds of different things.

Loyd James Fox III 52:34

In the United States they pay for the hyperbaric treatments, they only pay for hyperbaric treatments for certain things. Sudden stroke of the eye, gangrene, diabetic foot wounds, burn wounds that aren't healing.

Loyd James Fox III 52:59

So they've got like nine things that the United States only pays for. So this is out of my pocket. But if I were in Britain, or if I were in Russia, for I was in China, I would be in one of these things. And it wouldn't cost me anything.

The Hyperbaric Chamber And How It Works

Bill Gasiamis 53:19

Yes. So out of curiosity, how long do you spend in the chamber? How does the therapy session go?

Loyd James Fox III 53:30

So what I do is, that I wear an insulin pump. So it gives me insulin throughout the day, I'll give three units of insulin, get in the chamber. I have to take the pump off because it doesn't, it doesn't handle the pressure. Get in the chamber. Turn it on. And then I'll sit in the chamber from anywhere from an hour to three hours. So I've spent a lot of time in there since I had the stroke in November.

Bill Gasiamis 54:10

Okay. Did you notice any changes? Is this something that you can hang your hat on? Can you say this is what other than the scars on my hand and all that stuff? Did you notice anything different now?

Bill Gasiamis 54:32

I am in fact very impressed that three months after your stroke, you're on my podcast. That's amazing. That's just fabulous that somebody is capable of doing that after a stroke. And I'm grateful for that.

Bill Gasiamis 54:48

But then I do notice that you have some fragmentation in your thinking and in your speech and in your ability to begin and finish sentences, which I don't know if it's your normal way of speaking, or it's as a result of the stroke.

Bill Gasiamis 55:07

But that's how I was I'm very familiar with the feedback I was getting from my wife and other people about how I was communicating after the second bleed that I had.

Bill Gasiamis 55:23

So am I seeing you the way you were before stroke? Or am I seeing a slightly different way of communicating and to make the question a bit shorter than it has been. And what have you noticed about the hyperbaric chamber with regards to

your stroke recovery?

Loyd James Fox III 55:45

So I feel that my speaking is better. When I first had the stroke, I had to stop. My brain has always been bing, bing, bing, bing, bing, bing, bing, bing bounce around this subject to that subject. That's not new. Me going from one subject to another. Sometimes I have to be straightened out. Or, well, what about this? What about that? Or I'll just keep rambling.

Loyd James Fox III 56:24

When I had the stroke when I started to talk like I did, when I normally did, I would slur all my words, all of my words sounded like I was drunk. So I had to slow my my thinking down and my speech down.

Loyd James Fox III 56:48

I'm doing that just because this is what the way it had to be after the stroke, right after the stroke, I had to slow it down. So the hyperbaric chamber was not my idea. It was my friend, Mike's Idea. Mike Anderson, one of the best men I've ever met in my life.

Loyd James Fox III 57:16

His son ended up with a C7 fracture. We had some big fires in 2019, I think, big fires, burned his house down, left his garage, his son ended up with a C7 fracture. Ended up with a wound driving from San Diego to Redding. Because of a heater in the seat that got bumped. So they treated him for that wound in a hyperbaric chamber heart chamber.

Loyd James Fox III 57:55

And then after the 40 treatments, 40 treatments is the normal prescription for hyperbarics. And after the treatment, they bought a system and was using it while they healed and it was just sitting in his house. He invited me over and say hey, why don't you get in this after he found out that I had a stroke.

Bill Gasiamis 58:30

So that's how you got to it. So okay, that's great. Now, I've done a bit of a online search about the benefits of hyperbaric therapy right. And it says it supports wounds to heal. It supports people who have had carbon monoxide poisoning, it can help reduce the harmful effects of that. It helps people reduce swelling and promote healing when they've had severe crush injuries.

Bill Gasiamis 58:57

It can help prevent the spread of gas gangrene, a serious bacterial infection by increasing the delivery of oxygen to the affected areas. Okay, it all sounds legit. You know, increasing oxygen to the brain is really good for the brain to heal and to operate better.

Bill Gasiamis 59:19

It can help reduce the symptoms of decompression sickness, which is what we know hyperbaric therapy for more than anything, diving and having the bins and getting the bins you can help reduce the effects of radiation injury by increasing the amount of oxygen in the bloodstream.

Bill Gasiamis 59:41

So for cancer patients, I imagine that is a useful tool and definitely mentions burns. It can help reduce pain, promote healing, and reduce scarring and people with burns.

Bill Gasiamis 59:56

And is used by Athletes, it supports improving apparently athletic performance by increasing the delivery of oxygen to the muscles. Okay there is no doubt that it has a medical benefit, because it's been used to bring people back from the bends for many, many, many years before it was applied to other areas of medicine and before other people started to use it, for example, for burns and the reasons that you're using it.

Bill Gasiamis 1:00:36

So I think this is going to make people curious, I did not know that you can buy one for \$14,000. I mean, it's not cheap. But the fact that you can buy one and have it in your home and access it.

Bill Gasiamis 1:00:51

And even then I imagine, once you're done with it, there'd be a secondhand market for a good condition, hyperbaric chamber, and it may not end up costing you the full 14 grand, you might have to just cough out and pay for the amount that you lost in the buying and then selling of the product. And then I did a search just while we were talking about hyperbaric therapy in Australia.

Bill Gasiamis 1:01:20

Again, I didn't know that it existed. There's an organization here that sells tanks,

and they have different versions of them. And they start at about 20,000 Australian dollars, which is roughly the equivalent in about time you do the conversion, all that kind of stuff.

Bill Gasiamis 1:01:41

It's a similar amount to what you paid. And then they have a more expensive version, which is about \$23,000. But I am just stunned that that is so accessible these days. I know \$20,000 is not accessible for everybody, but it's more accessible than it's ever been. And I think you can rent them as well.

Loyd James Fox III 1:02:02

That's what I'm doing with this one. I'm renting it. So it was a big cost to rent it. But I've decided I could rent this one and own it at the end of the three months. But I've decided that I want something that has an air conditioner involved.

Bill Gasiamis 1:02:27

Inside of it. Okay.

Loyd James Fox III 1:02:29

Because you start taking science into stuff, Boyle's law, you increase pressure, you increase the temperature. This unit doesn't have a dehumidifier on it. So when you compress air, you humidify you're pushing the air in there and you're humidifying it, or concentrating the air that's in there.

Loyd James Fox III 1:02:59

So you get the humidity increased. So increased temperature increase humidity. You put a dehumidifier on it. It feels better. I've been in multiple chamber chambers now. So I know what I want. So and that's why I did what I did. This is going to help me for the rest of my life.

Bill Gasiamis 1:03:25

Yeah. Well, fantastic. This has been a fascinating conversation. It has had so many layers and different things that we've discussed. I'm really buoyed by the fact that at 54, you've been through so much, and you're still working towards making improvements and making changes that are going to benefit your life.

Finding New Perspective: Life After a Stroke

Bill Gasiamis 1:04:04

Often I asked stroke survivors, how has your life changed since the stroke and they're not normally three months into their stroke journey, but I'm going to ask you that anyway. Because I feel like you've had another turn for wisdom or you've had another turn for thinking about life differently again. So how has your life changed since you experienced the stroke?

Loyd James Fox III 1:04:34

Everyday life I need to go back to work. But I have that problem that that you've talked about on many of your things about fatigue. I get tired, so fast. And I would really I would really like to know the only reason I know about it that It's a stroke thing is because you've mentioned it all the training I've been through everything I've done. You're the only one that has brought this up. Your, guest have brought it up.

Bill Gasiamis 1:05:16

Yeah. So strange. I can't understand that. But that's okay. Yeah, fatigue, quite normal, not not fun, and can be made worse by the food that you eat. So I know that as soon as I foods that are high in processed carbohydrates, like bread, like sugar, like pasta.

Bill Gasiamis 1:05:45

You know that food coma that we talk about after a Thanksgiving meal, or a big Christmas meal, or a big Easter meal, that can happen to me immediately after just a small amount of food.

Bill Gasiamis 1:05:59

That's just a normal regular meal if I ate those types of foods, and especially after alcohol, so I still experience fatigue, as a result of my, my strokes, and my brain surgery and all the stuff that I've been through.

Bill Gasiamis 1:06:18

But I've been able to really minimize its impact and decrease the the severity of it by stopping the consumption, in my case of breads, pastas, and sweets, and sugary drinks.

Bill Gasiamis 1:06:42

So I might be kind of boring to hang out with at lunch, or a dinner. But at least I'm going to be awake, and productive, and I won't have to separate myself from an event and go and rest and, you know, try and recuperate.

Bill Gasiamis 1:07:06

And it has worked for me, I know it works for other people, as well. But I'm not a nutritionist, I'm not trained or qualified. Anyway, I'm just talking about my experience.

Bill Gasiamis 1:07:18

And I don't know what stroke and diabetes combined. I don't know how that except, you know, interferes with fatigue and causes more fatigue. I don't know about that.

Bill Gasiamis 1:07:34

But I do know that after my brain injury, I also had a thyroid condition. And the thyroid condition was causing the same neurological fatigue that I was experiencing after the brain injury. And at the beginning, it's very difficult to understand what was happening to me.

Bill Gasiamis 1:08:02

And I was trying to get feedback and information from my doctors about why the fatigue is so debilitating. And I had kind of a double fatigue if you like because the thyroid wasn't functioning properly, and the brain wasn't functioning properly. And I was eating the wrong foods. It was just really terrible. I couldn't walk from the couch to the toilet and back.

Bill Gasiamis 1:08:27

So after many doctor's appointments and visits and many attempts to get to the bottom of the fatigue and to try and understand Google searches, you know what causes fatigue of the brain and all that kind of stuff.

Bill Gasiamis 1:08:43

And you get a number of different hits. I had these tests and they accidentally one of the tests that happened when I was in hospital because I was so lethargic, was they did a chest X ray that accidentally discovered that I had a nodule on my thyroid gland that was so large, it was the size of a baseball.

Bill Gasiamis 1:09:03

And it was and it had moved and deviated my windpipe and my esophagus by six centimeters, which is about two inches or three inches or something like that two inches, I think, to the wrong direction. So that scan was the one that revealed that I have a thyroid condition but I didn't know the gravity of the situation.

Bill Gasiamis 1:09:26

And what eventually happened is a year after my brain surgery, I had surgery to reveal half of to remove half of my thyroid and, and that's why I'm even more susceptible to fatigue because I have two predisposing conditions that both cause fatigue. And if I'm not careful, I can be really unproductive, you know, an entire day. And it's not fun. It's not fun being productive.

Bill Gasiamis 1:09:54

So if somebody out there is watching and listening, and they do experience fatigue, just consider some Other things that I said, Ask some trained professionals about what I just said, do a little bit of Googling and see if there's some articles that are verified that are online that you can read about that. And you might make a massive difference to the way you experience fatigue.

Loyd James Fox III 1:10:19

Simple a simple blood test. Thyroid panel.

Bill Gasiamis 1:10:25

Yeah, thyroid panel. Exactly. Yeah, you nailed it. Because a lot of people have undiagnosed thyroid conditions. It's why some people are overweight, and they can't explain it.

Bill Gasiamis 1:10:35

And they don't know how they've become overweight or gained weight all of a sudden. So maybe all the stuff we've discussed is going to just get people thinking, that's really what we want to achieve here.

Bill Gasiamis 1:10:49

And, and share stories. I really appreciate you coming on the show and reaching out. Thank you so much for doing that. I wish you well on the rest of your recovery. And all the best in overcoming all the obstacles that that you need to overcome. And congratulations on how far you've come so far.

Finding Your Tribe

Loyd James Fox III 1:11:09

Thanks Bill. Fantastic. I searched you out. Once I got in the chamber, I searched you out. Maybe not you exactly. But looked for some of my people. You know, because there had to be an answer.

Bill Gasiamis 1:11:35

Thank you for saying that. Because you and the people that have already been on my podcast are my people. That's exactly how I feel like they're my people.

Bill Gasiamis 1:11:42

Because we get each other we understand. Without needing to really even talk really, we could have just done this in five minutes. We completely understand. But, you know, I get it. You're my people. So thanks for being on the podcast.

Loyd James Fox III 1:11:55

You're very welcome. It's my pleasure.

Bill Gasiamis 1:12:00

Well, thanks again for joining us on today's episode to learn more about my guests, including links to their social media and other pages and to download a full transcript of the entire interview.

Bill Gasiamis 1:12:11

Please go to [recovery after stroke.com/episodes](https://recoveryafterstroke.com/episodes). If you'd like to purchase the course five foods to avoid after stroke, go to recoveryafterstroke.com/courses and get on board now.

Bill Gasiamis 1:12:25

If you'd like to support this podcast, the best way to do it is to leave a five star review and a few words about what the show means to you on iTunes, and Spotify.

Bill Gasiamis 1:12:34

And if you're watching on YouTube, comment below the video like this episode, and to get notifications of future episodes, subscribe to the show on the platform of your choice. If you are a stroke survivor with a story to share about your experience, come and join me on the show.

Bill Gasiamis 1:12:50

The interviews are not scripted, you do not have to plan for them. All you need to do to qualify is be a stroke survivor, or care for someone who is a stroke survivor. Or you are one of the fabulous people that help stroke survivors go to recoveryafterstroke.com/contact fill out the form.

Bill Gasiamis 1:13:09

And as soon as I receive your request I will respond with more details on how you can choose a time that works for you and me to meet over zoom. Thanks again for being here and listening. I truly appreciate you so you on the next episode.

Intro 1:13:23

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 1:13:40

All content on this website at any linked blog, podcast or video material controlled this website or content is created and produced for informational purposes only and is largely based on the personal experience of Bill Gasiamis.

Intro 1:13:53

The content is intended to complement your medical treatment and support healing. It is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice and should not be relied on as health advice the information is general and may not be suitable for your personal injuries, circumstances or health objectives.

Intro 1:14:09

Do not use our content as a standalone resource to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease for therapeutic purposes or is a substitute for the advice of a health professional. Never delay seeking advice or disregard the advice of a medical professional, your doctor or your rehabilitation program based on our content.

Intro 1:14:25

If you have any questions or concerns about your health or medical condition, please seek guidance from a doctor or other medical professional 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.

Intro 1:14:42

Medical information changes constantly. While we aim to provide current quality information in our content. We did not provide any guarantees and assume no legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, currency or completeness of the content.

Intro 1:14:55

If you choose to rely on any information within our content, you do so solely at your own risk we are careful with links we provide however third party links from our website are followed at your own risk and we are not responsible for any information you find there