From Anxiety To Calm In Just A Few Sessions – Bill Gasiamis with Scott Stevens

Scott Stevens is a father and husband who had a stroke at 44. Listen to how he went from anxious to calm in just a few coaching sessions

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https://recoveryafterstroke.com/coaching/

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Scott 0:00
Yeah, what choice have you got? I mean, you're the guy who knows what he's talking about. And if you're saying, like a bit of tough love is good for you, then, of course, you know, I've got no choice but to take it on the chin and, in retrospect, take it on the chin and listening to what you had to say to me, was a really important part of me turning this journey around to a more positive approach.

Intro 0:27
This is the Recovery After Stroke Podcast, with Bill Gasiamis, helping you navigate recovery after stroke.

Introduction

Bill 0:40
Bill from recoveryafterstroke.com This is Episode 134. And in this episode, we will be talking about overcoming anxiety, how stroke affects your identity, nutrition that supports the brain, the benefits of sleep, and plenty more. And my guest today is Scott Stevens who was a fit and active 44-year-old who experienced a cryptogenic stroke about six months ago before this recording. Scott, welcome to the podcast, mate.

Scott 1:11
Thanks, Bill.

Bill 1:12
Scott, tell us a little bit about what happened to you how you became a stroke survivor.

Cryptogenic stroke

Scott 1:19
Well, my stroke happened in August 2020, just to cap off a wonderful year for everybody. But I returned from a bike ride early one morning and I was sitting down having coffee, and then all of a sudden became confused and all those classic stroke symptoms.

Scott 1:37
Weakness down my left side, and I pretty quickly realized that I certainly was not right. And I suffered from an ischemic stroke. So I had a clot, which I still don't know what it was caused by.

Scott 1:49
So I guess I was very unlucky, I guess you can call that a cryptogenic stroke. But yeah, I was just really unlucky. And so after hospital, I spent three weeks in hospital, and slowly during that time I regained my movement. And had been working on eversince. So that's basically the story.

Bill 2:11
So it's February 2021. Now. So you're about six months beyond stroke, what were some of the things that you had to deal with, and still are dealing with, beyond

stroke, what they leave you with what kind of deficits and challenges?

Scott 2:29
Well, I think I mean, you and I had this sort of we messaged about this during the week, but I guess I wouldn't really call them a deficit at the moment. But I do have some odd feeling on my left side, which doesn't leave me at all.

Scott 2:41
And certainly fatigue is an issue, as I noticed with a lot of people. But that's what it basically was like let's be very careful of managing my fatigue. But I'm back at work and operating in that regard.

Bill 2:58
And sometimes you say that you have these kinds of zoned-out days can you describe those a little bit?

Scott 3:05
Well, I think they're sort of they pass now. But the period of three or four months after the stroke was perhaps the time when I had that feeling of being zoned out, I guess you'd call it really bad brain fog, where I would feel like I was in a room with everybody.

Scott 3:20
And I was like watching a movie, but not a particularly good one. really odd feeling in retrospect, I guess I can put that down to anxiety related to the stroke. And not being particularly well, in a mental health space, which is certainly become a lot better now. I sought help and yeah.

Bill 3:45
So you were pretty healthy guy, you're active. And all of a sudden, you're recovering from an ischemic stroke. What's at stake for you, in the time after your diagnosis and when you've come home from hospital?

Scott 4:01
Well, I guess yeah I was a healthy guy, I was right into my cycling. And I play a lot of sport. I'm a PE teacher. So I really that's what was at stake was my livelihood, my identity as a PE teacher and as a guy who was pretty fit and active.

Scott 4:17

And all of a sudden that's been taken away. And I'm sure that will come back because I'm headed. I think I'm tracking the right direction. But there certainly is a period of time where there's a lot of uncertainty, and you don't know what the future brings.

Scott 4:30
And that in itself creates anxiety and the anxiety really feeds on itself. And that was my period of time when I got home. I was always very uncertain about what the future would bring for me.

Bill 4:43
You did a lot of work with the doctors you had a lot of support. You had people that you're seeing regularly about the mental health challenges in that time because it's pretty common for people to struggle through stroke in the physical but also emotional and mental way.

Bill 5:03
At some point, but you kind of noticed that it was necessary to make some kind of a change in the way that you were approaching things. Why was it important for you to make a change in the way you're approaching things?

Scott 5:17
Well, my family is really important to me, because my mental health was spiraling, really, I wasn't engaging with my children in the way I would like and I really think if I'm honest, it was impairing my ability to recover.

Scott 5:30
Because I wasn't sleeping, and I wasn't resting effectively. And, I just wasn't thinking clearly and I knew that if I wanted to recover, or make some recovery, I needed to look after my mental health.

Scott 5:30
So I spoke to my wife, and we sought help. And I think actually, Bill, what you were a capital, say, because you remember getting in touch with you via my occupational therapist. And he, I remember you suggesting that perhaps I would benefit from seeking some help around the mental health space. Yeah. And that was the real catalyst for me. So as soon as I saw that, things turned around. Yeah,

Bill 6:12

I know, you'd started to turn around what? What I'm curious about was, you know, in that moment, in the moment, or the days or months before you made a change, was there something preventing you from making that change to start thinking about this as a holistic kind of recovery, rather than I've just got to get my ischemic stroke sorted?

Scott 6:33
Yeah, well, I think because, I mean obviously, I've never had a stroke. And this is really uncharted territory for me. I mean, I thought I would just sort of spontaneously and naturally recover.

Scott 6:47
And then I became aware of your approach. And that was a more holistic approach. And then they to really get everything in line, and then the recovery can get some momentum, and that was the turning point.

Bill 7:04
Did you have a time in your head about when that'll needed to happen by?

Scott 7:12
Well, the trap I fell into is because I thought I wanted a definitive answer around when I would be better. And that was the mistake I fell into because every stroke is different. And I would ask people who I knew had strokes, I would ask them, how long does it take you to recover? When did you get this back? When did you get that back?

Scott 7:32
And of course, They can't give me an answer that relates to me, because every stroke is different. And all I knew that was that I needed to start looking after those things that would contribute to recovery and talking to people as the only way you can develop that knowledge. And I guess in many ways, I've developed that knowledge by talking to, you.

Positive impact on Scott Stevens



Bill 7:54
What does it mean to your life, when you make that kind of a change? When you shift your perspective from going I'm just going to get my head sorted to I am going to look at the whole me and work on the entire me. How does that impact your life in a positive way?

Scott 8:16
Well, I think it starts to embed behaviors. I mean, forget about the stroke where you start to embed behaviors into your life that you can carry on beyond recovery, I guess, I mean, I guess the recovery doesn't stop it continues, It's a bit of a journey, isn't it? You've indicated this you're nine years out is that right?

Bill 8:35
Yeah, I'm 9 years out this month. Yeah.

Scott 8:38
Yeah. So as you well know, it continues I just get to 12 months ago right on fixed and I think I've got behaviors in place now where already I'm seeing a difference in like the way I relate to my family the way I approach things and certainly de stressing and relaxing and and building in meditation and effective sleep habits and sleep hygiene and good dietary practices. And they're things that have already made a difference. Stroke aside.

Bill 9:10
Well done, how old were you had the stroke?

Scott 9:14

44.

Bill 9:15
Too young. There's never a right age for stroke is there? 44 is too young man.

Scott 9:22
Yeah.

Bill 9:23
What was your typical day filled with?

Scott 9:27
Pre-stroke or post-stroke?

Bill 9:29
Yeah, pre-stroke.

Scott 9:30
Pre-stroke well pre-stroke I would. typical day would be getting out very early in the morning, heading out for a bike for some exercise, and then I would return breakfast with a family and my wife and I both teachers and our kids go to the same school that we teach at so we would all head off together.

Scott 9:50
So it was a busy, busy schedule. So that was a typical day for me. So it hasn't changed a whole lot. Like I'm not teaching it the moment I'm in another role at the school, which has been great for my recovery, but my great hope is to get back to teaching, but not to get back to a sort of life where it's just so high paced that you can't keep up. And you don't know what's going on.

Bill 10:14
So how long were you in China before the stroke happened?

Scott 10:19
Bout two years.

Bill 10:21
You're coming to us from China. So it's a little different. Do you feel like it's a little different in China than it would have been if you're at home in Australia? Do you have a different kind of process towards the way you're looking after

yourself? Because you're not home, around family, friends, all that kind of stuff?

Scott 10:45
Yeah, well, I think isolated is actually not far from the truth. I mean, I went to hospital they did a great job of saving my life. I mean, it was a serious stroke was a massive stroke. But what's really interesting is that you don't have that ability to relate to the doctors in a way that you would in Australia.

Scott 11:03
And ask to get answers to the questions that you want answers to. I mean, their approach was certainly I made a pretty good recovery in the first month or so. And I went back for my follow up, and my neurologist, I must admit, I will give him credit, he did a great job in saving my life, the day of the stroke, get all the right things. But he certainly didn't fill me with encouragement when it came to my recovery. He was particularly pessimistic. And that seems to be the way that things happen here.

Bill 11:40
Yeah. And that's the one thing you need when you're recovering from a stroke. You want a little bit of hope at the end of the tunnel, is that not right?

Scott 11:48
Oh, yeah, absolutely. And I think you have to provide that hope yourself. And I guess that's what my recovery looked like, or still looks like it's I'm doing it myself. Because you don't have access to the allied health that you would in Australia.

Post-stroke challenges

Bill 12:08
So you know, post-stroke. And this is probably a bit of a difficult question in that there's maybe a lot of challenges. But what was the single biggest challenges you faced post-stroke, do you feel and bearing in mind now that you're six months out now, but it wasn't that long ago that you only one month out and two months out? So I'm probably keen to hear about what it was like at those first couple of months.

Scott 12:36
Well, I guess my biggest challenge was having been used to having complete

control of my body, I was having to rebuild from almost scratch, from the ground up. And I'm not a particularly patient person. And I think that has been my biggest challenge is being patient forcing myself to be patient, and know that this was like a long time trying to find positives along the way and not get mired down in the doom and gloom.

Bill 13:07
There was there's a lot of talk around, you know, delaying gratification, and the benefits that people experience when they delay gratification, are you somebody that perhaps previously didn't really delay gratification?

Scott 13:25
Well, I guess I could, because it certainly wasn't at stake what's at stake now? Because I ration now and I'm too full on there, I'm just going to fatigue and it impairs my recovery. So I've certainly learned that there's nothing wrong with delaying gratification and just being patient.

Help from Bill Gasiamis



Bill 13:45
Yeah. What would you say? I help you with the most?

Scott 13:51
Well, certainly, I mean, Bill, you probably got sick of me sending you messages in that third and fourth month, because I mean, I was terrified. I'm not afraid to admit that I was scared.

Scott 14:02
And knowing and talking to you, and being able to say to you, listen, I'm feeling like this, and this is what I'm really tackling at the moment. And for you to say, don't worry, mate, that's quite normal, you'll work your way through it, there's better days ahead, was really reassuring.

Scott 14:20
And that actually got me through a fairly dark period. And that enabled me to sort of sort through the mess. Now, I don't know whether you recall there's a period over Christmas just where I got in contact with you quite a bit because I was really struggling.

Scott 14:34
And I think that's so important, being able to talk to people about what's going on and connect with people who know, I mean, I know, I'm realistic enough to know that you can't give me an answer in terms of my recovery. But just for you to be able to say listen, it sounds familiar, and you will get through it. That hope. I mean, I guess you offered me hope that things would improve.

Bill 15:02
Why was it important for you to have somebody there that can answer your questions, if not immediately? Because I never answered them immediately, always but.

Scott 15:12
You were pretty close.

Bill 15:13
Yeah. As close as I can possibly be to? Why was it important to have that there? How does that change things for you?

Scott 15:23
Yeah. Well, I think I'll preface that a little bit, it's important to have somebody who's slightly removed from the immediate situation, which I guess you are in a way. Because I was just saying, a colleague yesterday, I'm almost at that point where I feel like I'm talking about the strike too much.

Scott 15:38
And, you don't want to be bombarding people with stroke chat. And it's not really good for me either. Because all it means is that I'm dwelling in the stroke, and I'm not moving forward. Whereas when I'm speaking to you, I can tell you how I'm feeling you give me an answer.

Scott 15:56
And to be really honest, it's been a couple of times where you've fired back at me and said, listen, things could be absolutely worse mate, you need to be a bit more grateful. And now you're smiling but I think there's value in that as well.

Scott 16:12
Because I mean, this could be a lot worse. And I think having that gratitude, whether it be developed via something like you telling me really mate, you need

to have a look at yourself, you're being a little bit negative.

Scott 16:29
And if I developed like, just having that gratitude, it helps you understand that there is hope. And but you need to work for it. You can't woe is me and speaking about how unfair this is, just does not work in this situation. And that's what you've taught me?

Bill 16:48
I was doing the soft love, soft love, soft love, tough love.

Scott 16:52
Yeah, that's right.

Bill 16:53
Every once in a while, you need a bit of tough love. And that's only because what needs to happen is we need to get you thinking about all the good things that have come, all the positives that have happened, all the things that you have overcome and stop focusing on the things that haven't.

Bill 17:09
Because focusing on those tend to get you're stuck there. And what I liked about you was that you're really comfortable in me giving you that tough love, and that you didn't take it personally. And you knew that it was about me just trying to jolt you out of one of your states.

Tough love by Bill Gasiamis



Bill 17:25
And, and I think it worked well. And I'm glad that you didn't take it personally and didn't feel he's another person who's not listening to me or annoyed by me or whatever. So it was really good that you also took it on the chin so to speak.

Scott 17:42
Yeah, what choice have you got? I mean, you're the guy who knows what he's talking about. And if you're saying, like a bit of tough love is good for you, then, of course, you know, I've got no choice but to take it on the chin and, in retrospect, take it on the chin and listening to what you had to say to me, was a really

important part of me turning this journey around to a more positive approach.

Bill 18:08
That's what I love about it. It's that opportunity for you to get your curiosity sorted you, and then in the really difficult times actually get some really good answers. Because that's how I become curious about what I can do to support myself and then curiosity evades me, and then I get stuck in in a really difficult time.

Bill 18:32
And if I don't seek out help, then I can't get that answer, or I can't get that puzzle, the piece of the puzzle to move forward and I get stuck there. And then when I do get the piece of the puzzle to move forward, then curiosity kicks in again.

Bill 18:47
And then when I'm curious, then I'm in control of the recovery rather than me and sort of relying on somebody else. Who else did you go to before you got to me that kind of helped, but not really, with what you specifically needed from me?

Scott 19:05
Yeah, well, I had a good friend who I went to school within Australia who had a stroke around the time that you did, I think year 2012. So it was around the same time. And I guess there was a bit of a disconnect between what I needed him to tell me and where he was coming from.

Scott 19:27
I mean, he was well removed from the stroke like you are, but he certainly gave me tough love, but probably at the wrong times when I was really in an emotive state. Whereas Bill, you just need to have that timing the tough love was when I needed it, and when I was in a frame of mind to be able to handle it. And I think I may have relayed that to you that I really felt like the people I was talking to back home did not understand what I was going through.

Bill 20:00
It did sound to me like your friend kind of had a very different experience to stroke than we did and kind of got away with it a lot easier than we did. I know that stroke is serious either way, but it seems like he made a different recovery and therefore, was not able to relate to the type of recovery that you're making.

Scott 20:20
Yeah, but his recovery was quite quick, really, compared to yours and mine. And I think maybe if I'm really honest, it was a little bit of not jealousy, but a little bit of, why can't my recovery be quicker? And yeah, I got to hospital quickly and I'm just you know, I got my problem is, I got what fixated on you know, I got to hospital quickly, and I got treated quickly. So why am I not making a really quick recovery? And that's not how it rolls.

Bill 20:55
That's alright, remember early on when we were connecting after we got introduced by David. And we were chatting a little bit, and then I kind of put the hard word on you. And I said, maybe you should take up one of the coaching packages. What do you think about that? What made you feel comfortable to connect with me?

Scott 21:15
Well, I think certainly the fact that when I reached out to you this is prior to me taking on a coaching package that you were quick to get back to me. So let's have a chat. And I think just the similarity between our stories and the fact that you understood where I was coming from.

Scott 21:32
And the fact that you knew that perhaps I needed some one on one help was, and you had that insight that sort of resonated with me quite a bit. And I thought, well, there's nothing to lose here. And nothing to lose, and is plenty to gain by, you know, using your experience and your approach to recovery.

Steps that Scott Stevens take

Bill 21:55
What were the three things that you are taking action on to achieve your milestones?

Scott 22:03
Well, I guess I'm making sure I look after myself physically. And my approach is, if I look after myself, physically and get my fitness back and my love of movement, I mean, I've just actually come back from a run. But so that's one thing. So making sure I continually moving and rewiring those pathways and trying my

brain to move again.

Scott 22:27
And so that's one thing. The second thing is certainly and I've got this from you is nutrition. And just avoiding all those things, which that brain doesn't need, like grains and gluten products and alcohol. Well, we've had this conversation.

Scott 22:47
Well, yeah, certainly alcohol and sugar. I've avoided sugar, based on the conversations I've had with you. And attending to my need for sleep has been really important. And I find that if I don't get enough sleep, and I don't attend to my fatigue, then I really noticed a flare up of the symptoms. And I don't feel well. And when I don't feel well, I start to get negative again.

Bill 23:16
So you become aware of the cycle that gets you into that bit of a negative zone?

Scott 23:20
Oh yeah, absolutely.

Bill 23:21
Yeah, that's brilliant. Getting sleep, if I could make anyone do anything, if I could make them do anything, it would be to get them to go to bed and sleep more. That would be the one thing that I would make them do. Because that does do that. It breaks that circle of the negative spiral. It starts the circle off for the positive spiral.

Scott 23:40
Yeah.

Bill 23:42
I love the sound of the things that you've done. What was the big aha moment? Have you had one?

Scott 23:47
Well, I don't know whether they explain one moment because I don't think there is one there's not singular moments in recovery like this. I don't think I've found that out already. But what I did notice, during the Christmas break, we've just had a Christmas break like a month ago, I went away with my family and we spent

time together.

Scott 24:08
And the aha moment, I guess, if there was one was, I can still do the things that I really love. And I did them like running and cycling and spending time with friends and family. Yeah, it feels different but I can still do it. And at that point, during that time, there was a three-week period where I just started to feel a lot better.

Scott 24:31
And I went back to work after Christmas and people were saying to me, Listen, you look a lot better, you sound a lot better. And I recon this is a real confidence thing. So I gained confidence and then you start to keep doing those things that have contributed to that better feeling.

Scott 24:49
Since I've gone back to work, I've really started to make sure that I'm sleeping well, eating well, hydration is huge as well. I know you asked for three there's a fourth, hydration is huge.

Bill 25:06
What were some of the fast wins that you got when we first started chatting, you know, those little things that got the momentum going, what were some of those little easy ones to tick off.

Scott 25:20
Well I think keeping a diary of what the good things that was a really positive thing that I did. So I started listing things I couldn't do yesterday, and things that I can do today. And very quickly, it starts to build up to a bigger picture. And I think very early on when we spoke you talked about maybe keeping a journal or a diary of where the recoveries tracking.

Scott 25:46
And I still do that. Yeah. And my colleagues at work have started helping me out. So I'll go into work. This is really quite good, actually. And they'll get post-it notes, and they'll ask me, okay so this week, what have you achieved, and I'll tell them, and then I'll go in on the Monday, and then my computer screen will be full of post-it notes. It's like my wall of positivity. And it sounds really corny, but it works. Because I can't help but see the things that I'm achieving.

Bill 26:20
Often stroke survivors don't start noticing the positives, they notice all the things that they can't do. And Fair enough, there's probably a lot of things that stroke survivors can't do so you can understand that.

Bill 26:31
But that takes away from the wins that people have had. And it's really good to get reminders wherever those reminders come from and if you can make a habit of reminding yourself, it's even better, but the fact that your colleagues are getting involved. Thank them for me.

Scott 26:48
It's great. It's really good.

Bill 26:50
So before stroke, you had a reality, you had a kind of a life reality and the things that you did, then you had a stroke. And then you had a new sort of substituted reality, of uncertainty of challenges. Since coaching started, what's your reality, like now?

Scott 27:09
Well certainly a lot more positive. And I feel like, I mean, nobody can take me back to pre-stroke, I now understand that that can't happen. I mean, and to battle that to create friction there, keep wanting to go back to pre-stroke, I was talking to a guy last night from England, actually, who's a running coach and his back running, and he had a strike two years ago, very similar to mine.

Scott 27:36
And he was saying that he feels like if he keeps going back to wanting to be like he was before stroke, and battling that, marry that up against his new reality, it's almost insanity, it would drive you nuts.

Scott 27:53
So I'm trying to be comfortable with my new approach to life. And, I mean, who knows BIll I might get back to a point where this recovery takes me to a point where I'm really comfortable with my new normal, and I think that's okay to be comfortable with the new normal.

Bill 28:14

Yeah. And going back to what life was like before stroke is the time that stroke was about to happen, it was just before stroke. So it's probably not a good place to go back to go to, we need to go somewhere else, right?

Scott 28:28
Yes, right. Absolutely.

Bill 28:30
So now that you've achieved these things, what are you looking to do now? What else is on the horizon?

Scott 28:40
Well, I'm just really looking forward to continuing to feel good. Because I mean, let's face it, I mean, post-stroke a couple of months, you you feel pretty miserable, you're tired, you're worried about the future. And then when you make a turn, and you start seeing momentum and recovery, it feels really good.

Scott 28:59
And you feel like you can build on something. That's not to say that I don't have moments now where I still feel overwhelmed. I mean, I'm only six months out, but I'm sure in the next six months, I'll feel overwhelmed at stages too.

Scott 29:11
But I think what I want to achieve really is to be able to help people who were in their early phases of their recovery, whether it be talking to them and offering I guess what little advice I can give, given that I'm so early on in my journey. But as you well know, and as I found out, talking to people is so cathartic and so important in the journey. Because it's a lonely place post-stroke is a lonely place.

Scott Stevens's advice

Bill 29:42
Yeah it can be man it can be, people don't understand you and family doesn't know what it's like and fair enough. We wouldn't want them to know what it's like. So, that makes sense. What advice would you give to somebody who's in the same position you were in back then?

Scott 29:59
Well, I mean, Now without sounding like an advertisement for your services Bill, I

would say they need to make contact with you and try and get that one on one chat going and try and gain an understanding of what they can do to take control because as soon as I felt like I was in control, I mean, it's really hard to articulate what that feeling was to feel like you're in control, again of your recovery.

Scott 30:24
And I mean, to tell a little bit of a story, I remember sitting at my desk at work, and just being and my colleagues in the office will tell you, there was a period of time where I was just petrified. Because I was so scared about what was ahead of me.

Scott 30:39
And, even though I had lots of people around me, who understood that I had a stroke, they certainly didn't understand what I was going through. And it was a very lonely place, so my advice would be to reach out and talk to people, certainly talk to people who are might be just a little bit removed from your immediate situation because then you can really speak your mind and feel comfortable.

Bill 31:06
Yeah, good advice man. Is there anything that looking back now you would have done differently early on?

Scott 31:17
It's a long time ago, and my head was a bit cloudy to be honest, I think I would have taken like I read early on, even when I was in hospital, I did a lot of reading about what stroke recovery was like a maybe what I could expect. And I guess what I would have done differently is being far more proactive in addressing the mental health side of things.

Scott 31:43
Getting help very early, I mean, matter of fact, with everybody, and I'm happy to share this with friends as well now, I was depressed, and I was so anxious that it was impeding my recovery. I'm sure I probably could have let go of that a lot earlier, my recovery, my turning point would have been a lot earlier as well.

Scott 32:05
But in hindsight, I would have taken that seriously. Because it was I read about it. And because at that immediate moment, I didn't feel like I was in a bad place. I didn't take it seriously. And it needs to be taken seriously because it can hamper

your recovery.

Bill 32:23
Yeah, it is one of those things that people don't realize they're in that state at that time, they don't realize they might be experiencing a little bit of depression. So if somebody happens to be kind enough to tell you, and risk your wrath, then maybe pay attention and listen to them is basically what you're saying.

Bill 32:43
And then seek help get curious about why they said that, and then maybe seek help a little bit earlier, rather than later. Because if anything is going to come out of seeking help, it's just support, that's all that's going to come of it nothing else.

Scott 33:00
And reassurance in many ways.

Bill 33:03
Yeah, reassurance is something I can relate to, to it's what I offer people is what I needed, nine, you know, nine years ago when I was going through it, and I didn't have it. So I figured there's definitely an opportunity for people to experience more of the things that you got, and and if they know where to go to get that, then they made a better turning point a quicker turning point in the way they approach their recovery.

Scott 33:32
Well, I mean, there's I mean, I've gained a lot out of, you know, signing up to do one on one coaching with you, because there's so much more like I think I emailed yesterday about the guest you've had on your show. I mean, you really do get exposed to courageous, I mean really brave people.

Scott 33:53
And there's been moments where I've watched your podcasts, and your interviews where I felt like that is perhaps the best approach to recovery that I've ever seen, you know, with a range of your guests, because they've lived it. And I think the number one thing that I've built, we've spoken about a lot of stuff, the number one thing that I've got from you is reassurance during a very scary time, and I'm really grateful for that.

Bill 34:23

Yeah, my pleasure. We spoke you're referring to Duncan Campling from Episode 133, who is overcoming locked-in syndrome. And on the interview, I had to speak to him with a recorded voice that he answered my questions and it was all pre-recorded.

Bill 34:43
I asked him the questions and then he pre-recorded them and then sent me the answers because he can't speak it. He has dysarthria and his vocal cords don't operate properly. So he has a adapted iPad that has a British accent that talks the way that he would have talked to he said previously.

Scott 35:06
So despite what he's been through the fact that he was smiling and laughing with you, I found just unbelievable. And that really will stay with me, I think.

Bill 35:17
Yeah he's a good guy, we had a laugh, so let's do a little bit of a recap, you went from feeling quite anxious, and quite concerned about what the future holds, you know, you didn't go through a dark times there experiencing, you know, depressive symptoms, and all those types of things.

Bill 35:34
And you've kind of moved from that, to feeling in control of your recovery. You've certainly taken your mental health seriously. And you're continuing to do so you've taken care of things like your nutrition, and you're getting active and moving as much as possible. And you're sleeping and you're paying attention to your fatigue and how you're feeling about your energy levels during the day.

Time management

Scott 36:08
Yeah, absolutely. Well, I certainly know that if I do too much, and I haven't, well, the weekend is really the time where I bank that sleep. And that sets me up for the week. If I don't get enough rest, have late nights and I mean, I mean you've indicated to me that during your recovery, and this is great advice that you have to be very, you have to prioritize where you can put your time.

Scott 36:33
And that's what I'm becoming better and better at doing that. Like, you can't go

out every night and have dinner with friends. And you can't, the risk of losing sleep, you can't do that. And it might not be forever.

Bill 36:47
That's right it's definitely not it does change so early on, we would leave parties and events early. And now we can stay a bit longer, it doesn't really matter anymore. I just know that that next day, I'm not going to have too much planned or too much to do.

Bill 37:05
Because if I wake up at my regular wakeup time, which is 6:30 to seven o'clock, no matter what time I go to bed, that's what time I wake up. I know that if I've had a late night, that next day better be a light day, it better be a day where I don't have much to do. So I just plan for that late night. And and it works out well. And the following day, I just chill out and go to bed a bit earlier.

Scott 37:30
Yeah, I think it's really important there to think about. One thing I've learned and certainly my wife has been fantastic with this, she knows that that fatigue is so such a big thing with this recovery that she has helped develop routines, or she has developed routines in our house to enable me I'm really grateful for this enable me to get enough rest.

Scott 37:54
So it means that I'm in bed really early and far earlier than I would have been in the past. And I'm not around to help all the time. But if I can get the recovery, right, I will be in the future. I'll be as good as I can be. And I think she understands that she's learning patience as well. That's huge mate.

Bill 38:22
A test to everybody tests everybody in the families, and mate look, I really appreciate you coming on and sharing your story and your journey with me. It has been and it will continue to be a pleasure to support you and work with you. So thank you so much.

Scott 38:37
No worries thanks, Bill. I hope more people have the chance to engage with you in the way that I have.

Bill 38:44
Thanks, mate.

Bill 38:45
Well I hope you enjoyed this episode. If Scott's story has resonated with you. And you'd like to know more about recovery after stroke coaching simply go to recoveryafterstroke.com/coaching, where you can find out how you can also get recovery after stroke coaching. And who knows, maybe take your recovery to the next level.

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