

Positive Impact Movement Interview Part 1 - Brain Surgery

Preparing For Brain Surgery

06:43 Waking Up With A Numb Toe as a Stroke Symptom

15:23 Calling My Client In Tears

17:19 What's My Name Again?

24:10 AVM's Rarely Bleed Twice. Repercussions of having a stroke.

29:08 Can't Avoid Surgery

31:02 Preparing Myself For Brain Surgery

32:42 My Mother In Law Died

41:06 Post Traumatic Growth After Suffering from Stroke

Transcription:

Joe 0:00

My guest today on the positive impact podcast is Bill Gasiamis.

This is the first of two episodes I conducted with Bill so make sure you tune in for the second one coming up soon. In this episode, we'll find out how Bill sustained two strokes at the age of 37 and a third stroke three years later. He's extraordinary story and how it unfolded and incredible self work he did on himself and research he did on brain trauma, and how to recover from a brain injury.

We'll also be finding out from Bill the amazing positive attitude he had towards his recovery, and why this made such a difference to the speed and effectiveness of which he recovered from his third stroke.

Intro 0:48

Right Now is your time, your time to make a difference. Your time to step up and into the life you always dreamed of. to confront your fears. Make your leave and unleash your true potential. The positive impacts podcast with Joe Morton, improve yourself, inspire others.

Joe 1:11

Hi, I'm Joe Houghton. I'm the host of this podcast and the founder of the Positive

Impact Movement. Positive impact is a growing movement of people just like you that want to leave behind a life of negativity and embrace positive change in their lives. Our movement is growing week on week from strength to strength and helping you the listener to fully embrace positivity in all its forms. We're beginning to help grow positive people, relationships and communities in a world today, which has become increasingly negative and polarized.

The episodes we have coming up in the next few weeks will cover topics where we could all improve, my guests will present you with some great free resources that you can take away and apply immediately to positively impact areas of your life. Topics like developing yourself as an entrepreneur, learning, meditation and journaling.

I will also be speaking with guests about some of the more difficult aspects that life throws at us. In covering these more difficult subjects. We will uncover how you can use them as opportunities for growth and discovery in your own life. We show you how to use life's adversities to grow, learn and inspire. The world's top experts I feature on positive impact are hand picked to deliver maximum impact to you. So you can make some amazing improvements to your own life and inspire others around you to do the same. We're interviewing psychologists, neurosurgeons, thought leaders, entrepreneurs and best selling authors. Pretty much anyone that can help you the listener to be inspired and reach your true potential. We will bring on to the podcast. My dream is for positive impact to be the number one personal growth podcast in the world and invite you to join me on this journey.

Our guest today is Bill Gasiamis. Bill Gasiamis is the founder of the recovery after stroke community, which is a resource for stroke survivors and their carers. He also hosts the recovery after stroke podcast. He was inspired to set up the recovery after stroke community because of the lack of support for stroke survivors when they leave hospital, and having had personal experience of three strokes himself. Today he provides personal coaching to stroke survivors and provides resources support and a community to help those who have suffered a stroke.

Bill had his first stroke or 37 years old, a brain hemorrhage with a second brain hemorrhage a few weeks later. On the road to recovery he then sustained a third stroke three years later, which necessitated surgery. However, in those

intervening three years Bill radically, he changed his lifestyle and life, which meant that when he had to undergo surgery, he was in the best shape he could possibly be. Not only is Bill's story astonishing in itself, but the fact that he recovered from brain surgery in half the time then his doctors predicted is testament to the extensive work Bill did on himself to change his mindset, belief systems and lifestyle. His curious nature, a thirst for knowledge around the brain, mind body connection, and lifestyles of stroke victims makes him an excellent advocate for a more healthy, balanced and sustainable life.

Bill, welcome to the positive impact podcast.

Bill 4:42

Joe, thanks so much for having me on the podcast, man, I really appreciate it.

Joe 4:46

It's my pleasure. It's my pleasure. There's very few people that I get on the podcast who have got an extraordinary story to tell, but you are certainly one of them. And your journey has been nothing short of I don't know whether it's used the word phenomenal. Or there's various other words I can use. But it's certainly been a journey. That's for sure. Where did this all start for you Bill

Bill 5:13

Look, it started when I was 37. So that we don't go back to year zero and I bore everybody.

And 37 what happened was I was just a regular guy, my dad was dead. My two kids were about 12 and 16. Then my, my wife was doing her thing. We were working, we were busy, I had a business, and I had a property maintenance company. So I was doing, you know, six days a week I was doing I don't know 12, 13, 14, 15 hours a day, whatever I needed to do. I was going through a lot of stress delivering the work and I wasn't necessarily eating well, and I wasn't really doing much to look after myself.

Other than going to the gym and running and you know, sort of half heartedly doing physical exercise. And I just woke up one morning and I had a numb sensation in my toe. And that that was day one, you know that that was when it started. But you wouldn't have thought that a numb toe becomes a seven year long so far, you know, journey towards recovery and overcoming stroke.

Waking Up With A Numb Toe as a Stroke Symptom



Joe 6:43

So after you'd woken up with this numb toe in your foot What was your Did you just think I've got cramp or I've got you know, I've slept awkwardly or what kind of happened was it because most guys would wake up with a numb foot and just sort, I've just slept awkwardly on my foot or something like that is a guy thing to do, isn't it you just don't come off, it just hurts.

Bill 7:09

You nailed it mate. It's exactly what I did. I just woke up from my boots on and just thought wow, this is a bit weird. And went to work. It was a Friday. So, you know we had, I had two crews running at the time. So I had to catch up with one crew at one site and catch up with another crew member site. So that was all good. Nothing major. As the days progress, so Saturday, the numbness had spread a little further into the foot Sunday had got to the point where it was up to about my ankle. And I didn't really know what was happening. I didn't feel unwell or bad or anything at all. And when I went to the gym to run my Sunday, five kilometer run on the treadmill, I notice that my foot wasn't landing properly on the treadmill. In that I didn't, I didn't, I had to look down to make sure that it landed properly. So I didn't fall off.

And as it continued, I got through the run no issues. And then as the process continued to get worse, as the as the numbness continue to get worse by about the Tuesday. My wife says you're walking strange. You look a bit weird. What are you doing? And I said, Look, I'm not nothing wrong with me in it. I'm all good. I didn't, I wasn't able to tell that my gate had changed to support me because my leg wasn't able to feel the ground and send messages to the brain about where it was. So my gait had changed to support that. And I went to a chiropractor who I had on speed dial because I was always doing something silly at work you know

lifting me too heavy or bending incorrectly or whatever.

And I had had described speed dial, forget him and say, Look, can you do me a favor, sort my back out cause of our work to get back to work. And of course, you know, the 10 years, he did that. And he's to get me on the go. But then as the as that session ended, the chiropractor said something that was telling, but you know, again, didn't mean anything to me. And my history didn't raise any flags for him. And he said to me, look, whatever is happening, it's probably early days, the numbness that he knows who might be due to inflammation in one of your nerves or something, but it hasn't really shown up yet. So monitor it, whatever you do, just keep an eye on it. And if it changes, just contact me and let me know and we'll work it out.

So I continue to go to work the usual routine, nothing's changed and by about the eighth day, my entire left side had gone numb, and I couldn't feel my leg. And I couldn't do the things that I normally did. Because it felt strange, I was completely aware of it. And I made another appointment to see the chiropractor but I made sure to make the appointment after work, because I didn't want to miss out on going to work. And when I went to work, I went to climb a ladder. And I noticed that my foot, my left foot wasn't able to find the the bottom rung of the ladder, it kept slipping off. I've looked down and I've noticed that there was a little bit of water underneath the ladder and I thought, well, it's probably causing the water, you know, my foot, or my shoes wet and slipping off.

So what I'll do is I look down, I've picked my leg up from my knee, I physically put my leg onto the bottom rung of the ladder. And I proceeded to climb the ladder to do my task, you know, to paint that part of the doorframe, you know. So we got that done and I got down, I got through my day got all our jobs done, and we had a massive day the we were preparing on the Saturday, It was going to be 15 guys, we had to cut a hole in the ceiling. Get some guys in there that needed to do some work, we had to replace the ceiling and paint the ceiling. I had electricians there, I had engineers there I had all sorts of guys there. It was all one day. And there was 15 people relying on me being there this Saturday.

So after I went to work on the Friday, I went to the contract at the end of the day, and he goes, whatever, within a minute he goes whatever's wrong with your left side, it's not your back. So what I would suggest is you go to the hospital immediately. And I said to him, Look mate, I can't do that. Because you know

what's going to happen on go to the hospital, they'll say, the doctors not here or this guy is not there, or we've got to run tests. And whatever they do, like they're going to keep me there the whole weekend. And I won't be able to be to work at work tomorrow.

So I'm not going you know, forget it. And he insisted, and we kind of had an argument. And then I said are fine with me. So anyway, I left and went home. When I got home my wife goes what the chiropractor say? I said to her look, he said that there's nothing wrong with my back I should go to the hospital. She said, Why aren't you at the hospital? I said, Well, you know, I've got work to do I've got stuff to do tomorrow.

You know, I can't be there, you know, today, I'll go on Monday, you know, be fine. Anyhow, my wife who's bit smarter than me. She said, Look, why don't I take you to the hospital, they'll check you out. They'll tell you there's nothing wrong. And then you get to work tomorrow. I thought that was a great idea. That's exactly what we did. So we went to the hospital. And I went into triage. And you know, normally when you go to a hospital, you see a doctor, by the time you get to the doctor, you've been through all these other steps and takes ages. Well, I've gone to the window and I said Look, they said, how are going what's going on? I said, Well, I'm all right, actually, but I just can't feel my left side. So I thought I'd get it checked out and well then the red carpet treatment.

I was almost you know what all was called immediately in a CT scanner. And when they did the scan a little while later, a doctor came and saw me and said we found a shadow on your brain. And you need to stay in because we need to do further tests. And that was the beginning of this epic seven year journey. so far.

Joe 13:51

It's giveaway time listeners. Right now, I'm working on a short ebook, which I'll be giving away completely free in the next few weeks to everyone on my mailing list. But to get it, you have to be on my mailing list, as it will be exclusive content not available elsewhere. so you don't miss out on grabbing yourself a copy, go to my website, www.positive-impact-movement.com and subscribe to the mailing list. That way, as soon as it comes out, you'll grab yourself a copy immediately. Not only that, but in the next few months, you will receive more exclusive free content by being part of the positive impact movement community. So don't miss out, sign up today at www.positive-impact-movement.com.

And so did you that point was that the you'd had one stroke then or you'd had was you'd had one. And then the test reveal you'd had a second one, which was the point which you go into the hospital.

Bill 15:02

So what happened was this particular bleed occurred due to a faulty blood vessel and the faulty blood vessel created a slow leak that as more blood entered into the brain cavity into the space in the brain. It switched off more and more neurons.

Joe 15:22

Okay,

Calling My Client In Tears



Bill 15:23

so that was the first time and then they they did seven days of testing. I didn't get to go to work, I rang my and my client crying the next day, saying I can't go to work there is something wrong in my brain. They manage to handle it. So seven days later, I went home and I said six weeks at home no working no nothing. Just rest up and a six week appointment, we'll do another scan, and we'll test to see if it's continued to bleed or not.

So then it's what I did. And then around the six week mark, I was just getting extremely bored, Joe, ah you can imagine, now I'm not allowed to go to work, drive do anything, I'm just at home, I know there's all these jobs going on, I'm booking them in, I'm getting my 2IC to go and run around and meet with the client. And so that kind of stuff, my dad's driving me to quotes and all that kind of stuff. So we were at this job one day because I told them to pick me up in the morning, to just take me out of the house. And I'm watching them paint this wall, and I started to notice myself just drift away to the left and I couldn't hold my body up and it just kept drifting away and I started to notice my face very numb.

So in order to rouse myself, I would, you know, slap myself and try and get myself awake, or I don't know what. And at around about a couple of hours after I noticed this numbness I said to the guys, like you need to take me to the hospital or to home because I'm not feeling great. So they finished off their job. They took me to my house and when I got to hospital, my wife dropped me off at the emergency entrance and it's a 50 meter walk to triage and we were chatting, everything was fine.

Joe 17:19

Yeah,

What's My Name Again?

Bill 17:19

By the time I got to triage they asked me what I was doing there who I was, and I couldn't give them any information. And I don't remember being able to communicate or anything like that I blacked out. And I just remember waking up a little while later and there was this strange lady at into my bed going, you know, do you know who I am? And I said, No, I don't know who you are. And it was my wife. So that was the second episode. And what had happened is it bled again. And now the amount of blood in the head has gone from being about the size of a 10 cent piece.

Top the size of a golf ball,

Joe 17:37

right.

Bill 17:45

So all sorts of stuff had switched off now.

Joe 18:03

And so at that point is beginning is affecting your speech. And it's affecting having major effects not just on your, on the physical side of things, but also just, it just everything, your ability to recognize people and know what's going on around you. That's obviously we've been laughing at the typical bloke reaction to being ill for the last couple of minutes. But all jokes aside, that becomes then a quite a frightening situation to be in. It must have been very frightening and kind

of daunting and confusing stroke. You know, what? What goes through your head when you could? At what point did the nurses and or your wife explain to you what was going on? It must have been terrifying.

Bill 18:59

Yeah, look at it wasn't the first time, like six weeks earlier, no big deal. Right. But bleed in the brain, everyone sort of said it'll be okay. But it's true when you can't remember your wife, or you don't know your name. And then you wake up and you don't know what's happened to you, you know, it starts to sink in that, okay, it might be something more serious happening here. And the biggest issue was that it automatically impacted on my ability to work, drive. type an email, finish a sentence, begin a sentence, you know, everything. So you're, you get seriously challenged and fatigue was a massive thing, which was really, really bizarre.

So extreme fatigue. So even if I wanted to be active or physical, or anything, I couldn't do much more than get from, you know, the couch to the bathroom without being exhausted. So you started, I started to worry about my longevity, I started to worry about, you know, my family. I wasn't so concerned about me, but I was more concerned about, you know, I realized I had become mortal. That was my realization that I'm currently a mortal, and this could end.

So you go through a whole mix of emotions, but you and you've never dealt with them before your wife's never dealt with them before your kids never dealt with them before. So now like how do you reconcile this? I had no idea, mate, it was just that absolutely horrific time and and somehow you just got to get through it and hope to god that you're going to get a second chance or some kind of a chance to get back to your feet was we didn't know how I was going to be in 10, 12, 24 months, you know, we didn't know.

Joe 21:10

And in terms of what happened., I mean, I I've got some recollection of where my father was in hospital having sustained a stroke. And I remember the doctor saying at that point, that first I think I'm sure they said the first 24 hours is kind of the most kind of crucial is that is that the case with you? or?

Bill 21:34

Yeah, it kind of is the most crucial because the impact on the brain can be really dramatic, very early on. And that's when all the interventions have to occur. So if

they can intervene quickly, and resolve the cause of the blockage or the bleed, then then brain is being saved immediately. So in my case, again, this bleed, although it did have a massive episode, it stopped. And then it's settled down. So they were happy that it had stopped, it had done its thing, and then it had stopped. Now we're not sure why it stopped or how it had bled again, but it just had.

And then what happened was as they monitor you, they just try and make sure that you've got all your faculties about, you know, they asked me questions, they do this, I do that touch here, feel their push this do that. And after three days after the second bleed that was quite confident that I was once again, okay. But they I was definitely not out of the woods. And they they needed to operate is what I wanted to do. But they couldn't operate because the blood clot was so large that it was interfering with the MRI scanner, and it wasn't allowing them to see the actual blood vessel that had created the bleed.

So they wanted to operate, but they were concerned about whether or not they should operate because they might find something more sinister like a cancer. And then they may have made a mess of things. So they said, we've just got to wait,

Joe 23:18

Yeah.

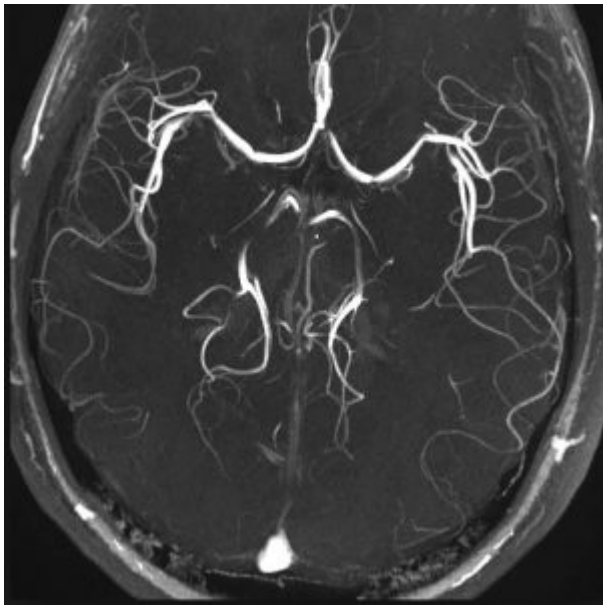
Bill 23:19

And, and you guys have got to be diligent. And because I did have some capacity to speak, you know, respond and say all the things, enough things that they needed to then they were comfortable that I wasn't in danger immediately of having massive trauma, which was not able to be recovered from

Joe 23:43

And the body and I guess there was a kind of gamble point there where they had to trust the body's natural ability to heal itself over a period of time. So you so they could then get a clearer picture as to what is going on under the bonnet so to speak, which was obscured from view, by the sounds of it in those first few early days after afterwards. Yeah, yeah.

AVM's Rarely Bleed Twice. Repercussions of having a stroke.



Bill 24:10

Yeah. So what happens is, they said that, and when they sent me home the first time, they said, Look, these things bleed, we often see a lot of people with a bleed in the brain. And sometimes they played once, and they stop. And very rarely do they bleed a second time. So now that it played a second time, they were like, well, the chances that it's going to play the third time I extremely rare. So these things normally stop bleeding, and then the blood

goes away, you heal and everything comes back. And you're okay.

So they were pretty comfortable with the whole environment and situation. But of course, I wasn't allowed to drive in, you know, do anything strenuous all the standard stuff. And they said, Look, we'll monitor it, and it'll be fine. Now, in the meantime, I left the hospital that I admitted myself into for the first two bleeds, and I went to another hospital. Because a friend of mine knew a neurosurgeon who was end up being my surgeon, it was amazing.

And she did something that really made me feel at ease, she was amazing. She would, she ordered weekly MRI scans for the first couple, then fortnightly and then monthly, and then three monthly. So she had a really clear picture by about the by about the 10th month as to how stable the bleed was. And it appeared to be very stable by now. So she was really calm about it and comfortable. And she said the likelihood that it will bleed again, is very rare. And if it does believe the chances are that it's not going to be too catastrophic. In that, you're probably going to experience what you did after the second bleed. And when we're okay with the way the onset of that, and we're okay with the whole process.

So as you said the the body, then the body starts to deal with the blood clot and starts to decrease in size and break it down. And as it did that, everything started to come back. My ability to function, speak, you know, drive. All the numbness

had gone. Everything that I considered to be abnormal, was gone. and around and around nearly, nearly 30 months later. So almost three years later, I was back to my, my old self

Joe 26:45

and feeling a lot better as a result.

Bill 26:47

Yeah, you know, had changed a lot of things, I'd stopped smoking, I'd stopped drinking, I had started to work less hours, I had started to give my work to other people and just manage the jobs rather than be with them, quote them and do all the paperwork and all that. I had started to, you know, shed some excess weight, I had just become a better version of myself. And for the first time in a long time. A little while later, I started. I started bike riding, I went for my first bike ride and felt really good.

And you know, the following day, when you wake up from a bike ride, your body aches and everything hurts? this next day on never experienced any of that stuff, I felt really good. And I was going to work. And on the way to work, I had an appointment to get to with a client. And when I got near there started to feel a burning sensation on my left side like I'd been sunburn.

And I was driving a pulled over. I got out the car I walked around the car to see what I'm feeling you know to notice what's going on, and this burning sensation kind of went away. Just thought, Oh, well that weired it's gone away, no problem. As soon as I got back in the car and sat down, the burning sensation came back. And it occurred to me that perhaps something else is occurring you know another bleed.

So I've jumped into the car, drove myself to the hospital, went to triage called my wife and said, Look, I'm just headed to the hospital. I'm not sure exactly what's wrong, something's going down. And when I got to triage I said to them, look, I think I'm having another stroke and other bleed. You guys need to admit me after they argued with me for a little while, because I wouldn't give them my details because I was trying to hurry them up. Come on, hurry up, like get me in there, you know, something's going wrong.

They got me into CT, and they realized that I had another bleed. And the same bleed, the same blood vessel had bled again and now. And now the risk. For me it

was quite high, that things could go pear shaped a bleed could happen while I was driving.

Joe 29:06

Yeah.

Can't Avoid Surgery



Bill 29:08

And my surgeon came to see me, she said we've got to go in now. And there's nothing else to do, we've got to go in and repair this and get rid of this faulty blood vessel. So that's what we did.

Joe 29:18

One of the single biggest factors in ensuring that you continue to remain positive and have a positive outlook on life, is to get around other people with that very same mindset as you people that are going to encourage you cheer you on and celebrate your wins along your journey. That is the reason why I've created an exclusive group of like minded people who can be found at the positive impact movement, Facebook group. Whether it's a new business venture, you have in mind, a side hustle, advice on your morning routine, fitness, mindfulness tactics, or even goal setting, this is the place to be to mix with others who have a growth mindset, people that are looking to make a positive impact on themselves. And those around them, check it out the positive impact movement, Facebook group, .

there was no other option, I suppose at that point, then to kind of take the, the kind of drastic action of going in and repairing it and sorting it once and for all. Want of a better word. How, what, what were you kind of feeling as that kind of sort of, sunk in that, actually, they're going to have to do something kind of quite invasive, in order to, in order to kind of resolve it.

Bill 30:34

Yeah, so it's definitely scary. The bleed was four centimeters in from the here near the cerebellum. And I had to get up get through a fair amount of brain to get

there. I don't know how they get there, I don't know whether they like push things away or whatever. But, you know, somehow they get to that place and like quaterize the blood vessel, and it was the only option because the alternative was, was not good.

Joe 31:02

Yeah.

Preparing Myself For Brain Surgery



Bill 31:02

So what I did was, I was actually quite comfortable with it by then. And I was ready for it. Because I had done a lot of work on self, myself on my, on my state of mind, on my physical body, I had, you know, started becoming extremely healthy, you know, focusing on what i ate shed some weight, you know, meditation, I've done, I've done everything to control my state, I've been sick counsellors, coaches, you name it, I did everything that I can

possibly do that was in my control. So that when I got to surgery, I gave them the best version of myself that I could so that they are dealing with the perfect patient, so to speak,

Joe 31:50

yeah, you're done. as much as you could, to stack the odds, as much as you could in, in within the things in your control in your favor.

Bill 31:59

That's it. That's exactly what I did. And that approach, I think, made a big difference in the long term and how I'm feeling today, you know, seven years after this, the beginning of this whole thing. But it also put me in a state of mind where I was able to alay the concerns of the people around, because the the hardest part of this is not me. It's dealing with everyone else, my wife, my kids, my mom and dad, and all the all the doom and gloom people that come and see you that just

are that way just because that's how they are.

Joe 32:32

Yeah,

Bill 32:32

so if I was losing my shit, and then it goes pear shaped everywhere,

Joe 32:41

Yeah.

My Mother In Law Died

Bill 32:42

So I was really calm and collected. Now one of the issues, one of the things we didn't expect was that literally 10 days before my surgery, my mother in law passed away. And that just messed up everything for everybody. So we weren't expecting it. She was unwell. But she wasn't, you know, somebody who we thought was going to pass away, she had a heart attack and died. And now, my, my wife had to bury her mom and have to prepare for the brain surgery of a husband, who, let's face it, has some risks to it and may also not wake up or wake up completely different to what he was when he went in.

Joe 33:34

That is, must have been an extremely stressful time for your wife. And you know, because that is a kind of that is a kind of double whammy that no one know, is out there with a list of worst nightmare situations really, in terms of kind of what could you know, what could go wrong? Bad luck comes in threes. But there's two, there's two straightaway, isn't there? Well, there's you've had three your, three yourself, but there's that, you know. Yeah. And that was one of the things I was going to ask you Bill is just how, how you kind of you've touched upon, you know, self care and looking after yourself after the first first, first two strokes that you had?

How do you How did you kind of start to get into that kind of positive mindset? Because that's something that listeners to this show, you know, be desperate for me to ask you? How did you stay kind of positive throughout this experience? What kept you going? What kind of made you get up in the morning and kind of

just keep kind of plugging away? And

Bill 34:36

yeah, so what I did was, I didn't start I didn't set out to become this, you know, guru of myself, I set out to become better at business, make more money, you know, find strategies that worked and all that kind of stuff. And, and that was great, because it was kind of the beginning of this journey to self discovery. And a lot of the coaches that I had with business coaches at the beginning, and they were all about it, it was not there was no business coaching, so to speak, was all about, okay, so how are you getting in your way of stopping your business from growing? You know, like, how does that thought and, you know, those words stop you from becoming a better version of yourself, when you're running your business and communicating to your clients.

And it made me look at my words, it made me look at my habits and my behaviors and where they came from. And why I was even speaking that way. And what was interesting was, I used to do the old I can't run my business out of that place, or I need a proper office, and are they never going to take me serious and a who am I you know, I'm just build from, you know, the northern suburbs, you know, no one wants to do work with me. And when I realized that I was being I was in the way of my own of my own progress. It was a massive, it was a massive time for me in my life, because it was kind of like, wow, so I was really the one that was in my way the whole time.

How can I change that. And what I noticed was, it's the same energy that you use to put yourself down, you just convert that into turn it into energy to pep yourself up. And it is not about saying words that are great, and just saying the words and not believing them, it's starting with the heart is starting with checking into the heart and noticing what's important to you. So for me, what was important to me for my business wasn't to be the biggest and the best it was to supply food and a house for my family. And it was to be a better version of myself as a dad to be a good example, to maybe create something that I can bring the kids into.

And when you're running a business from that perspective, instead of making money perspective, it's a totally different version of running a business, but it creates the same outcome, which is money. But what it does, it does that better, better. And it does it in a way that other people resonate to better send my clients really started to love me, they really started to call me back a lot. And I had

relationships for 10, 11 years with some of my clients. So it was me just paying attention to myself. And then what I learned in business I was able to use in my personal life, but it meant that I had to be brave, to touch into emotions that I'd never dealt with before.

And this is the key for me. It was I had to be brave to open up and share my deepest, darkest fears and concerns about who I am, what I am my life and everything. And once I did that, and notice that actually, when you express that, and you become better at being kinder to yourself, and when you let go of things, a weight is lifted from your shoulders, and it's better on the other side of that than it was on this unknown side, which I was afraid to tap into.

Joe 38:19

Yeah,

Bill 38:19

I when I finally tapped into it, I realized that that was the same path that I needed to go down to support my mindset and get myself healing from all the emotional stuff so that when I'm focusing on stroke recovery, I'm not doing it from I'm not doing it from this point of pushing, I'm doing it from this point of flow. And that's what came just came flow and everything that felt good I did. And everything that was amazing for my body, I researched and everything that I could impact. And I took action on.

Joe 38:55

It's very interesting, because I speak to a number of the guests on this show. And there is often a theme that kind of runs through it in terms of just getting out just getting out of your own way, getting out of your head, taking positive action, taking steps towards the person that you want to be. And people sort of often say, Well, isn't that just trying to change yourself? And I'm like, Well, no, it's not. It's kind of it's been a better version of yourself. It's not saying, okay, we're going to chuck away all of the stuff that makes Joe, Joe all the stuff that makes Bill, Bill, it's kind of it's actually saying, right?

Okay, this is the way Joe is, or this is the way Bill is but what we're going to do is we're going to look at an area or a number of areas in your life and say, Okay, I could improve this area here. And quite often what happens, and you see this a lot with people with one area will improve. And typically for a lot of people it's

generally fitness, they'll get made itself into shape, then they'll find out that suddenly they get a promotion at work, then they'll find out that their relationship begins to flourish, then they'll find out that they meet the woman or the man of their dreams, depending on what where their guy or girl so thing,

But it's a kind of like a, it has a knock on effect to every single aspect of your life for most people. When they have a kind of life changing event, whatever that life changing event could be. So some people they don't some people have life changing events, and they kind of it kind of, they take the kind of what I would say the our life's too short, I don't care anymore sort of thing. But the lady I spoke to recently, regarding trauma she was a neuro scientist, and she was saying about the about this sentiment of post traumatic growth, which is I'd not heard of very much until the last probably six months. But all of a sudden, you hearing it a lot more in terms of kind of the medical community actually saying it is a thing as opposed to post traumatic stress.

Post Traumatic Growth After Suffering from Stroke

Bill 41:06

Absolutely this, it's the opposite of post traumatic stress. And, and it's exactly what you said, you got to get out of your head, your head will convince you 1000 times over in the space of a split second why something is terrible, bad, the worst this that the other. If you can quiet in the head and just connect to your heart, and then tap into your gut. And just check in with your gut and see, you know, because your gut instinct will drive your heart. And vice versa, the heart will drive the gut to tell you what to do. And if you can get out of your head.

And allow yourself to listen to those intelligences because it's it's known now that the gut is called the second brain and the heart is called, you know, a brain in its own right. And the reason they call it that and it doesn't look like a brain and I know it sounds weird. But they have neurons in there. The same neurons that appear in the brain, you know, oxytocin, serotonin, all those feel good hormones start in the gut. And they are used by the brain. The heart has up to 130,000 neurons, people that are young at heart have more neurons in their heart than the guy who is hard hearted, or has no heart, or is described as heartless.

Guys like that have 30,000 neurons, you know, in their heart. And this research is vast, and there's a lot of it now that shows how traditional how religious traditions from the past, you know, Buddhism and all that kind of stuff, how they talk about shakra's and all these places, they were onto something, they weren't just talking about this stuff and had no idea what they were doing. So for people like me, I had to learn these things. I went and learned about the head, the heart, the gut. And we understood how they all in influenced and supported my well being.

So so when I when I realized I was a head case. It wasn't a surprise that my blood vessel in my head burst. Yeah. Yeah, I know. People might be grasping with the concept that I'm saying now, and thinking That's bizarre, but like these words that we used, you know, I was gutted when something went wrong. I was you know, I followed my heart. These are not words that we made up. They're cross cultural they used everywhere.

There's an amazing book that I read, which was really what started me down the path of this self discovery and healing called mBrining. Using your multiple brains to do cool stuff. And it was call. And it was written by a guy called grant Soosalu, and Marvin Oka two guys, Melbourne guys. And they've trained it all over the world. And there's coaches that coach people into this self discovery, and actually getting you to talk to and connect to your heart and your gut.

And these things that I discovered, came at the perfect time because my brain had switched off. So I had to tap into something else, call up my wisdom from somewhere else. And what I found was my heart was really coming alive. And I had never experienced that. And I was feeling this strange sensations around my chest. And I thought they were anxiety or this that or the other. But it wasn't it was just me being guided by my heart. And me being gutsy, and taking gutsy action, to resolve my own issue. And also, having the courage from my guts to take steps to overcome this massive challenge, which was brain surgery was just about to happen. You know.

And then not only that, that led to Joe, me being super convinced when I woke up from surgery and realized I couldn't walk, being super convinced that there was nothing going to get in my way that I was was 100% going to walk again and use my arm again, get back to work again, do all these things. I was going to restructure my life. I was 100% convinced. And the doctors had booked me in for

two months of rehabilitation. I was home in four weeks, I was driving within two months.

Joe 45:17

That's incredible. That is incredible.

But they talk about you I do affirmations and visualization in the more in typically when I get up in the morning, and I've heard somebody say before that when you work on your subconscious brain, when you give it a command, it goes to work on making that on making the thing happen that you want to happen. So in your case, sounds like you were 100% convinced that you were going to make a full recovery come what may and and that happened.

Because you're because you because you're because you're carrying your your brain is even in its kind of damaged state, if you like has given a command to your body to right let's get going we're going to get this we're going to get ourselves fixed this sort of thing.

Bill 46:10

Yeah,

Joe 46:11

Bill and I made light of the lead up to him discovering he had sustained his first stroke, not least because his was a typical bloke response. But it underlines quite a serious point. If you suspect that you or someone else is having or has had a stroke, you have to seek medical attention as soon as possible. Fortunately, it didn't have fatal consequences for bill but that isn't always the case. So the one thing I want people to take away is, if in doubt, get down to the hospital as soon as possible.

Bill is quite chilled in talking about it now, but it doesn't take away from what must have been a terrifying time for him and his family. Having said that Bill story is amazing. This is because of how Bill took full ownership of his own recovery and made sweeping changes to his life, health and mindset. He went to work on himself and became a student of the mind and body. Because of his massive change in mindset and self work, by the time of his third stroke, he was able to have the foresight and positivity to visualize himself walking again.

He retrained his brain and visualize walking again 10 days before he actually

swung his legs out of his bed for the first time. It's no surprise that he halved his predicted recovery time as a result. What an inspiration.

Make sure you check out Episode Two of my discussion with Bill coming up soon.

I hope you enjoyed my conversation with Bill and make sure you connect with me and Bill you can contact him by his website, www.recoveryafterstroke.com and you can also link up with him on Instagram and Facebook.

I want to say a big big thank you for supporting positive impact. listening to the show. And being part of this movement. We are now 11 episodes in and I am uplifted by the support I've had from all of you that listen each week. Conversations such as this one really do have the potential to change lives. I'm genuinely motivated and fired up by you to do what I'm doing here. What I do give. What I do here gives me so much meaning, knowing that if one of you take just one piece of information away, that changes your life, I will have made a difference.

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Intro 49:47

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