

Hemorrhagic Stroke Recovery - Clare Coffield

Clare Coffield had a Hemorrhagic stroke back in 2015, and while she was in recovery, she suffered a massive setback due to a leg injury. Now 5 years later, having faced so many challenges and adversities, Clare has come a long way in her recovery journey.

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07:00 The deficits after having a hemorrhagic stroke

17:30 Using less walking aid

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Transcript:

Bill 0:00

Our relationship is both friendly. But it's kind of an informal coaching situation as well. How does that help you to be accountable to somebody because you're accountable to your writing buddy, you're accountable to Mr. Snuggles because you've got to get up and feed him? How does it help you to be accountable to people? Because you seem to have sourced out some people to make you accountable.

Clare 0:26

I'm not sure whether I go down this route, particularly because I do live alone, or whether it's my nature that I need support and encouragement. And I'm so glad I do have people like yourself, Bill, because you're specially chosen, I'll tell you because you've been through all this stroke nonsense. I don't think I could be coached by someone who didn't get it.

Intro 1:00

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

Bill 1:07

Bill from recoveryafterstroke.com. This is Episode 92 and my guest today is Clare Coffield. Claire is a hemorrhagic stroke survivor, a friend, and someone that I am coaching and gently keeping accountable. At 69 years young Clare is full of enthusiasm and passion for her recovery and has overcome some huge challenges including breaking her foot just as she began to walk again. Clare Coffield, welcome to the podcast.

Clare 1:34

No, thank you, Bill. lovely to be here.

Bill 1:37

You know, we've done a podcast before do you remember?

Clare 1:40

Well, I can't remember what it was about or when it was.

Bill 1:44

It was about stroke recovery and it was Episode 10 was in 2017.

Clare 1:51

Oh right years ago. I don't remember that I must look that up because it would be interesting to see what changes there have been so 2017, my goodness.

Bill 2:04

Yeah, I'll send you the link It was called stroke recovery with Clare Coffield.

Clare 2:10

Oh, great. I'll enjoy watching that.

Clare Coffield had a hemorrhagic stroke



Bill 2:15

So for another episode. Episode 90 something or other we're going to have. There's been quite a few since the, one that we did together, way back in Episode 10. And you've come a long way. When was your stroke? How long ago? Was it?

Clare 2:37

21st of October 2015.

Bill 2:43

Can you remember a little bit about what happened to you?

Clare 2:45

Sure can. I was very excited being at my friend's house, Nikki Ellis, who lives locally here in Lacrosse. She'd filled the room and I'd filled the room with ladies who wanted to know about goal setting. And I was so excited about doing this presentation. And at one point, I lost my place in what I was talking about, which was unusual for me. And her daughter, the lady's daughter had my notes and she held them up for me.

Clare 3:33

And I'm looking at the notes and I'm thinking, I can't read that. I don't know what that is. So my daughter-in-law came forward and tapped me on the shoulder and said, Clare, I think you better sit down. And I said no, I'm fine. I'll just finish this work with another 20 minutes to go. She said Clare I think you should sit down.

Clare 3:56

So I said, Oh right. Okay, then so I got a chair so I could still keep talking. And I just sat down my whole right side just completely collapsed in front of everybody know that that was an issue. It was a shock for them, my goodness. And I hadn't a clue what was going on. And before I knew it, I looked at (inaudible) she was on a phone with an ambulance at the door and wound up straight into the Austin. So I would say she saved my life with her quick response to recognizing the signs.

Clare 4:43

Because I've never anticipated having a stroke. I felt that was for the men in my family. So my father and the eldest brother had a stroke, but they were both big drinkers big smokers, overweight, and I wasn't Any of those things, although I have always liked wine and comparing myself to them health-wise, I thought not an issue for me not.

Clare 5:14

So for me to have a stroke was a real shock. And because I thought I looked after myself pretty well. But what I didn't realize until afterward was that it was a brain hemorrhage. So not a blood clot here. It was a brain hemorrhage and it just went and made a big fuss and knocked me out. So unbeknownst to me, my daughter-in-law is on the phone with her husband, who's my son, saying, You better come quick to Austin your mom's had a stroke.

Clare 5:57

What? My mom you kidding me? Right. Okay, so he came in, and his face was gray. I'll never forget it. He was in such shock. He just felt that too. Was that a good note for a fun evening together? Yeah. Okay.

Bill 6:16

That's what it was meant to be.

Clare 6:17

That was meant to be. Yeah. So more than two months later before I got home. And that was just a whole incredible story. But that particular night is emblazoned on my memory from the anticipation of feeling the excitement of this great well, I wanted to do a great event. And then before I knew it, I literally couldn't move on my right side and I was in the hospital not knowing what was going on. So not what I expected to happen that night.

The deficits after having a hemorrhagic stroke

Bill 7:00

So your stroke was hemorrhagic. What were some of the things that you had to recover from? After the stroke? What were some of the deficits that have left you?

Clare 7:12

The paralysis on my right side. So let's side hemorrhage, right side paralysis. And

really, I could lift my right arm and it just flopped down like doll a floppy doll. So I have no control over my right leg or my right arm. I felt as though was different than the middle of my body. My left-hand side was working perfectly fine, thank you. And then I gave up and just said, I'm not playing anymore.

Clare 7:50

So my two halves of my body weren't talking to each other. And that was so confusing, I had no feeling in my hand, my arm, or my leg it was numb, and what I would have said was useless. And that was frightening because I didn't understand about stroke. I hadn't learned anything about stroke. It was completely new. So I was learning as I went on. But what I somehow instinctively, the first thing that I wanted to do for myself was to lift my arm and kiss it like this.

Clare 8:39

I thought, looking down this ward, the guys here waving their sticks in the air, shouting and screaming at the staff. that other people are so angry, they are hitting the affected sides and swearing like troopers and I thought, oh my god. I can't do that to my body, I just can't. So I started all this. Well, what would I say to my granddaughter specifically little at the time? So I would say, Come on darling, you're going to be okay. You'll be alright. Have some kisses and cuddles with grandma.

Clare 9:20

So I was teaching my arm like a granddaughter, do you see what I mean, and so being ultra kind and gentle to myself. So I believe that that mindset of directing my language about myself to myself was vital in my recovery. Now we're all different stuff might not work for other people. But for me, I felt I was taking a modicum of control to see what happened. I didn't know if it would help me recover or not. But it seemed to me instinctive that It was a kind thing to do for myself.

Bill 10:04

I remember you had a conversation with somebody who spoke to your arm in a way that you didn't agree with.

Clare 10:17

All this is for the feisty Scotswoman to come out. So it was I think it was my leg,

one of the physiotherapists who were in general, tremendous people. There was one I think, maybe because she was a lot older than the other ones. And she had her way of doing this. She would say to me as I was trying to learn to go up and down stairs again, which was terrifying because the stairs in the hospital are massive and you think, oh, what does she want me to go up the stairs for I'm gonna fall.

Clare 10:55

So it was terrifying. But what she would say to me was Clare, use your right leg to go up to heaven on your left leg to go down to hell. Oh dear so I remember going, excuse me? Can we just take a little break here? I need to tell you something. And she's saying what? What is it? What's the matter? And I said, Look, I've had a Catholic upbringing, which I didn't enjoy.

Clare 11:28

And all this talk of heaven and hell does not sit well with me. Can we please change the language because this is not working for me at all? So I think that was the end of the session at that point. Oh, time's up. Right. Okay. (inaudible) what she said in the staff room. But I thought I was not taking that language as they say these days. I'm not wearing it. I'm not Heaven and Hell good and bad have nothing to do with having a stroke and stroke recovery nonsense. So I watched what language I was using myself and then about myself and what language I would accept from other people.

Bill 12:20

So, what kind of language would you use? What was the right way to speak about your hand or your leg for you instead of the words that she used?

Clare 12:37

I thought about this one. There are so many different words we could use. We could use it for the side that was damaged. We could use affected sides and you're non-affected sides, but not good and bad or bad and good for my leg, I said the left one is the one that's working well, and the right one the affected leg is the learning leg, it's learning to walk again. So we wouldn't say to children Oh, come on, you know you're gonna go to hell or your leg's going to hell.

Clare 13:27

So I thought no, it's a learning leg and it has done me well it's learned very well

indeed. For me, that was vital that I stuck to my principles on that because you don't have much control when you're in the hospital, but I don't think you've got any really when you think about the foods and you know, people waking you up for all sorts of crazy times and telling you to go to sleep when you don't want to and I mean, the care was excellent. I know that but I want to be treated as an individual, which is very difficult for the staff to do when you're in that, you know, a communal ward situation. And I'm going through it on my own. I want to do things my way.

Bill 14:19

That's not a bad thing. Recently when we got together. It was probably a couple of months ago, when we got together, and we spoke about various things. And one of the things you spoke about was your walking aid, and that you were about to get rid of it for good. Have you managed to get there yet?

Intro 14:38

If you've had a stroke, and you're in recovery, you'll know what a scary and confusing time it can be. You're likely to have a lot of questions going through your mind. Like, how long will it take to recover? Will I recover? What things should I avoid in case I make matters worse? Doctors will explain things, but obviously, because you've never had a stroke before.

Intro 15:00

You probably don't know what questions to ask. If this is you, you may miss out on doing things that could help speed up your recovery. If you're finding yourself in that situation, stop worrying, and head to recoveryafterstroke.com where you can download a guide that will help you. It's called seven questions to ask your doctor about your stroke.

Intro 15:21

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.

Clare 15:50

And I'm not using it as much so it's a 4 field drive walker walking frame I use my stick more, which is good. So it's beating towards using the stick more. Unless

I'm going to the shops and I need to buy something the walkers are wonderful for putting shopping in it. So I'm just going out for a walk and walk around the block or go down to the park. I'll take my stick and just have lots of breaks. Because there's no rush, you know?

Clare 16:28

There are no timescales I can do and decide what I want. And so I haven't got rid of the walking thing yet, but that's, on the cards, I think. The stronger my leg gets. And just I don't know if these things are coincidences, but in the local chemistry and workloads. A couple of weeks ago, I saw a pedal machine just a small one in the canvas. That's unusual. No, I haven't tried it yet.

Clare 17:05

But because I can't go to the gym. No, I'll be using that to do some exercise. It's not a bike. It's just a little pedal thing. And, and it wasn't expensive, really very reasonable. The chemists here even delivered it for me, which was fantastic. Awesome. And so there are other ways to do things.

Using less walking aid

Bill 17:30

Yeah. So you were using the walker and you found when we spoke recently, you found that it was potentially interfering with strengthening your leg further and you said to me something along the lines of the way that it makes you walk also changes your posture.

Clare 17:51

Yes.

Bill 17:52

So is that one of the reasons why you decided to start using it less?

Clare 17:58

Yes, I was finding that I was using a lot of energy in my shoulders and my arms. And that was propelling me along the roads. And I wasn't thinking so much about my legs. So my arms are already quite strong. And I was forgetting about building the legs up. So I thought, well, I'm becoming too reliant on leaning on this frame, I'm neglecting my legs. So that was one reason behind it.

Bill 18:34

So tell me about fatigue. How is that coming along? Because you were fatigued for quite a while and you were experiencing fatigue at different times of the day, has it started to settle down as well? Is it causing less of a disruption or is it still a bit of an issue?

Clare 18:53

I don't worry about it I mean they put you well in lockdown here.

Bill 18:59

So up until lockdown there before lockdown, we'll talk about that in a minute, how was the fatigue changing for you in your recovery?

Clare 19:13

I have to be very careful about my timing of going to bed. I've got this habit of staying up and watching movies till two in the morning. And then guess what I can get up in the morning, you know? So alone myself one film a day during the day, at the moment, and there's loads, there's loads on Netflix, I mean, you couldn't watch all the films on there, and you can watch that anytime you want. I watch the odds program on TV, most of the news, and things like that. I'm limiting my TV time and I'm not watching TV late at night so time to get to bed before 11.

Bill 20:04

Wow, that's great because you were going to bed at two o'clock. And I remember saying that you need to start pigging that back and you've done well.

Clare 20:13

Yeah, I've gradually pulled it back. So that's helping because I want to feel that I'm having a more normal day if it is such a thing now. Because there were some days at the beginning of the lockdown. I didn't know what day it was. But I've got a Google Home machine. And all I have to say is, okay, Google, what day is it and she says (Google voice talking)

Clare 20:59

I got one In the kitchen. And I've got one in my bedroom, which my son put in for me and set it all up. He said it was easy to set up. But he always says these things are easy. So I can lie in bed not having a clue what time is it and say, okay, Google, what time is it? And she'll tell me. Okay, thank you. So when I begin to have conversations, because if I say thank you quickly enough, she'll say, that's

my job. That's what I've been designed to do. Or you're welcome or something. So I'm having a conversation with this machine, which is quite funny to me.

Bill 21:50

So bringing back your sleep time, you've got it back to before 11 o'clock, which means that your sleep is becoming a really important part of your recovery and is helping your brain heal. It's helping it detoxify and it's helping you wake up refreshed in the morning. So what time roughly Do you get up now?

Clare 22:09

About Nine.

Bill 22:12

Excellent.

Clare 22:13

Yeah. Or 10, I mean, I wake up and say to Google, you know, please pay me an ABC Radio Melbourne or BBC Radio 4 extra. I'm very keen on radio plays on BBC Radio for extra that just got plays on all day all night. Fabulous. And there are great programs on ABC as well. So it's quite a nice way to start your day listening to half-hour programs and then I get up.

Bill 22:49

Yeah. Excellent. So then you get up and then you go about your day and who do you have to feed first?

Clare 22:57

My cats

Bill 23:00

Tell me about your cat and tell me about your cat because we need to talk about how important he is in this part of your recovery. Tell me about your cat. How did you come about having a cat?

Clare 23:13

Okay. Well, last year, me about May or June, I said to my son that I would love a dog. So as always, when I suggest things to my son, he goes away and talks to his wife about it, and then comes back with a better plan. So when I think about a cat, it's much better for me, it will not be tripping me up because I'm out walking

it with a leash and all of that.

Clare 23:44

So we went to a pet rescue place in Greensboro and we saw this litter of kittens. Oh, we wanted all of them. The grandkids came with us. We're all going Oh, look at that one or look at that one. And so his name was Roger, and I thought, I don't think so. That sounds like a cat's name to me come on. So anyway, we brought him home and oh thrilled to bits. And when the kids first came over to play with them, they named him Mr. Snuggles, cuz he's a very affectionate cat he snuggles into you and you know comes up to you and he wants to be friends and wants to play.

Clare 24:35

And so I've had him though since last June, and thank goodness I got him because he's been the best little companion you could ever have. He sleeps on top of my bed at night. And I can feel the weight of him on top of the covers and sometimes you'll wake up in the middle of the night and you'll come right up from my pillow and then he'll around and lie right across my neck.

Clare 25:13

And then he starts going Yum, yum, yum yum yum into my shoulder, but then I've got a nice fluffy tarpon and he's going (munching sound) and I think it's hilarious he gives me so many laughs so obviously he's the first one to get fed in the house. And oh, yes, I'm my son bought for me my birthday in February. He bought me An Emporium. I think that's what it's called for the cat so it's a little door in my utility room now, at his height and he puts these little paws on his head in.

Clare 25:55

And he goes out and it's a big cage thing. It's got toys, and different shelves to jump on and he can see the birds bees but can't get them. And so he's been loving that. Just watching them. It's better than the television. It's just so funny. And then it comes in and out all day long. And at nighttime, he likes to go when it's dark, and I think fair enough off you go see you later. And so he's got a real character he's just wonderful. And I just love him to bits I do. I'm so glad he's here.

Bill 26:32

What does he offer you other than laughs and somebody to feed before you what

else does he offer?

Comfort from Mr. Snuggles

Clare 26:39

His little body's very warm. So when he lies when it comes down off my shoulder, he'll lie this way sometimes and he can see his heart going and his warm body is a black and white cat shot head cat. And you just feel the warmth and I'm cuddling him and I'm sure he's cuddling me convinced of it, because that's what I want to think, and that closeness, that physical closeness to me is just adorable, it's very comforting to me.

Bill 27:16

Yeah. Well, that's excellent. Because you've never had animals before. You never thought that they were worth having.

Clare 27:24

I just always saw them as extra work. And when I was working, I thought, Oh, no, I'm not gonna do that as well. But just something last year. I know what it was that prompted me. It was when I got to my birthday in February last year. Or was it this year, hold on. Must have been this year. Anyway, I got to 69. And I thought, right. What of all the things that I've started and I haven't finished?

Clare 27:57

All the things that I've always been interested in. But never followed up. Wouldn't it be great to have a list of things from the last year of my 60s and to say, hey, look, I can learn new things? And I'm enjoying doing new things. I can complete tasks. And now maybe the last was one. I've been watching a lot of YouTube videos. And I was drying up my pots and pans today. I turned over the frying pan, and it was so dark and murky, right with grease and all the rest of it. I thought I had seen a YouTube video where you smear the base of the frying pan with toothpaste. And then you get a soft cloth and you just rub it off and Wallah, it's so shiny.

Clare 28:52

So I rubbed (inaudible) It's the same as it was before. Now I'm thinking was it toothpaste, he said what was it? I wanted to go back and look at the video again. God knows what that was. But I don't think it was meant to be toothpaste so that

gave me a huge I thought well, (inaudible). I still have a mucky frying pan. So there you go.

Bill 29:27

So what about you a list? What about your list of stuff to do for the 69th year? What are the things that you have to finish that? You you neglected it for some time?

Clare 29:37

Okay, so I've made a list. So I started knitting socks in the round. So that's four needles, which I hadn't done since I was at school. And then like me, I got fed up doing it. And they are beautiful. She's got two half-skars in a beautiful blue color. So They need to be finished. That's one thing. I've got needlework on a canvas.

Clare 30:07

That's about a third done. And that looks lovely, not finished. My study room is piled high with files and papers from all the past jobs that I've done. And I've never cleared it all out. So I've hired a bin from a shredding company and it's on my front porch now, and it's about three-quarters full sort of got rid of a lot of stuff, but I look in the room and it's still a mess.

Clare 30:38

So there's lots more to do in that bin so they'll come and take it away and shred it all which is great. That lady that Dawn I'm knitting the socks for is a lady who travels around the world on a cruise ship. What do you call it?

Bill 31:04

A yacht?

Clare 31:04

Yes. Yes, thank you. She's got a crew. So she's not on her own. And she does a lot of the hard work, physical work. So she's the one I'm knitting socks for and she's a published author. So, I've engaged her to push me through the next seven weeks until I finish my manuscripts. I've done quite well, I think I've done quite a lot, but it's not enough for a book yet.

Clare 31:35

So we've had one session on Zoom, and we're doing another one tomorrow. So I'm feeling well supported with that because left to me, I would do a little bit put

it down and do a little bit think oh who's gonna read anyway? And she's saying No, madam, just behave yourself. So that's good that'll keep me going if I get through all those things, and then eventually I'll be doing okay,

Bill 32:10

I think that's plenty as well. You don't want to give yourself too many things to do that you get overwhelmed. But if you do those slowly, steadily, you'll get to the point where they're done however, you had to put them off for a little while for legitimate reasons.

Suffering a leg injury during stroke recovery



Clare 32:23

Yeah. Well, sure. And the thing is, that was the stroke. I was doing pretty well up until 2016. And then I broke my foot on the same side that I've had the stroke, and I just went diving down because I'd worked so hard to put all my energy into my recovery. And then all I did was walk across the road, and I twisted my ankle, but I broke my toe.

Clare 32:56

And that was me in gumbot, whatever you call it for eight weeks on the same note, you do realize because you're all done it'll take you longer to do the bones didn't have to tell me that please don't tell me that. And so two months, my moods and my motivation went, boom gone.

Bill 33:22

Yeah. So it was a setback, wasn't it?

Clare 33:24

Oh, it was much bigger than well she broke a toe so what, but it was after the stroke, the hard work recovery, beginning to go out and enjoy myself. I was out on a date that night. I never saw him again. And we were just crossing the road and my foot just went.

Clare 33:53

That has set me back quite a bit, but I a much, much better, much stronger now than I was So I don't see it as lost time, I just think that's what it is. You just have to deal with it and find a way to keep going not to give up, but to keep going and still have that hope that if I take advice and I do the right things might get another bit of recovery or I might not, definitely worth finding out.

Bill 34:30

Yeah. Now I also remember that you maybe inadvertently kind of isolated yourself a little bit from connecting with people and from doing the things that you'd love. Is that something that you noticed now that you were doing or what do you what can you tell me about that time?

Clare 34:49

Um, I think I got very into very low moods and started on antidepressants at that time. And then came out of that a few months later came off the medication and went back down again. So there's been this seesaw of on the medication of it. I don't think that's good. And I do think the medication it's fluoxetine, a small 10 milligram, one tablet a day thing.

Clare 35:24

And just the action of seeing like this is helping me this is helping me and has made me feel that I've got some medical support. I've never liked taking antidepressants. In the beginning, I thought it was a sign of weakness and emotional weakness. And I've now come to accept that quite honestly, with all the other stuff that was going on.

Clare 35:53

I just take this little blue pill in the morning when I get up. So far, you know I'm not shooting up heroin. lying in the gutter with a bottle of whiskey. I mean, you know, give yourself a break been too hard on myself.

Bill 36:12

Yeah, you're quite a straight shooter, and you're somebody who has, you know, very strong values and very strong beliefs. So, you know, you have to be a little bit easier on yourself, especially when you're in recovery, recovering from something quite traumatic, and you want to allow yourself some slack.

Clare 36:35

Definitely. I'm getting back to that bill.

Being coached by someone who's been through stroke recovery



Bill 36:40

Yeah. So our relationship is both friendly, but it's kind of an informal coaching situation as well. How does that help you to be accountable to somebody because you're accountable to your writing buddy, you're accountable to Mr. Snuggles because you've got to get up and feed him? How does it help you to be accountable to people? Because you seem to have sourced out some people to make you accountable.

Clare 37:09

I'm not sure whether I go down this route, particularly because I do live alone, or whether it's my nature that I need support and encouragement. And I'm so glad I do have people like yourself, Bill, because you're specially chosen. I'll tell you because you've been through all this stroke nonsense. I don't think I could be coached by someone who didn't get it.

Clare 37:41

Yeah. And although our stroke was different, and you're younger, and you know all those things, it doesn't matter. You understand the basics of your life being fine one day and the next day, (inaudible) So not a lot of people understand that and I don't know, but maybe a lot of people think, oh, she's 69 I mean, your life's over anyway, you know? I think I don't think so. No, no, no.

Clare 38:12

So, I'm fortunate that I have people like yourself and like Dawn, and you know, sister, my son, of course, and the grandchildren and my daughter-in-law. They are tremendously supportive. We've not seen the grandkids at the moment. I'm sure they'll be away camping at Easter. So they'll be another little flier won't see them.

Clare 38:47

But we do Zoom, we have them. We have dinners together over Zoom.

Bill 38:53

Yeah, tell me about that. Because the coronavirus pandemic is changing our movements for a little bit To be safe and keep other people safe and keep the hospital bed free for unwell people we are isolating ourselves self-isolating. But it's likely the holidays will be canceled for the majority of the people who are traveling etc. Yeah, but tell me about how you and your family have creatively got together for dinner.

Clare 39:27

Okay, well fortunately My son is an IT techie guy who always has been that's his world. So years ago when he came out to Australia I was still in England and Scotland. He set me up with all sorts of webcams and bla bla bla, that he showed me how to use, and then when I came here in 2011, we added on the Chrome notebook and it'll, so he sets all up and goes tada all fixed mum there you go, and I just Play with it, which is great.

Clare 40:02

So he had already set the technology up for us. So what we do is my son sent me a Zoom link and he's got his laptop on his dining room table. We've got Elsa who's 11 Heather who's seven. Mum Jewel and Dad Steven. So and the laptops here so I can see all four of them. And then at times, I'll say, okay, so tell me what's been happening at school.

Clare 40:41

So he moves the camera around, so it's just me and Elsa. No, she loves that because usually, the other one is interrupting grandma, grandma, grandma. And so the same thing one at a time girls grandma can't hear you, and you all speak at the one time. And then we'll have one-to-one chats. Steven chats a little with Heather. Heather, will show me whatever little doll or whatever she's playing with. And then I'll talk to the mom. And it takes about half an hour, 40 minutes, but we're all sitting eating and I'm saying, oh, Heather, come on, eat up your spaghetti.

Clare 41:26

And she'll go (slurping) spaghetti's going up and it's hilarious. And so I'm asking them, so what are you eating and they'll say what have you got? And I'm seeing Well, tonight I've got bacon and eggs and big beans, and toast. And my daughter-in-law will say, I'm taking note of what you're eating Clare, you had something similar last night? Damn. So it's all very good-natured and just love it.

Clare 42:04

So that is working very well for us. And I've been honestly thinking that setting up the webcam and the laptop is that difficult and just the way you did tonight you send me a link they click on it and wherever and you know so I think a lot more on fact Steven was at PC World. It's called here the other day, and he was getting an extra monitor for their house because he's having to work from home.

Clare 42:38

I think you've got the last monitor in Melbourne. People are going crazy. Wow. Yeah. So, she's now doing. He set it all up for her. She's now doing. She's a consultant and a gastroenterologist. So she's doing consultations. One-on-one on the webcam is fantastic.

Bill 43:05

And your son still comes around but he's at the moment is he allowed in the house are you letting him in the house? I'm not. How does that work? What does he come around for?

Clare 43:15

And he'll come to drop mail some shopping. Because calls just closed their home deliveries recently. I'm sure that will open up again, but at the moment, they're

not doing it. So I sent him a list the night before. And when he was doing the family shop, did another trolley to me, brought it over left it in my crate at the front door, and then I would run to my window in my bedroom where Mr. Snuggles was looking out. So he's knocking on the window so we had a chat through the window, absolutely fine.

Clare 43:57

I thought well, that perked me up you just hearing his voice and seeing him. And you know, and I'm leaving things for the kids and the trips as well. So I put in chocolate bunnies and fluffy bunnies and you know things like that. They were thrilled to bits, you know, toys and, and these would be things that I'd got at the OP shop. And my granddaughter was 11 for me today and said, Oh, Grandma, thank you so much. So I thought, Oh, that's very interesting. They've grown up with her, but also she did. Enjoy it and appreciate it. And I think No, this is good.

Dealing with lockdown in a positive manner

Bill 44:43

So you've taken, to this lockdown, very calmly. Is it your background in the work that you've done in the past or is it has being somebody who's had to navigate uncertain times because of stroke helped you as well? Like how does it help you to be so calm about this whole situation where a lot of people are not

Clare 45:10

Right and interesting question when I think about my life it's not been plain sailing Bill

Bill 45:20

Nobody's life has had it

Clare 45:22

No, exactly everyone's got a story to tell and mine is not any better or worse than anyone else's of how to navigate to having my son Steven when I was 18 and my catholic family going crazy because of it. Not exactly disowning me but pretty, pretty cold of course, married his father and divorced his father married someone else 10 years later, and then left me you know, it's a soap opera.

Clare 45:58

But each time I've gone down the next time, I don't go down quite as far. So I

have built my resilience. And I think it's around trusting within myself, I can navigate these situations and whatever else is going to come Lord knows what is around the corner. But we all have that resilience in us. And the more we employ it, the stronger that muscle gets.

Bill 46:34

Yeah, that's really about learning from our previous experiences and then applying them to new experiences. It's also about connecting with people who are going to support us whether it's through Zoom or you know, through other methods or other means so that we can feel like we have somebody to call upon and talk about things and talk through things and get another opinion about what we're thinking and how we're feeling.

Bill 47:07

And it's really about doing what people always do, which is finding the right people to support you to give you the answers to maybe give you a new idea. It's not just about waking up in the morning and expecting yourself to have all the answers and yeah, what on your own is it?

Clare 47:25

Yeah, no, that's that's very true. And I think that there are some people in my life some relatives, not in this country, I would say have had a pretty easygoing life. And they don't get that people who are frightened at the moment. Got a better background for them. And they were being called selfish and I'm saying, Well, I think that's too harsh.

Clare 48:00

People are reacting in different ways, for different reasons of all different backgrounds. Let's not judge each other. You know, let's just see what we can do to encourage and acknowledge. Right? You're finding that hard. I'm sorry to hear that. What can I do to help you? You know, something along those lines, instead of saying as some of my family members do oh it's ridiculous!

Clare 48:32

Oh, my God, that's just ridiculous. So I'm quite different from my son in that respect. I'm glad to see we still want to keep in touch with them.

Bill 48:45

Yeah, yeah. It's okay for them to be different and for them to have their own

opinions. And it's okay for us to run our race, isn't it?

Clare 48:51

Yeah.

Bill 48:56

Getting to know you and every time I'm around you, you're always smiling and laughing at stuff is that a mechanism that helps Is it something that you've always done? How is it that you're always able to find something to laugh at?

Clare 49:13

I don't know. Maybe I just look in the mirror and I can get a good laugh. I don't know how I got to the stage. And this was a complete surprise to me. So that does make me laugh. I'm looking to move I think, what are they, okay? Don't look any longer. That's fine. So it's just a disposition I suppose. That is very helpful.

Clare 49:50

That doesn't mean to say that I don't have times and times when I'm thinking Oh, damn this, you know, it can't be doing this any longer, and then I think, Oh, come on, come on, come on, come on. You've been through worse than this. And God knows what's coming next. So you better gather your courage Clare and step up.

What is in store at the age of 70



Bill 50:14

Yeah. So 70 is nearly here. You're going to be 70 soon what's in store for your 70th? Or your seventh decade? What are your short-term and long-term plans?

Clare 50:30

Okay. By the time I'm 70, I will have published my second book. I've got a chapter book that is already published.

Bill 50:42

Yeah, chapter book where while you're reading the chapter in another number, a few more people have written their chapter.

Clare 50:49

Yeah. So that's been good. I enjoyed doing that. No, I'm working on my book, which is called The Stroke Warrior. And, yeah, that's what Dawn's helping me with. And that will be published by the end of 2020. I've got a publisher in the wings, she's waiting. She's but dammit she needs the manuscript

Clare 51:20

Yeah. So that's, that's a very solid thing that I can work towards and enjoy. And when they say that, writing about this kind of life experience, it's very cathartic for us. We can work through a lot of the emotions, but I'm hoping that it'll also give some people who are either friends or relatives of a stroke survivor or a stroke as I like to call them. And some laughs some different ways of looking at things And some maybe new or novel, ideas, techniques that maybe I haven't thought of. You know, all I can say is these things work for me pick and choose anything that you fancy.

Bill 52:17

What I'd like to know is if somebody wanted to get in touch with you, because they loved hearing what you had to say or they wanted to get a pre-ordered copy of your book or something like that. How would they do that? What's the best way?

Clare 52:31

My business websites clare.coffield.clarityinyourlife.com all one word all lowercase.com

Clare 52:56

So clare.coffield@clarityinyourlife.com

Clare 53:05

Okay, lovely.

Bill 53:07

So now you've previously also been a coach and you've recently picked up a new client without revealing too much about your new client or any of those things.

What type of coaching Are you supporting that person with?

Clare 53:24

Okay, now, this client came to me, because I've left copies of that chapter book in the local cafe. And she opened it up and she read my chapter and I put my business card inside of my email and phone number. So she called me up and said, Oh, just been reading your chapter, and enjoyed reading it. And would you be my coach? And I said, oh sounds terrific. You know, what is it that you'd like to be coached about?

Clare 53:58

And she said, Well, I'm in my early 40s. My daughter has gone to school full-time now, I have not been getting on that great with my husband for a couple of years. And I'm thinking things are changing around me. Should I start to make some big changes?

Bill 54:24

And you're somebody that has background and that type of thing, don't you?

Clare 54:29

Yeah, yeah. So the thing is that I never give advice. I never tell people what to do. They come up with a range of solutions. Pick what is best for them. And I say, that's what you're wanting to do. I'll support you in that whatever it is. So I never make decisions for clients.

Clare 55:02

A supportive and encouraging role and listening role I'm good at listening. So although, we were meeting each other here at my home for the coaching sessions. We're now going to do it over Skype. So easy.

Bill 55:26

Yeah, it's a great solution. And that's the beautiful thing about coaching online. You don't need to be in the same country, the same state, or the same room as that person, you can just coach and offer really good value to people wherever they are. Clare, thank you so much for being on the podcast. It's always fun to connect with you and have a coffee with you. See you in person, hug you. We can't do that for the time being. But I have just as much fun on Zoom as I do in person.

Clare 55:53

Oh, good. Well, I love talking to you too. Bill. That was nice. Thank you.

Bill 56:00

All the best in your recovery. I look forward to the book being finished and I look forward to, writing the foreword in them for you.

Intro 56:09

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