

Cavernous Malformation at age 20 - Kawan Glover

Kawan Glover was only 20 years old and studying at college when doctors found a cavernous malformation on his brainstem, 3 surgeries in 3 years meant some serious life lessons at such a young age.

Instagram

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Bill 0:00

How did you feel about what had happened to you at the age of 20 did you question your mortality? Like I did at 37? Or what was it like for you?

Kawan Glover 0:09

I think after I had the procedure because I was up and moving, I felt overconfident and arrogant, I felt like I was Superman. But I think a month later I had a stroke. That was humbling, you know, I went from being athletic most of my life to not being known to run or jump or you know, go out and be myself.

Kawan Glover 0:30

Operate by myself without having any extra help. So it was a complete 180 and I never saw this happening to you don't plan for things like this to happen, especially where I was in life. So it was just very detrimental to my self-

confidence.

Intro 0:51

This is recovery after stroke with Bill Gasiamis, helping you go from where you are to where you'd rather be

Introduction

Bill 0:58

Bill from recoveryafterstroke.com. This is Episode 83 and my guest today is Kawan Glover. Kawan was 20 years old when doctors found a cavernous malformation on his brainstem, which required three surgeries over three years to remove all while Kawan was studying at college. Now because I know that we all like to consume podcast episodes differently.

Bill 1:20

I make this podcast available on iTunes and other audio streaming apps for people who like to listen on the go. If you prefer to watch the episode and see me and my guests, you can do that on the YouTube channel. And if you prefer to read and take notes, or highlight different parts of the episode for future reference, you can now download a PDF of each episode transcript and print it out and perhaps even get a band and place it on your bookshelf.

Bill 1:49

That is something I would recommend that you do for episodes that you like as it is a great way to learn and helps retain new information to memory. Just go to recoveryafterstroke.com. click on the image of the episode you have just listened to. At the very beginning of the page, you will see a button that says Download transcript, Enter your email details and the PDF will begin downloading.

Bill 2:17

Now, I want to share with you that a few weeks ago, I launched recovery after stroke coaching the people who have signed up and now are being coached by me and are being helped to overcome challenges including fatigue, anger, and isolation, amongst other things.

Bill 2:31

For the 12 months of access, they paid only 149 US dollars. So if you are a stroke survivor who wants to know how to heal your brain, overcome fatigue, and reduce

anxiety, recovery after stroke coaching might be perfect for you. If you have fallen in the cracks between hospital and home care, and desire to gain momentum in your recovery, but do not know where to start, this is where I can help.

Bill 2:54

I will coach you and help you gain clarity on where you are currently in your recovery journey, I will help you create a picture of where you would like to be in your recovery 12 months from now, and I will coach you to overcome what's stopping you from getting there. During coaching, I will also teach you the 10 steps to brain help for stroke survivors and guide you through each step with supporting interviews from experts and information that is based on the latest scientific research.

Bill 3:20

If you're one of the first 10 people to join recovery after stroke coaching, you'll get a one-on-one private coaching thread with my access to the course 10 Steps to Brain Health for Stroke Survivors when released. Member access only monthly group training calls and access to the stroke survivors private forum the first 10 people to join will also get more than 70% off the full price of 599 and 12 months of access will only cost you 149 US dollars.

Bill 3:48

Be one of the first 10 people who apply for recovery after stroke coaching now and get the first seven days free After the seven-day free trial you will only pay the annual amount and the price of renewal will never be Increased for as many years as you stay a member.

Bill 4:02

Once the first 10 coaching packages are sold, the price will increase. And the \$149 offer will never be made again. So take advantage of the seven-day free trial now by clicking the link below if you're watching on YouTube, or by going to recoveryafterstroke.com/coaching if you are listening online, and now it's on with the show.

Kawan Glover. Welcome to the podcast.

Kawan Glover 4:27

Thank you for having me.

Bill 4:29

Thanks for being here, man. Before we get stuck into the conversation, tell me a little bit about what happened to you.

How Kawan ended up having a stroke



Kawan Glover 4:35

Yeah, so back in 2014 I had a massive lesion they found on my brainstem and my symptoms got worse They monitored and my symptoms got worse when I went home. So we decided to operate and remove it. And from what they told me they believe it was all gone.

Kawan Glover 4:54

About a week after my first brain surgery, I went back to school and back to life I think I was 20 years old at the time. So there was no stopping me from getting back to a more normal life. And because of that, it created an environment where I was one day, I think September 17. I had a headache for 13 hours, vomited, clear fluid, I lost a lot of my vision, and my right side completely became useless.

Kawan Glover 5:20

I had a stroke and recovered for a month, a year later in return, I had another lesion and it grew back in the same spot. October 1, 2015. had another surgery. Everything was okay just recovering slowly so some deficit but I was able to maintain my lifestyle. And then right after I graduated, in May of 2017.

Kawan Glover 5:21

About a couple of months later September, symptoms started resurfacing, they

got worse I lost there was ringing in my left ear that was numbness, and lost control of my face up to my left eye complete numbness on my right side major deficits and became difficult to talk to eat to sleep. Then, my last surgery took place on October 12, 2017. It was a long recovery process and I'm still recovering every day but I'm here now and that's my story and I'm sticking to it.

Bill 6:16

Wow, man. So this lesion was it more of a tumor or

Kawan Glover 6:21

So from what I understand it was the benign tumor They called it the cavernous malformation so that's a group of blood vessels that set on my brainstem which is why I experienced the deficits in my motor functions. Just interviewed my first surgeon, Dr. Jonathan Sherman GW Hospital. He kind of ran me through what they thought what they were thinking he quarterback, each of my surgeries.

Kawan Glover 6:44

(inaudible) interviews actively involved you know, overseeing people or recommending someone so it's called a cavernous malformation or cavernoma. Say for short and just, you know, when I talk to you about it, I realized you probably had been there since I was born, I just created the right conditions to pull out the burst.

Bill 7:06

Yeah, we we tend to do that The thing is, I don't know if we could create the right conditions for it to not burst just because of the way that we live life and the issues that you know we have to deal with and the stresses and work and all the things that we have to, you know, overcome. So, it tends to be this thing where perhaps it's a weak spot, and then when we give ourselves enough stress or enough challenges in life, you know, Something's got to give in our body and tell us to pay Take it easy or slow down.

Bill 7:43

That's the way I talk about my situation just so that I suppose it makes me feel a little bit more empowered about the situation now that I know that potentially I created the situation to make it a little worse. Maybe I can create a situation that makes it a little better.

Bill 8:04

And if I can do that, then that's a positive thing. I'm not saying that that's going to stop a bleed of a cavernous malformation or an arteriovenous malformation as I had. Not saying that what we're going to do is intervene and stop it. But I think we could be gentle on ourselves for sure.

Kawan Glover 8:25

Yeah, I think that was a big lesson I learned just just trying to happen. You know, people around actually around me were just like, slow down, take it easy, you know, you're recovering still, like Take it easy. And I was like no. I'm gonna keep going. I'm going to keep going after it and you know, I suffered the consequences, but also talking about slowing down and accepting where I am and just being patient with myself takes time, years, decades for these things to write itself. So, you know, I'm claiming to embrace that this year in this next decade, I learned my final lesson just to slow the heck down, man.

Taking things slow after a stroke



Bill 9:07

Man, you were 20 years old, I get why you wouldn't be able to slow down too much. But I went through the same thing at 37. And it bled the first time. And I was all gung ho and I was all about, let's get back to everything I was doing being completely normal, which there's no such thing as being completely normal after a bleed in the brain.

Bill 9:27

Then, and then six weeks later, it happened again, but even then, that wasn't

enough to trigger me into having a different approach to my daily life or my well-being, At this time, I had no choice because the deficits made it impossible for me to get back into the full swing of things. And then slowly as I started to heal and get better, I did get back to the full swing of things, but I did notice myself taking more time for myself.

Bill 9:58

So you know, my experience was over three years, the three bleeds happened almost over three years. The third one was about nearly three years after the first one. And then that was the one where I had to wake up and say, okay this is not a joke. You, need to take it easy, and you need to understand that your body's healing and it's going to take time.

Bill 10:29

And like you said, it takes a decade and it takes a lot of other things that we need to do to heal. And that for me involved, you know, nutrition involved, meditation, it involved, sleeping better. It involves getting counseling. It involves so many things that I had never done before, that I really got a lot out of, and you just can't do those things quickly. As you said, that takes time and if not and if not a long time decades, maybe even.

Kawan Glover 11:04

Yeah, and I, you know, even now I'm starting to really like I was into meditation, I think in between a second and third procedure. But now I'm like making it a must, as a part of my day when I get up in the morning, I do a set routine. Make sure I'm in a powerful state, you know, the play takes positivity. I think also a lot of people that extra thing for your experience, neglect, the mental and emotional health aspect that usually comes during recovery when you don't have the doctors and people running around you just kind of by yourself.

Kawan Glover 11:38

And I think, and honestly, that was probably the most difficult part for me to accept where I was, at my age when I felt like us, puts me in the prime of my life. But I was, you know, not at peak physical condition. So I think I made it extremely difficult for me.

Bill 11:55

Emotional anguish is one of those things that we go through for different reasons,

you know, life, you know, traumatic experiences. You know, we go through that at 20. And most people haven't gone through a lot of trauma. I know some people have, but a lot of people haven't.

Having a Cavernous Malformation at a young age



OVERCOME ADVERSITY

Bill 12:15

And when you get to 20, and you experience a health issue, you know, it's a big deal because just you're only 20 years old, you've only just been on the planet for a short amount of time, and now you're dealing with this potentially life-threatening thing. How did you feel about what had happened to you at the age of 20 did you question your mortality, like I did at 37? or What was it like for you?

Kawan Glover 12:43

I think after I had the procedure because I was up and moving. I felt overconfident and arrogant. I felt like I was Superman. But I think a month later one had a stroke. That was humbling, you know, I went from being athletic. Most of my life to not being able to run or jump or, you know, go out and be myself, operate by myself without having some extra help. So it was a complete 180 in that I never saw this happening to me you don't plan for things like this to happen, especially where I was in life. So, it was just very detrimental to my self-confidence.

Intro 13:24

If you've had a stroke, and you're in recovery, you'll know what a scary and confusing time it can be. You're likely to have a lot of questions going through your mind. Like, how long will it take to recover? Will I recover? What things should I avoid? In case I'm making matters worse.

Intro 13:42

Doctors will explain things, but, because you've never had a stroke before, you probably don't know what questions to ask. If this is you, you may be missing out on doing things that could help speed up your recovery. If you find yourself in that situation. Stop worrying, and head to recoveryafterstroke.com.

Intro 14:01

You can download a guide that will help you. It's called seven questions to ask your doctor about your stroke. These seven questions are the ones Bill wished he'd asked when he was recovering from a stroke. They'll not only help you better understand your condition, they'll help you take a more active role in your recovery. head to the website now, recoveryafterstroke.com and download the guide It's free.

Kawan Glover 14:36

You know, I had all these plans. I was like, we'll do this and. Then it was like, I gotta figure out how I'm gonna make it in this state. You know, how I'm gonna do all the things I want to do set goals and you know, I'm not in a better place where I am doing that. But at that age at that time, it was it was detrimental I didn't question my mortality. Cuz I didn't believe it would happen again.

Kawan Glover 15:02

And then when it did, I think it was interesting because I took a road where I sacrificed my internal feelings for the benefit of us. So I didn't allow myself to crumble outwardly. So other people around me wouldn't crumble. But on the inside, it was a lot of turmoil and a lot of doubt, loneliness, depression, anxiety, all those things you can imagine. So it was a battle, I'm going to say up until August of this year, internally.

Bill 15:31

I know with that thing that you said about managing the emotions of other people like it becomes our responsibility. Or at least we make it our responsibility to manage the emotions of other people, our loved ones, family, and friends who come and visit I was doing the same thing, and I thought that if I turned up and looked and acted confidently, they would get a lot from that. And they did. They did get a lot from that.

Bill 15:57

The one difference is that maybe Because I was 37, I had already spent many, many years going to counseling and therapy. So I was visiting, with a counselor from about the age of 25. And for the usual, normal standard stuff, I had just experienced life, I was a young Dad, I was, you know, working, I had a mortgage, we had a my, wife was at home with the kids.

Bill 16:26

And it was tough, you know, so I needed a way to have an outlet and understand what I'm doing and how to set goals and that everything is going to be okay that it's all normal. And, you know, we just have to adjust our lifestyle because at 21 a dad at 21, that's a real big deal. So when I got to 37, one of the first things I did was I went and saw my counselor.

Bill 16:52

We're talking about 14 days after my first hospitalization which allowed me to start dealing with all those issues that we're talking about really rapidly. And then I was quiet, sure if the word was Okay, I still had all the concerns that we all have. But I was already processing those feelings and those emotions and I was already taking steps to address some issues, especially around my behavior with my children, and with my wife and all the things that crazy busy people end up potentially doing.

Bill 17:31

And not realizing they're doing and that for me, it was to be a bit of a cranky person, you know, angry and acting out and not nasty, or mean or, or violent or anything like that, but not the happiest guy. And I started to address that stuff very, very early on. And I think that has helped me tremendously now that I'm almost eight years down the track.

Kawan Glover 17:58

Yeah, I didn't get into counseling until after the second procedure. And even still, it wasn't even about the procedures or dealing with the stroke. It was other things in my life that I finished earlier, like different relationships, how I dealt with emotion, and things of that nature. So I didn't even start the process of talking about all the medical history until I was in my last stint of occupational physical therapy.

Kawan Glover 18:27

We also had a counselor in the hospital, and I continued with her afterward, that was about 2018. But even now, you know, I just turned 26. So I've just had to get my new health insurance. So now I'm going to find a counselor so I can get back to the process. And, you know, also me writing the book I'm writing now, I'm, you know about this whole ordeal as a memoir. I call it "Favor how our stroke struggle and surgery helped me find my life's purpose".

Kawan Glover 18:55

And that's been therapeutic for me as well. Just writing on those things down you live in that trauma, I think the first drive was more like a journal. But now I'm creating a narrative around it, and it's helped me see things that I didn't see before. And I think counseling, you know, through whatever you're going through is like paramount. I think it's a necessary expense, you going to call them, something a necessity for life.

Bill 19:22

That's an investment. It's not an expense. I mean, you're dealing with all those challenges that we all have in life, and then you have a stroke. So your challenges become even more dramatic, there are even more things to deal with immediately. So you've got to start chipping away at those little challenges that you've already experienced.

Bill 19:41

And like you said, the first few things that you were talking about or dealing with work, stuff that happened, you know, in relationships or whatever it was, and you hadn't even got to the point of talking about your stroke but how described to me how much of a weight off your shoulders was it when you talked about that stuff when you dealt with that stuff where you left it in the past?

Kawan Glover 20:03

Yeah, I think you know, when I first learned counseling, again, it was a bar about stuff that was happening in college for college. And I think if I had kept that weight on my shoulders throughout this whole ordeal, I don't think I would be here because a lot of that stuff leads to suicidal (inaudible) deep depressions and anxieties.

Kawan Glover 20:25

So I would've gone crazy a lot of it led me to a drug addiction, which stemmed

from a medicine they gave in the hospital called fentanyl, the addiction to pain pills, and things like that. But, you know, addressing those things, allow me to step outside myself and see, you know, you don't need to add anything else to your plate.

Vulnerabilities are superpower



Kawan Glover 20:43

You need to alleviate yourself so you can have the freedom, the state of mind, and the mental real estate to address those things. So now it has led me to a point where I truly believe that vulnerabilities are super power. And me laying my flaws and weaknesses on the table allows me to embrace whatever comes my way.

Bill 21:09

It's powerful as well man being vulnerable is powerful because you know what that allows other people listening and watching to do is it allows them to be vulnerable. It permits them it's okay for Kawan if it's okay for Bill if it's okay for there are other people that we've come across to be vulnerable. Like maybe I can be a little bit vulnerable. Pick a safe space Counseling is the perfect space to be vulnerable, and be vulnerable there man you won't get judged.

Bill 21:34

They won't give you a hard time they won't give you advice or tell you what to do. They just listen, you know and let you get that off your chest. And I know that's why I was going to counseling one of the best things I ever did was allow myself to be vulnerable. And it meant that you know, with my partner, she's not equipped to deal with all of my vulnerabilities.

Bill 21:55

She's equipped to handle some of the conversations that I want to have with it. But there are some things that she's not equipped to deal with. Therefore, I didn't want to put those certain things, it was better to put those in a place where professionals could handle them. And then when I came back home after a session with my counselor, I could go to my wife and say, hey, we spoke about this today.

Bill 22:20

And I feel really good about it. And I've let that go. I've put it in the past. I've learned something from that. And that's a completely different way for me to go to my wife and have a conversation with her about something that troubled me once. that's troubling me less now.

Kawan Glover 22:36

Yeah, and I think, you know, as I've listened to a lot of podcasts on this particular subject, we make our partners, our partner, our therapists, your best friend, as we give them so many roles, and even in my relationship, she was the one that encouraged me to like to seek counseling because they were things she just was not equipped to handle. Like she can listen and sympathize and even empathize. Sometimes, there is professional help that you should seek to flush out those issues and they shouldn't be placed. That weight shouldn't always be placed on your partner because it can ruin a relationship.

Bill 23:15

Absolutely. One of the things that we spoke about yesterday on another episode, the one that's going to go live before this one with a teacher, a friend, and a colleague of mine called Marvin, Oka we spoke about coaching. And coaching is similar to counseling in that to be the best tennis player in the world. You know, Roger Federer and all those guys, when they get coached their entire career.

Bill 23:45

They never go a day without a coach. And I suppose for them, their tennis coach would help them with other issues, amongst other things, amongst you know, the swing and the footsteps and all that kind of stuff that be constantly getting coached on their emotional challenges on their, you know, mental issues on all those things that come with being the world's best performing at your peak traveling around the globe, being away from family, doing all that kind of stuff.

Bill 24:16

They're constantly getting coached. And perhaps they aim to be the best in the world. Perhaps they aim to make the most money ever. Perhaps it's to make, you know, to win the most tennis matches ever. But we don't consider counseling and coaching as important because we want to be the best we can be in the world.

Bill 24:38

We want to be able to make money and survive and thrive and be able to cover all our outgoings. We want to be able to deal with our emotional challenges and all that kind of stuff. But somehow for some reason, the majority of the population thinks that they're going to be able to handle everything on their own.

Kawan Glover 24:55

Yeah, and you know, even when I started my company this year, I ran into that wall like people will benefit from a consultation and, you know, recession or whatever. But when you introduce like, this is an investment just to make you, you know, better equipped to handle things, you know life like, I don't need it.

Kawan Glover 25:16

My question is like, what sport? Have you ever seen a championship team win without a coach? And they were like, no, and I was like, well, what makes you think you can win the game of life without a coach? And you know, counseling like you said, is an investment as well just to me counseling is clearing that mental real estate so you can put more energy into things that you want to accomplish.

Kawan Glover 25:41

So I think coaching and counseling are almost two sides of the same coin. They may take different types. I think counseling is more task-focused. And coaching is more future-focused. But I think they are key elements to a well-rounded human being I mean everybody I mean doctors have doctors, lawyers have lawyers. So why don't people have people that coach them to get to where they want to be?

Bill 26:09

Yeah, I was looking for people who had gone through the stroke journey before me to support me in my stroke journey so that I could get beyond my current, you know, pain or problem or emotional turmoil. I was looking for somebody and I did get counseling, I did get coaching got a lot of things. But there wasn't anyone out there who had my unique needs, which was I needed to know somebody who had

a stroke and was doing better.

Bill 26:46

And I didn't mind if their deficits meant that they were in a wheelchair or that they were slurring their words. I didn't mind about any of that. Because I know with time everyone gets better somewhere somehow they can I believe that can. So I was looking for somebody like that and there was nobody available. So I went and got the next best thing, you know, counseling and coaching, it works just as fine, you know.

Bill 27:09

So then that's when I decided, well, I'm going to be one of those people who helps other people get through stroke and overcome the challenges that they need to overcome, which are the same things that I wanted to overcome. And what's interesting is that as you start to learn about counseling and coaching and move into that space yourself and start helping other people, there's another part of it that as a coach myself, I get a lot out of helping other people.

Bill 27:40

It makes a massive difference to me. And I've noticed that some people in the community who haven't moved to coaching for example, still go and present and, you know, public speaking about their experience and how to avoid stroke. They still get up in church and they talk about their experience. They inspire people. They do less type of stuff and that makes them feel better Isn't that an amazing way to feel better by helping others? It makes your stroke journey richer and better and makes it purposeful Did you find something like that as well?

Kawan Glover 28:16

Yeah and crazy that I just had this conversation yesterday you know, my brother was asking me how I've been feeling and I was like, you know, as this year comes to a close I feel great I feel when I'm coaching other people I feel like it's more for me almost than it is with another person because I get such joy and such peace of mind and that I'm putting a giving a person advice so they can gain from I'm doing it to my unique story and giving them the strategies to overcome whatever they're dealing with.

Finding your life's purpose after a stroke



Kawan Glover 28:54

And that you know, I said to him, like if I don't have an opportunity to share my story, to add value to be a benefit to other people then my life is kind of pointless. So that's why I go after it so hard because it brings me something that nothing else can. That's why I moved into coaching. Because it's, I feel I finally found my purpose like really you know, that's why I want to get on this podcast, just have a conversation with somebody who understood and this fear, you understand.

Bill 29:27

Yeah, I found my purpose. And it's such a cool thing to find. You know, I talked about that yesterday as well, man I talked about like, I found what I wanted to do when I grow up. You know, I'm 45 years old. And I just in the last few years discovered what I want to do with the rest of my life. And it makes such a massive difference because I get people contacting me all around the world, saying, you know, thanks for that episode.

Bill 29:53

And I don't need to worry about any of that. I just need to put it out there. And that attracts people to me. So I would encourage people who are listening, and watching to do something that helps other people, even though you think that you're the one that needs help you probably do. helping other people is going to make a difference in your life. Now you're 26, right? So, to me, you sound like a much wiser 26-year-old than the ones I normally come across. Is that how you were or does stroke somehow impart some wisdom on what normally would have been A 22-year-old party animal kind of guy?

Bill 29:53

This was a great episode. I needed to hear that I'm so glad that the podcast is around and feedback like that. It just drives you further and further to do more and more and to get better and better at the way that we offer services, you know, and the podcast is completely free, people don't need to pay for that they jump on, they get so much value immediately.

Kawan Glover 31:03

I think the stroke that the surgery is the whole ordeal has given me a lot of patience and perspective. I think those two combined kind of aid you they make you focus and think about different things. A lot of things that were priorities are longer priorities, I think about you know, and gratitude. I think every day I get up my feet touch the floor.

Kawan Glover 31:31

The fact that I'm alive, makes me smile, you know, after everything else after that was a bonus. Like the fact that we're having this conversation right now. Amazingly, we're talking to a computer, I'm alive and you're alive. You know those types of things excite me now where before was like the party or the girls or whatever, but now it's like, really for me is the small things like the fact that I can grab this bottle of water and drink it and I don't have that the (inaudible) in my throat anymore.

Kawan Glover 32:01

It's hard to swallow you know the fact that I have a cell phone the fact that I can write still with my left hand you know those things matter so much more to me and because I had to slow down I was told to slow down so often in my own body I think that patience you know I'm no longer want printing out you know, when I'm riding I'm watching people speed up the red light and move so fast. I'm like, Where are you going?

Kawan Glover 32:30

If you have left earlier or if had a plan you'd be fine. Like I'm no longer in a space of judgment. I just everything. I don't feel as if things are good or bad. It's just about what your experiences have been and this constructive you have. I seek understanding and employ empathy, instead of accusing someone or judging someone based on what they say or do I just feel like if more people practice empathy practice gratitude, and embrace patience and perseverance, and, you

know, perspective, you'll be a lot more well rounded, calm, peaceful person. I think that's the state of the stage of life I'm life just accepting what is and creating what I want to be.

Bill 33:18

Yeah. It's like that about a man we can create what we want to have, and what we want to be, and what we want to experience our life to be. And if you think you can't, well, you're right, you definitely can't. But if you think you can, you can. And that's the whole point about it is that I understand that people experience different deficits.

Bill 33:42

That doesn't mean you can't have a full, rich experience of life and make a difference to yourself, feel better, and also make a difference to other people. You your trajectory at 22 Before the stroke, what do you feel that If it wasn't for a dramatic, life-threatening situation, do you feel that you would have this awareness about being calm about being patient, etc?

You need darkness to be able to appreciate the light

Kawan Glover 34:15

No, I don't think so. Because when you have a stroke or something, something traumatic happened to you, something is taken from you. You learn that you share and appreciate things, you know, I talk about the adverse a lot. And, you know, if the world was always sunny and warm and, you know, now whether you wouldn't appreciate it, it was always light, you wouldn't appreciate the light because always there you need darkness.

Kawan Glover 34:45

You need a little cold. You need a little adversity to appreciate the success that comes after it. I think everybody has their fight and everybody has their challenges in life, but I think this was maybe I'd go so far as to believe I was especially gifted in life and that I needed some type of refresh, restart, and let me know that things are going to happen in life.

Kawan Glover 35:10

And this will give you the toolset to be able to face those challenges. So I think I

honestly believe that this whole deal, has been a gift because my mom has told me you don't learn these things until much later on in life. So now I have that perspective. Now, it allows me to live in the moment, embrace people fully, and just accept, you know, sometimes you just get frustrated about little things.

Kawan Glover 35:36

But now it's like, well, it happened no longer crying about it has already happened. Now let's see what I can do to move forward. And I think that perspective again, has just been such a great learning curve for me because it takes some time, but I did get the lesson and now you're talking to you. So I think my life is going pretty well.

Bill 35:58

Surely is, you're an interesting guy I talk about stroke as being one of the best things that ever happened to me. If I say that to some people, they get a little bit nervous about that. They go, well, it's not the best thing that ever happened to me. And in context, let me give you guys the context the best thing that ever happened to me from a learning experience is no doubt about the trauma I could have done without.

Bill 36:27

, For the surgery that maybe I didn't wake up from, I would have preferred to avoid waking up and not being able to walk for a time. That was something that I would have preferred to do without, but when I reflect now and it's been eight years, for me to reflect, it's been the best learning experience ever like you. I'm contemplating things I'm thinking about things that I don't think I ever would have.

Bill 36:59

If I just When about my regular life as I did, because I was all about working too much making what, you know, making money, and not giving other people the opportunity to express themselves, it was just my way it was everything about me. And now it's not about me so much. It's more about everyone else. And I get to be a part of everyone else's experience of the world. And I get to be a good example of how we can change from the person that we were before to the person that we are now.

Bill 37:33

And that change is not the change that was forced upon me. That was the one that I chose, you know, to go down the path of change so that I could feel better in my skin so that I could feel better in the way that people that I interacted with people, and when I walked away from an interaction, I didn't feel like I had judged that person because that's what I used to do like you.

Bill 37:59

I used to judge people Not that I did it on purpose, I didn't know any better. I used to see somebody in a wheelchair. And I was just assuming that the only reason they're in the wheelchair is because they can't walk. I didn't understand the emotional issues that went with that. And all the other challenges that they have to overcome daily to exist in their world, you know?

Bill 38:20

So now I see somebody who is just perhaps able-bodied, but looking cranky, and I'm figuring, well, man, they must have had some bad news this morning. Or, you know, they must not have slept well, because they had some dramas last night. And then that makes me approach them completely differently and allows them to come down while I'm around them, and I positively impact them. without even trying, because I'm not judging them. I'm just assuming that like me, they're human beings and they've gone through some tough times.

Kawan Glover 38:54

Yeah, when I first came out of rehab, we did an outing and it was a group of people We're in the rehab center and we went out to Washington Monument and walked around. And one of the tasks were asked to complete was just buying something with some money and it didn't, you know, exchange the money over the counter and I just watched the way people that were able-bodied would look at me and the people I was with and how it would take me too long.

Kawan Glover 39:23

Now, it's just like, this is the first time I had ever been looked at as another. And this is the way I used to look at people that would not be able-bodied or something seem to have a disability, and I you know, just get impatient. And now again, this lesson this whole deal is like, some so many people go through things every day. I don't know what happened when you left your house.

Kawan Glover 39:48

So me judging you, that you're an awful person. I hate the way you are. Because I don't know how I have been with your life I may see for 10 seconds and make a judgment and now I think I'm more self-aware to challenge that judgment within myself like wait a minute, you don't know where they've been you don't know what kind of month weekday morning they've had so how can I sit here and accuse you of something that I don't have all the information on?

Kawan Glover 40:17

You know and it goes conversely for people with their jolly all the time, you know you never know what's that going to and I just have empathy towards other people no matter who they are or what circumstances are because, you know, I would like to have that empathy given back to me and I just think you don't know where people are in life. So appreciate that damn. Even in a conversation with a stranger appreciate that moment they talk to you and it just makes life easier.

Getting support from people



Bill 40:46

Yeah, it does. It makes life easier. That's a great way to describe it. So tell me about your family. Were you surrounded by family and friends when you were going through this? What was that like for you? Did you have support?

Kawan Glover 41:00

Yeah, I did have support. I mean, the first surgery, I know my parents, my grandma, of course, were there. But it was kind of like a two-day thing. And then I had a procedure in two days, and I was out back in school. So you know, I was looking fine again. So people are like, Oh, well, he's my friend in school, just kind of mocking me, but I think it started when I started having these symptoms again. When I started having the symptoms after surgery, like, are you okay?

Kawan Glover 41:31

Like, you seem to be stumbling around this still in college I was like, No, I'm fine. Don't worry about it. And then I had a stroke. And then people started to pay attention. know if I was at a party, or ok and people pull me to the side, and this is, you know, there at 2nd surgery. But it was not until this third surgery that a community of people tapped into what I was going through.

Kawan Glover 41:59

I needed a new surgeon and went to Rutgers University. And I knew this was a doctor that was gonna do it and It was great and we went to check on the paperwork and financials and my insurance didn't cover it. So I had to go to another hospital to see different doctors. There was one doctor who came into the room my parents were in just like, if you don't get this surgery in three to six months, you're going to die.

Kawan Glover 42:25

So my head, I'm like, so you're going to do the surgery? He was like, no. He sent me to radiology and got angiograms and different things of that nature. And I'm, you know, I was deteriorating at this point, you know, loss of talking, you know, hearing things of that nature. And then I started a GoFundMe in September that month. And within the first two days, I raised \$50,000 in the first week or raised about \$77,000.

Kawan Glover 42:56

So I think at the end of this whole campaign raised by \$90,000 and you know, all those doctors that had dealt with me met up at a conference and decided that the doctor at Rutgers was going to do the procedure and after procedures, insurance decided to cover the whole thing so one of the reasons I call the book (inaudible) because there are moments like that in my life where I can't explain what happened it just happened and worked on my favorite my grandma always says favor, in your favor, is just favor.

Kawan Glover 43:31

So I think the biggest rally around me outside of my friends was to start my family I started my business. (inaudible) was the third surgery, and the GoFundMe is still up. You can go read the comments and donations, I'm not asking for money anymore, but it's just up there to serve as a testament to the people who rallied around me and you know, now I'm starting to accept the fact that I may have

been a better person than I thought I was because if I wasn't all those people wouldn't have helped so I have to accept that.

Bill 44:08

That's awesome man. So, amongst other things, you're a pretty good guy anyway.

Kawan Glover 44:13

Yeah, I would say I would say so, especially after a stroke I think that was really what made this change.

Bill 44:21

Yeah, that's amazing you know what's cool is that money is always an issue for people going through a stroke or any health issue but the stroke takes sometimes a long time to be able to get back to earning an income and go fund and again, another blessing another amazing thing about the times that we live in, you know, we live in the best times firstly, you and I, two-stroke survivors 13,000 miles away from each other, talking as if we're in the same room then.

Bill 44:55

That takes away from me as far as I'm concerned isolation, you know, that minimizes The opportunity for isolation. We talk about the surgeons and the doctors and the hospitals that are available to us. In these times, we've never had so much support and help from the medical world before, say 20 or 30 years ago, you and I probably wouldn't have been around to have these conversations.

Bill 45:26

So that's a blessing. And then you talk about how you can ask for help and you can get all levels of support, you know, direct support people that come and, and, and support you day to day just by being with you or in hospital at home or taking you somewhere to this amazing thing of GoFundMe and all these other formats that exist to support somebody raises some money and pays for some medical bills. I mean, we do live in the best times and if we know how to take advantage of the tools that we have around us, we can make a big difference.

Bill 46:03

So, you know, imagine being imagined trying to raise \$90,000, you know, 25 years ago, before. Before things like GoFundMe, it was possible. But it would have been a lot harder. And that would have been a load off your mind knowing that if you need those funds, there are going to be funds there to be able to pay

for your medical expenses. Because I know in America, there's a big issue with people having life-saving surgeries and then leaving the hospital and then having a massive medical bill that they have to pay off.

Kawan Glover 46:46

Yeah, I have my own life with this system. You know, I think we're the only developed nation (inaudible) healthcare. And I just know that had it not been for my good fortune. And this situation that occurred to my whole ordeal, that I would have walked my medical debt. I told them that it was about 1.2 million combined with everything.

Kawan Glover 47:10

So I'm just thinking, How do I walk out of the hospital still recovering and needing some type of physical, occupational, and speech therapy and counseling? You know, with that \$1.2 million bill in my back. How would I ever get back to a place where I could breathe again? It just grinds my gears that I don't feel like it used to always be like this. And again, these people, you know, when I was in the hospital,

Kawan Glover 47:37

I wasn't thinking about money, I was thinking about living. So now, I get out of one stressful situation into another and that could follow me for a long period in my life. So I just hope it changes man. I do but until then, I just pray for people and help everybody keep going it is a challenge and a struggle that people face regularly.

Bill 48:07

Yeah. And how does medical insurance work? Is it something that you have to have before you become unwell for it to cover you? Or can you get medical insurance later?

Kawan Glover 48:18

So, um, it's really interesting, like even get getting through your employer. It used to be there were some plans, that's where President Obama enlisted Obamacare that AIG will cover pre-existing conditions because there are clients where they can deny you. After all, you've had this number of medical injuries, and we don't want to pay for that.

Kawan Glover 48:46

You know, I would have felt under that burden had not been for Obamacare there's also Medicaid, and Medicare, for the elderly and the poor. You know, it is a system that if you have it in can work for you. You don't have it, that debt that piles up is outstanding. At one point I had some bills that I didn't even know had started to affect my credit.

Kawan Glover 49:11

So, you know, it can go as far as seeping further into not only your health, life, your financial house. So it is a system that I think needs to be rectified in some kind of way. You know, when I was in a hospital, they told me one time not to bring my Tylenol because they wanted to charge me for a pill. So it's interesting the way that it works. The cheat of Don't take that we'll give you some just so you can charge me. So it's all about the dollar bill and big pharma up here. But you know, I hope that changes.

Kawan Glover 49:22

So tell me, what are the plans now moving forward for the future? I know. I saw a post just a couple of days ago. You're doing a first podcast episode, and you're planning on writing a book. What do the next few years look like for you?

Plans

Kawan Glover 50:08

Next, I want to say 10 to 15 years, I'd like to write at least 15 to 20 more books. I like to start a media production company and write films, movies, and things of that nature. I'd also like to venture maybe into music. I mean, I feel like this is spurring some creativity, I enjoy the writing process. So the books are going to be a staple. I like to, you know, expand my podcast to get more listeners.

Kawan Glover 50:41

And my theme for it's called favored podcast, just really digging the stories like yours and mine we talk about the moments that you didn't know whether it was going to be the end or not and how favored you are being played a role in that. But I just really want to continue, I want to start speaking regularly. Want to expand my company, I want to start other companies.

Kawan Glover 51:04

I want to invest in companies. I want to be an investor in real estate. There are so

many things, but I know the things I'm going to do for sure. Speaking, coaching, writing books, starting a media production company, and continuing podcasts, are five I know for sure. And everything else, you know, sky's the limit, but those five for sure is gonna be my (inaudible) for next couple decades.

Bill 51:28

Yeah, that sounds cool. Man. Did you end up finishing your college studies?

Kawan Glover 51:34

Yeah, I'd say I just finished them this year. When I graduated, I had one more class. And I was finishing that and then the health stuff happened. So it interrupted that but I signed up for my course this summer. And I have my degree sitting over there. I haven't opened it yet. But I have it and that part of my life is complete. So it took me seven and a half years, but it's done.

Bill 51:59

What is the degree? what do you have a degree in?

Kawan Glover 52:01

It's actually in finance. So, you know, later in life or sooner than later, there could be an avenue for me to go into finance in some kind of way. I've had a background in business (inaudible) finance. So who knows when that will take me life is, you know, I tell people my ultimate goal in life is to live 80 to 100 (inaudible).

Kawan Glover 52:24

So now I have about 75 74 years left. So who knows what could happen if change, I could go to Australia. I was in Bali not too long ago. So who knows where I'll be my editor is in Bali Australia, she's from Australia. So who knows? Maybe someone's called me to that spot of the world and see, what's possible.

Bill 52:46

Come down, man, we'd love to have you here. When so you finish your degree? You've got all of that stuff done. Moving forward, what are the physical things that you have to deal with now as well as what are the things that you need to pay attention to?

Kawan Glover 53:03

The foot track on my right side, there is a lean muscle nerve and imbalance and when I'm exercising now I can feel the lactic acid buildup, and the left side of my

muscles on the right side, it's just not the muscles are working. Now build the acid buildup. So a lot of my hand's external right side, I got to continuously work on that.

Kawan Glover 53:31

I've used as much as possible but again, this is just difficult. I'm dealing with the spasticity of my bicep, the lack of muscle contraction in my tricep, and my right leg just the calf muscles. The upward flexion dorsiflexion I believe it's called? Other work on that is just being more capital apparel. Having my brace on it a company called my own nest gave me an electromagnetic brace.

Kawan Glover 53:58

So when I walk it sends a signal to lift my foot. If I didn't have that, then it would be easier for me to fall five times I tore my hand up catching myself. When I need to react faster, these muscles kind of stiffen up instead of, you know, going out the saving, but those things, again, we talked about from the beginning just about slowing down whenever I moved to fat.

Kawan Glover 54:26

That's when troubles right so I'm still that a mental block because I know in my mind when I'm mentioning, I see myself running and moving fast when I get up like whoa, like even the slightest turns here. You know, I used to get frustrated, but now I'm just like, Scott funny, you know, like, this is just me accepting what it is and realizing that you know, It's okay, I'm not hurting anyone. I'm just taking care of myself, man. You know, I said my mom kind of like nervous when I do so.

Kawan Glover 55:00

People, you know, if I trip backward, like oh my god, so but you know, other than that, I can cook myself, I can get around, I can talk, I can speak I can, you know, do the things that I value to myself on my list so I think, you know, I can work out I swim in Bali for the first time and like to this old thing again. So I think I'm pretty I don't see myself as someone having a disability, I'm just able to do things differently. And that makes me feel good.

Bill 55:37

Yeah, that's good man. And I know it's a for some people it might be a small consolation, but the fact that you had a stroke so young means that you have such a long time ahead of you to continue to heal and recover and, find ways to

overcome, you know, the challenges that spasticity brings up for you, for example, or whatever and we don't know whether technology is going to you, you know, there's hope for the future, in that, we're going to be able to take advantage of some technology that isn't around yet doesn't even exist because it hasn't been possible until now.

Bill 56:15

So it's great that you're able to have that approach and to be comfortable with the fact that things are the way that they are. The fact is, we can't change. But we can't change. We just can't. And there's no point trying to beat your head up against the wall every time something happens, and you want it to be different. If it's not going to be different, maybe we have to be different.

Bill 56:39

Maybe we have to find a way to allow ourselves to experience life differently. It seems to me that the majority of your life is going to be experienced in this way, which is not the same as it was before the age of 22. And there's no reason why you can experience a full life being a little bit different from how your life the first 22 years was, you can still take advantage of the same things that everyone else is taking advantage of.

Bill 57:12

You have the ability to learn, communicate, get around, and do all those things just has to be a slightly different way. And I say that from my own experience of a short amount of time in a wheelchair and a short amount of time not being able to walk. But, when I started to get on my feet again, I found myself falling over regularly. And I remember falling over at home holding a plate.

Bill 57:43

I just did something on the couch and I got up and I went to walk to the kitchen to put the plate in the sink and my left leg was just gone. It was a sleep. I put it on the ground fell flat on my face and thankfully the plate fell out of my hand and slipped forward. So I didn't fall on it and break it like that it just broke it further down the track. And it was that it was a reminder to say, just pay attention to your leg before you get up. Make sure that you can feel it. Make sure that it's on the ground. Make sure you're not going to fall over.

Kawan Glover 58:18

Yeah, I've had a similar experience with like, just getting out of bed to use the bathroom, and it just wasn't there. And it felt like I was falling in slow motion. You know, I can talk to myself. Like I was like falling and I was like, Wow, you're falling. You're falling right now this is happening. And then I hit the ground and was like well, prize prize-winning man, and now I just feel as have to get up and sit before I move for the only trepidations I have on my future.

Kawan Glover 58:48

I want to hit him something we talked about in the beginning. You know. I want to be a father. I want to be a husband. I just don't want this to limit my ability to be you know a dad you want to be chosen? And I think about that a lot now and I know also genetically or biologically I don't want to pass anything I have down. So I want to make sure you you know, see if that's possible to figure out that's handed down. But I think about that a lot. Like just think going ahead being a father What kind of father will I be you know, I can be successful? Am I all right but you know, I want to be able to contribute a full experience to my children. So, you know, that plagued me sometimes I think that's the only thing.

Bill 59:34

Yeah, I know saying. So my advice is to seek out other people who are already doing amazing things in that space with being perhaps confined to a wheelchair or not being fully active or something like that. seek out people who are already doing amazing things in that space and learn from them. You know, and allow yourself to see that that may be happening for other people already.

Bill 1:00:03

It's something that exists you're not going to be the first person in the world to be experiencing foot drop and specificity in the leg as children do not I mean, like, you're not breaking any, any barriers there, you just be doing what other people are already doing. And that, hopefully, will enable you to just get calm about that idea in the future because you're just stressing out about something that's probably not gonna eventually be this negative version of fatherhood, it's just not going to eventually you're a good guy. You know, people think you're a good guy. You're doing good things. You still have goals and ideas. And you sound quite wise to me for 26-year-olds, you've had massive life experience, and I reckon you'll make an awesome dad.

Kawan Glover 1:00:52

Yeah, well, I need to hear that. I think I just need to stop focusing on It and everything else in my life. Doing everything else I do with everything else in my life. Just focus on what I do have not what I don't have. I think that is something I need to focus on this year coming up.

Bill 1:01:11

That's it, man, we need to focus on what we do have. And we need to focus on our strengths. You know, we hear about people going through school and many years of school and they get told to do stuff like you're not good at algebra get better at algebra. And you never hear teachers say, well, you're good at multiplication. Though. Let's use multiplication as your thing and make it make you even more amazing multiplication.

Bill 1:01:39

We get stuck on focusing on the things we're not good at. And let's face it if I had to do the things I'm not good at I would hate my day. Terrible. I'm not good at doing it. I'm not good at reading books. I physically can't pick up books and read them. But I can listen to a book on an audio podcast and focus on doing it the way that I can do it. And I benefit from it because I can do that anytime while I'm driving while I'm on the train. Now when I'm on a bus.

Bill 1:02:11

My mind doesn't allow words to come off the page and into my memory. It doesn't allow that. So I'm not going to do that I'm not going to force myself to get better at reading, because that's gonna be, that's gonna be terrible, I'm not going to enjoy that book. So that's what I would encourage you to do: focus on your strengths. And you're going to be aware of your weaknesses so that you know what your limitations are. Focus on what you're good at, and you're good at so many things and so on. So many other stroke survivors, are so good at so many things, that if they gave themselves more time to practice those skills, they would see dramatic results and massive improvement, you know.

Kawan Glover 1:02:55

Yeah, and I think you get stuck in a cycle of negativity like, oh, I'll never do this, and you those thoughts and narratives you create for yourself. I, you know, I'm a chronic overthinker. So like when things go wrong, it's like me miles a minute questions, questions, questions, and, you know, what if this doesn't work and you know, now I'm starting to ask myself, Well, what if it does?

Kawan Glover 1:03:23

And it changes and rewires those thought patterns. So now, I'm in a place where, as I'm speaking, you know, even in this conversation, I'm able to pull out the gems and learn from that and incorporate it into what I'm doing and helps bolster my mental strength and emotional endurance. I think. Now, I'm at a place where I think the only thing I have to work on is the physical because the mental is coming together and the emotional is becoming better.

Kawan Glover 1:03:55

Counseling is talking openly about, you know, practicing awareness. Being aware of your flaws, but embracing your strengths. I think that is amazing. I've never said it before. But now, when I write that on my wall somewhere, like, it's okay, to focus on what you're good at, And I'm good at talking, I can talk all day, I'm good at writing, I can write all day, I'm good at coming up with solutions quickly.

Kawan Glover 1:04:22

That's what I do. And I'm not gonna focus on a thing I don't like, like, I don't like (inaudible) task or counting on, you know, I don't like finance. When rest my degree, like I thought it was gonna be on Wall Street. But I don't want to do that. Especially with everything that's happened, my focus has completely shifted. So I think that is a key part of something that I'm going to incorporate into this next decade. And I call it the decade of self-investment. So that's what I'm gonna do.

Bill 1:04:57

That's a beautiful way to end the podcast, man. Thank you so much. Kawan I appreciate you for making contact and getting in touch with me. Well done on the work that you're doing well done on your recovery and I look forward to seeing what else it is that you achieve.

Kawan Glover 1:05:13

Thank you so much Phil for having me and to all the listeners. You feel depressed down downtrodden. Just remember this too shall pass as long as you keep a positive mindset and keep taking positive actions. keep giving and practicing gratitude. You are good to go.

Intro 1:05:32

Discover how to support your recovery after a stroke. Go to recoveryafterstroke.com