

Neck Trauma And Stroke - Suzanne Eykholt

Neck Trauma And Stroke - Suzanne Eykholt was involved in a motor vehicle collision that cause a carotid artery dissection that was initially described as a sprained neck.

Instagram

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Suzanne Eykholt 0:00

I think the areas that I'm still working on improving, you know, I think that they've made me a more empathetic person, It's made me more open, It's made me less judgmental, It's made me more caring, it's made me more loving I think towards other people. I feel like I think sometimes after traumatic experiences people can harden and I felt like my heart just like turned to mush.

Intro 0:31

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

Introduction - Suzanne Eykholt



Bill Gasiamis 0:44

Hello, and welcome to episode 251. On the recovery after stroke podcast, my guest today is Suzanne Eykholt who was in a motor vehicle collision that caused a trauma to her neck, which was missed during the post accident medical checkup that later resulted in an ischemic stroke. Suzanne Eykholt, welcome to the podcast.

Suzzane Eykholt 1:07

Thank you for having me, Bill.

Bill Gasiamis 1:10

Thank you for being here. Tell me a little bit about what happened to you.

Neck trauma and stroke

Suzzane Eykholt 1:13

So I had an ischemic stroke, a little less than a year ago. So the reason I had the stroke was because I was in a car accident. And the car accident caused some trauma to my neck. And I had actually gone to the emergency center after the car accident and they did a CT scan.

Suzzane Eykholt 1:37

And they didn't find anything. They just said to come home and rest. They said I sprained my neck, and that I'd be pretty sore. But that was it. And then three days

later, that's when I had the stroke. And it was really intense. I mean, the car accident in itself was really intense. And then having the stroke three days later was a surprise. I didn't see that coming. And it completely changed my life.

Bill Gasiamis 2:04

The you're not the first person who's told me this about collision. And then later on down the track, sometimes six months, sometimes a few months later, there's a tear in one of the vertebral arteries.

Suzzane Eykholt 2:22

Mine was my carotid artery.

Bill Gasiamis 2:24

Okay, right. So it was a carotid artery dissection. Was it an internal dissection. They did it create a flap and therefore, they created a clot. And then that moved forward? Or is it a block at the site of the dissection?

Suzzane Eykholt 2:42

My understanding was the dissection caused a clot. So the clot was forming after the car accident, and then the clot like fully formed three days after the accident. And that's when I had the ischemic stroke.

Bill Gasiamis 2:58

Okay, so the clot formed and then travelled up towards the head somewhere.

Suzzane Eykholt 3:04

So I was, I mean, my memory of when the actual stroke happened is really patchy. So I had the car accident, I was pretty sore afterwards. They said I had a spring in my neck. But that was it. I was honestly really frustrated about my car.

Suzzane Eykholt 3:23

But I wasn't thinking that much about my health. I was like, Okay, I'm alive, great. I felt like I walked away with like, without a scratch. And I felt really lucky. And then, three days later, I had gone back to work that day, because I took the first two days off.

Suzzane Eykholt 3:40

And then I went back to work that day. And I was home. And I live with my roommate. And so she found me when I was having the stroke, and she called the

ambulance. And then I went to the hospital, and then they perform surgery right away. So I felt like, it all happened so fast. I feel like one second I was fine. And then the next second I wasn't.

Bill Gasiamis 4:05

It's just amazing that I'm so pleased to hear that it all happened so fast. And that meant that you were in the right place at the right time, like you in health in a good place where they were going to support you care for you and make you feel better and make it possible for you to be here a year later. Nearly.

Suzzane Eykholt 4:24

It was actually, you know, the stroke happened when I was like mid conversation. We were talking she was in the room right next to me. And I went to my room to grab something. And it felt like it was just you know, when you power down a computer. That's what it felt like in my brain.

Suzzane Eykholt 4:43

It just felt like everything was just shutting off. And then she found me and she didn't know what was going on. I couldn't move the right side of my body and I wasn't talking. So she called the ambulance right away and she suspected it was a stroke right away too.

The importance of getting immediate treatment

Suzzane Eykholt 5:02

So the ambulance got there. And then they administered. I forget what it's called.

Bill Gasiamis 5:08

TPA?

Suzzane Eykholt 5:09

Yes, they administered that at my house. They actually administered it right where I'm sitting right now, because I'm sitting on my bed, but they administered it at my house. And then they took me to the hospital, and the hospital is actually only 10 minutes from where I live. So I was really, really close to the hospital, and they got me in surgery right away. So I have a stent placed in my neck.

Bill Gasiamis 5:36

To support the tear inside your carotid arteries so that it strengthens it. And then you've got a clear passage so that blood can continue to flow. Oh, my gosh, it's overwhelming to hear how quickly it all happened for you. And you went through it.

Bill Gasiamis 5:55

I've been through my own version. And my one was very long, drawn out extended three years brain surgery, like so many things happened over a long period of time, you had in a very short amount of time. And I imagine that well, like so much needed. I didn't get it at all.

Suzzane Eykholt 6:17

Me neither I feel incredibly unlucky for having it. And then I feel incredibly lucky for the recovery and access to like health care that I had, I feel both where it's like, on one hand, you know, it's really unlikely that I had a stroke in the first place. But then it's also really unlikely that I had all these things line up to where I could get care right away.

Suzzane Eykholt 6:39

So, you know, I feel really lucky that I'm here and then I'm alive. And that, you know, because I got care so quickly, and I got rushed to the hospital so quickly. You know, I think that that had such a big impact on my recovery because I had surgery right away. I hear a lot of stories where people you know, they don't get help for like 12 hours or a day or multiple days.

Bill Gasiamis 7:02

Go roomie! High five to your roomie.

Suzzane Eykholt 7:08

I know I owe her my life literally.

Bill Gasiamis 7:12

Wow, you can actually say that in mean it to her. That's fabulous.

Suzzane Eykholt 7:18

She's my best friend too. We've been best friends since we were like 12 or 13 years old.

Bill Gasiamis 7:24

You chose well.

Suzzane Eykholt 7:26

I did, this wasn't in our plan. But yeah.

Bill Gasiamis 7:29

Yeah. Wow. So and then you're going through all this stuff, family and notifying people. How do you go from perfectly healthy today to I've got to tell people, I've had a stroke and I'm in hospital. Did you navigate that? Did that happen at the same time? Was your friend involved?

Suzzane Eykholt 7:51

That's a great question. I didn't navigate any of it because I wasn't verbal for the first little bit after my stroke. And I couldn't talk and I my brain wasn't like processing what was happening. Like I couldn't process it. I had a stroke for the first couple of days.

Suzzane Eykholt 8:10

People kept telling me and I kept asking again, what happened? I couldn't like when I could start talking. I kept asking what happened. So when it happened, my best friend who I live with still currently. And I live with at the time of the stroke. So she's close with my family, we grew up together.

Suzzane Eykholt 8:31

So she was in charge of notifying and contacting everyone. And I actually am living in Austin, Texas, and my family's in Washington State. So they all got on a plane immediately. And they flew to Austin that same night. So they were there like within 24 hours of when I had the surgery. So my memories, me waking up and my parents and my sister being there.

Bill Gasiamis 8:59

When your brain was shutting down in that zone, did you have any concerns about yourself any fear? Any thoughts about what was happening? I know a lot of stroke survivors comment that they had no idea what was happening. They didn't feel concerned or worried or anything like that after they woke up when all that stuff started to come back. How do you navigate that moment?

Suzzane Eykholt 9:31

It's a good question. You know, I wish and I don't wish that I remembered it more but it's very patchy for me. Which is really confusing to kind of put the story together in my mind, but I remember you know, I just remember I was standing and I was gonna grab something from my room. I don't remember what I was grabbing. And then I remember getting really dizzy.

Suzzane Eykholt 9:56

And I just remember falling over and then there was this big patch where I don't have any memories. And then I remember patches have been in the ambulance. And I remember thinking I was dying. And that was terrifying. I felt like all my memories are also only on the cars, the right side of my body went offline. So the stroke was on the left side of my brain. So all of my first memories are on like the left side of the room, which is really interesting, too. But I just remember, like looking at the EMT that was in the ambulance, and I was like, I'm dead. I'm dying.

Bill Gasiamis 10:46

Yeah, that's fine. Yeah.

Suzzane Eykholt 10:49

But then I got to the hospital. And I felt like, I have so few memories in the hospital. I feel like, I remember that I couldn't talk. I remember, people were talking around me and rushing around me. And I remember lights. And I remember this flashing light from my CT scan that they did at the hospital.

Suzzane Eykholt 11:11

And I remember not knowing what was going on. I was terrified. I was really confused. But at the same time, like, I think, because I don't remember so much. It was kind of like a blessing and a curse. Because I think that you know, it was it was really traumatic, and I don't have a lot of memory of it.

Bill Gasiamis 11:36

Yeah, I was completely cognitively away the first time I presented the hospital with a blade in my head, and I knew exactly what was going on. And I was even acting like nothing was happening. And the doctors and nurses were concerned that I wasn't staying in my bed, and that I was walking around and meeting people for coffee downstairs and all this stuff.

Bill Gasiamis 11:58

And the second time I was really spaced that felt like I was in a different

dimension. Everything was just kind of I felt like I was moving through this dimension without knowing exactly where I was and how to interact with it. And it was just kind of like a floaty. Whoo, we kind of thing. It was strange. And I didn't know how to interact with the people around me. Do you recall interacting with the people who came to visit you who flew in? And having them there? And did that? Was it comforting to have people around you? Do you know how you interacted with him?

Suzzane Eykholt 12:39

Yeah, I remember. When I first got to the hospital, it felt like everyone was talking around me. But I couldn't understand what anyone was saying. Like I could tell that they were talking to me, I could tell it. They wanted me to say something. But I couldn't talk and I didn't understand what they were asking. I just felt that there was like commotion and like chaos around me.

Suzzane Eykholt 13:00

But I didn't know it was going on. And then. But I remember my best friend being there. I remember knowing that she was there. And I remember knowing who she was. And then I remember waking up at some point, and my parents were there. And I think I I just started crying when I saw them because it was just like, I was so scared. I didn't know it was happening to me and I couldn't move the right side of my body.

Suzzane Eykholt 13:31

And I just I was so scared. And I couldn't talk then either. I think all I said was hi because that was like the speech that I could form. And, but I was comforted that they were there. You know, I remember I felt safe when they were there. But I also was like, Oh, something really bad happened for them to be here for them to be in another state and for me to wake up at a hospital. Like I knew something was really really bad but I didn't know what happened.

Life before the stroke for Suzzane Eykholt



Bill Gasiamis 14:02

What stage of life were you in a lot of young people will tell me about having a stroke and they're in the middle of something major usually it's university or something vehicle. Even something minor even moving out and living on your own with a roomie they're all big time. times in our lives. No one's really going through a I wasn't doing much. There wasn't really anything happening. What stage of life were you in?

Suzzane Eykholt 14:28

Yeah, well, I graduated college a few years ago, kind of early on in the pandemic. And I started working full time in Washington state for a while. And I felt like I was just burnt out. I was kind of at a dead end job that I really liked my coworkers but I wasn't really using my degree in the way that I wanted to. But I did I really enjoyed my job and I wanted to change so, I had recently moved to Austin, Texas right before the stroke.

Suzzane Eykholt 15:02

I moved in June of 2022. And I had my stroke in August. So I had just moved to a new city. I didn't really know that many people. You know, I had my best friend that was here. And I knew a couple people, my coworkers, but I didn't have a support system here yet. And yeah, it was really scary, like doing it away from, you know, home and having it happen away from home because I didn't have anything set up here yet.

Suzzane Eykholt 15:34

I felt like I was, I felt like when I first moved here, I wanted just to be like young

and new city. And I, I started working when I moved here. And so I just felt like I was getting into the groove of things. I was working. I was starting to meet people. I was starting to make friends. I was starting to like, explore a new city, and then just like, bam, that happened.

Bill Gasiamis 15:54

Yeah. How, long did you end up in hospital? Well,

Suzzane Eykholt 15:58

I was in the ICU for five days. And then I was in. Like, I was at the hospital for another two days. And then I was transferred to an inpatient rehab center.

Bill Gasiamis 16:13

What? What was that? Like I interrupted, you finish what you were saying?

Suzzane Eykholt 16:19

Oh, and then I went to an inpatient rehab center. And then I did outpatient rehab for a really long time.

Bill Gasiamis 16:25

Yeah. What deficits were you dealing with that you had to recover from?

Early deficits Suzzane Eykholt had to recover from

Suzzane Eykholt 16:30

Early on? Well, things were changing so quickly. So early on, I couldn't move the right side of my body. Everything was I couldn't feel anything. And I was talking at first, but it was just, it was really small sentences, I was getting really confused. I felt like my processing my processing, still I feel like I'm struggling with but I felt like I couldn't process things, my memory was really affected.

Suzzane Eykholt 17:02

The stroke was located on the left side of my brain. So they said that the parts of my brain that dealt with language, and fine motor control, were affected. So I had to do a lot of physical therapy, and a lot of occupational therapy and speech therapy. So when I was in the hospital, I kind of started to save some words.

Suzzane Eykholt 17:31

And I was able to kind of regain some of the feeling in my body. But once I got to the inpatient rehab center, that's when I really like worked on like, walking again, and moving around again, and trying to hold a pencil again, and like, sign my name again. And just like all those things that you never think you're going to have to relearn.

Intro 17:55

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 actually recover? What things should I avoid? In case I make matters worse, doctors will explain things that obviously, you've never had a stroke before, you probably don't know what questions to ask.

Intro 18:19

If this is you, you may be missing out on doing things that could help speed up your recovery. If you're finding yourself in that situation. Stop worrying, and head to recoveryafterstroke.com where you can download a guide that will help you it's called seven questions to ask your doctor about your stroke.

Intro 18:39

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.

Bill Gasiamis 18:58

Yeah, you're right handed. Obviously.

Suzzane Eykholt 19:01

I'm right handed.

Bill Gasiamis 19:04

That would be interesting. You're young, 25 years young. So you've got a lot of things going for you when people are young, and they have stroke, they've got a lot more things going for them than if you were older, for example, in your seven years or whatever, there's less potential for recovery, apparently, which is something that I hear that I don't really believe in any way that I tend not to like

to say to people.

Bill Gasiamis 19:29

But you're also in this phase where your identity is what it is, and you're just shifting and changing your identity because you have moved from home. You move to another state of moving into a place with a friend. You know, there's all these things that you're doing.

Bill Gasiamis 19:48

You're already going through a lot of upheaval changes and that type of thing. And now you're dealing with being in another state as well as the changes that are caused by this stroke or thing that you haven't really you went up for that part of it you weren't interested in, going down that part of it.

Suzzane Eykholt 20:08

No, I wasn't.

Bill Gasiamis 20:10

How are you reflecting on yourself? And how is your identity being impacted when you've moved into that phase with that with that, oh, my gosh, I've got to learn how to write again. And I've got to learn how to walk again, and all those things. How do you comprehend that?

Suzzane Eykholt 20:29

I mean, it was terrifying. I think I didn't know what my future was gonna look like at that point. Because like, previously, I'd been fully independent. And I, you know, could move around, and I could drive and I could go to work. And I had a really like, relatively, "normal life".

Suzzane Eykholt 20:52

But after the stroke, when it first happened, I didn't know what my future was going to look like, I didn't know if I was going to be able to work full time again, I didn't know if I was going to be able to drive again, I didn't know if I was going to need, like, at home care for a long time, or indefinitely, I just didn't know what that was going to be like. I was really like fortunate though, my family, they flew down immediately after it happened.

Suzzane Eykholt 21:24

But then, even after the immediate stay in the hospital, they were by my side, like,

my mom would fly down. And then she would go back, and then my dad would fly down. And then he would go back, and then my sister would fly down. And then I would have friends that would take care of me.

Suzzane Eykholt 21:39

And my best friend, who I live with and who found me when this happened, like she stepped in so much as my caretaker. And I had an outpatient care team that helped me too. So I was really fortunate, I had a lot of help, but it was still scary, just not knowing. You know, like, I had this idea of what my life was going to look like before the stroke. And all of a sudden, none of that was certain.

Bill Gasiamis 22:08

Yeah, stroke tends to do that, you're going along perfectly fine, one day, and then you're dealing with the most dramatic upheaval, the next day, and then from then on. And even though, you know, you're brave, I'm gonna say it's brave, because I've never done it before, you're brave, and you left your home and you went to another state and you set up shop again, you know, without any resources, of local knowledge or anything like that.

Bill Gasiamis 22:41

You've just gone blind into this new way of doing things. You have a certain amount of skills to do that don't you? You know, how to interact with people, you know, how to get a job, you know how to pay a bill, you know how to do all the things that you need to do to sort of stay on your feet, you know that you've got that.

Bill Gasiamis 23:04

But then you've got to deal with stroke recovery. And you've never done that before, you don't know how to do any of that stuff. It's foreign to you. You might have heard about the term stroke. But you may not actually know what it means. And even though you've seen somebody who's had a stroke, you don't really know what they're going through, you've got no idea.

Bill Gasiamis 23:23

So how did you go about discovering? How do you do that? How do you transition into I've got to recover from something I've got no idea about, and I've never heard about and I am unaware of, other than the fact that I'm living in it. How do you do it internally, I know that other people are helping you, but how did you

grapple with it?

How the stroke has changed life for Suzzane Eykholt

Suzzane Eykholt 23:52

I mean, it was terrifying. And I had questions about everything the whole time, I was going through it, like, you know, where I was just like, I'm not strong enough to do this. Like, I felt really sorry for myself for a really long time. You know, and I would just like, I wanted to just, like, throw in the towel and be like, That's it. I'm done. Like, you know, because everything that I was facing at the time, it just didn't seem I feel really lucky because right now, I feel like I've made a really good recovery.

Suzzane Eykholt 24:28

I definitely am not 100% back to where I was before, but, you know, I've been able to gain a lot of my independence back, but early on in the stroke like that just wasn't a possibility. And that was terrifying. I think I don't know how to say this because I think that the stroke did change my life for the better in some ways, though, because I think I created a new meaning on my life afterwards.

Suzzane Eykholt 24:57

You know, I think my relationship with my family I got a lot closer. I felt like before the stroke, there were so many things that were just like, superficial that didn't matter that I was so wrapped up in or just, you know, I think I was just kind of lost before this all happened and I definitely was lost when it happened definitely didn't help. But I think because of the nature of stress, you have to rebuild your life. And I'm proud of how I've rebuilt mine.

Bill Gasiamis 25:31

Yeah, I would be too. And you've said something that a lot of stroke survivors say. But what's interesting is I said that at 37 that before my life. Before stroke my life was a little bit weird, strange, different, but it's actually normal. It's the way most people go about their life, I can reflect on it now, because I've had this kind of, we'll call it. My gosh, I don't even know what the word is. But I think what I'll call it is growth, or I call it growth, post traumatic growth maybe that's better.

Bill Gasiamis 26:09

And before that, I hadn't had any experiences that were my experiences physically happening to me, that made me have to dig deep and find other ways forward. So I just went about doing things the way that I used to, and it was the way most people did it. And I thought it was okay, and I thought it was serving me well, but it really wasn't 25 to have that insight, I think that's an amazing insight to have.

Bill Gasiamis 26:39

Because now that I'm 48 I reflect back on when I was 25. And I don't think that even though you know, 25, I didn't know as much as I know now and I wasn't as aware. as knowledgeable as I am now. I didn't know if I was that aware, aware enough to be able to make the distinction that you have made, which is I was focusing on superficial things. Now I know what's important. I was focusing on all these things that didn't matter, now I know what matters.

Suzzane Eykholt 27:14

I don't think I would have gotten there unless this happened. I think that that's the nature of like, when things happen that are so unexpected, and traumatic. You know, I think it just, like fundamentally it kind of tears everything down. And you kind of have this, you know, I felt like even before the stroke, I definitely struggled with my mental health.

Suzzane Eykholt 27:44

And I wasn't always like, I didn't always have the most like healthy relationship with substances. And then after the stroke, it was just, I was so clearly not okay, that I felt like I had to be so vulnerable, I had to ask for so much help. And I, you know, I actually had to, like address a lot of things that I didn't address like pre stroke that I had just been putting off and like numbing for years.

Suzzane Eykholt 28:12

But it was all of a sudden, like, you know, I just it felt like it was like a scorched earth. And I felt like there was just there was myself before the stroke. And then there was myself now and I just like there wasn't any other option. Like I couldn't go back to that version of myself, or that version of me wasn't there anymore.

Bill Gasiamis 28:32

What a blessing.

Suzzane Eykholt 28:33

Yeah, I mean, I think I've created meaning from the experience. I wouldn't wish it on anyone. But you know, I'm grateful to be here.

Bill Gasiamis 28:44

Yeah, I wouldn't wish it anyone either. But if you're gonna get such a good thing out of a terrible situation, then bloody hell, why not? And of course, I never want to see anyone and well don't get me wrong. That's not it. It's just that that ability to shift your perspective is never going I mean, it's exactly what I said it's scorched earth. What a start, like fresh slate everything new rebuild, however you want.

Bill Gasiamis 29:18

Yeah, sure, you're going to take some of your old life into that new version. But you have really the opportunity to just let everything that didn't serve you go. And I love what you said about I love what you said about what I got out of what you said about your mental health. You were using substances to numb it right? And then you had to deal with it. Do you feel like the reason that you had had substances in your life and you had mental health issues? Was because you didn't reach out for the help that all you had to do was reach out for?

Why Suzzane Eykholt didn't reach out for help after the stroke



Suzzane Eykholt 29:51

Most likely. I mean, I think there was a variety of reasons but definitely because of my pride. You know, I think I just felt like it was Ever bad enough or that like, because I was still going to work or because I was still, you know, like functional that, like, I didn't need help. And I was just kind of like living this like, muted version of my life where, you know, I wasn't really happy or fulfilled, but I was just like getting by.

Suzzane Eykholt 30:20

So it felt like I never really like needed to. I mean, I sought out like therapy before the stroke, which ended up being such a huge resource after the stroke. I feel like I couldn't have gotten through this without, you know, all of those resources. But yeah, there was just a sense where it was like, I couldn't pretend that I was okay.

Bill Gasiamis 30:45

Because you definitely would. Yeah. I love that. That was me, as well, I got to that point where everything that I was doing before stripe was kind of tending to my challenges, but not really solving them. And I think what was lacking was my taking responsibility for the solution. So I was going to counseling, but I was kind of making it their responsibility to make me better.

Suzzane Eykholt 31:09

Yeah, I was doing it. So like, half assed. I don't know if I can swear on this. But yeah, I wasn't really like fully invested in it. And I, you know, it didn't take it that seriously before this. And also, when I was, I'm 26. Now, but when I was 25, right before it happened. In some ways, I felt invincible.

Suzzane Eykholt 31:30

I felt like the things that we're doing, were never going to catch up to me in terms of like, how much I was drinking, or just like, I just never thought of the impacts of it. Which is so naive to say, but I feel like a lot of people that are younger feel that way. And then something with their health happens. And it's like, oh, I don't want that life that I had before.

Bill Gasiamis 31:55

Yeah, look, I'm 48. But 25 was only a couple of blinks of the eye away. It was, it's that quick. I mean, you just get to 48. And you look back and you go, Oh, my gosh, I was 25 just two blinks ago. You know, like, It's ridiculous how quickly you get to 48. Now, there's a lot that happens in between 25 and 48. So it's not like you

haven't got a lot of additional stuff that's occurred. But time just seems to just go right. So when you're saying when I was 25. And then I'm 26. Even there feels like just a moment. Like let's events. It's a bit a quicker moment. But

Suzzane Eykholt 32:35

yeah, this has been the fastest and longest year of my life. Yeah, right.

Bill Gasiamis 32:39

So it's a time distorts in weird ways, and changes. And the fastest because all of a sudden, you're a year out of what happened. And that's like, oh my gosh, I've made it a year out. But then it's like, oh, my gosh, that was like, just a year ago.

Suzzane Eykholt 32:56

Yeah, yeah. I mean, I don't know, even now like, I still don't really know what my future looks like post stroke. I feel like I still in very much like active recovery in a lot of ways. But I have been really grateful. I've gotten back to work recently. So I'm working again. And I have recently started driving again, which was huge for me.

Suzzane Eykholt 33:24

That was a big goal after everything, so yeah, I think it's, I still have so many questions, I still don't know what I'm doing. I still have like, really bad days where I just, I think sometimes I feel broken because of what happened. And then other times, I'm really proud of myself, but it's just, it's so many highs and lows.

Bill Gasiamis 33:48

Yeah, I love that term broken. So some people are broken from stroke, they are typically specifically in a spot broken, it just depends on how you want to use that if you want to use that as an analogy that's going to support you or discourage you. And if you're using it as a discouragement, then I would refrain from using that kind of language, right.

Bill Gasiamis 34:10

But it's kind of accurate in a way because there's something missing now, that's something missing. That's what makes you unique. In my mind, now I have the ability to interact with people from all around the world at every single age stuff that you and I would never have had in common before. No reason for us to other than that you're an amazing person and a great guy.

And we would chat because we're just good people, right? Other than that, we would not really have any reason to get together and interact. But here we are. And I think that's kind of our our injuries are what has given us this insight into this other way of doing life. And that is something that I am grateful for, and that part that's broken if it wasn't broken wouldn't have allowed me to interact this way with 250 other stroke survivors around the world since the podcast started.

So it just depends on when you're using those words, how you're using them, and how you're making them, impact you. And if they're, and I use it as a way to empower me to say, okay, that little bit that's missing makes it possible for me to have really meaningful and deep conversations with other people that are going through the same thing. And what I'm doing is making a difference to them. And they're making a difference to me by chatting to me.

And together, we're gonna get through this. But we're also going to bring awareness, I suppose, or, or accept the down days as being part of the life of any person, quote, unquote, normal or not. Because even before your stroke, you had really bad days that you couldn't get up, and you were even doing it to yourself, right, where you were drinking too much. And then you'd have to deal with a hangover the next day. We do that to ourselves, regardless of whether or not we've had a stroke. So you're just doing now your, quote, unquote, bad days is just happening through a different source or cause or that makes sense?

Suzzane Eykholt 36:26

Yeah, I think it's interesting. Like I think I'm trying to think how to word this. I think, the areas that I'm still working on improving. You know, I think that they've made me a more empathetic person. It's made me more open. It's made me less judgmental, it's made me more caring. It's made me more loving, I think, towards other people. I feel like, I think sometimes after traumatic experiences, people can harden. And I felt like my heart just like turned to mush. Like, I felt so emotional. I felt like I couldn't. Yeah, I didn't, I didn't. I didn't expect to feel that way. To everything around me, you know, it just felt like, yeah, everything was so intense.

Bill Gasiamis 37:19

You can't ignore it anymore. You could have put it on the shelf before ignore it, pretend it wasn't really talking to you. It wasn't giving you any feedback, you know, you could consciously block out what the heart was saying and what it was

doing. Whereas now, the head is offline. So the hearts going, huh, here's my opportunity. I'm coming up, and I'm going to tell you what you needed to hear baby.

Suzzane Eykholt 37:42

Yeah. And I was also like, you know, I really had to, like, learn how to sit with the sadness and the grief of having a stroke and what that you know, meant for me at the time, but I think you can't like you can't selectively numb emotion emotions, like you can't shut off grief without also shutting off like joy and love in your life. So I think for a while I just been like, doing that I just been shutting it off, just kind of going about my day to day. And then after this happened, like I finally had to process a lot of the sadness from the stroke, but also from stuff that happened prior. And I think it allowed me to also like, feel joy in my life in a deeper sense, I feel like I have a different appreciation for things. Now.

Bill Gasiamis 38:31

That's probably one of the most profound statements I've heard in all the podcast interviews that I've done. That's the statement that you made, that you can't just independently shut off different emotions and not impact other ones.

Suzzane Eykholt 38:47

I heard it on I heard it somewhere. I didn't create it myself.

Bill Gasiamis 38:50

That's okay. Everything we've ever said, we've heard somewhere else, it's all good. But it's just a profound statement that you've made. I completely agree with that. Because that's what a lot of people do, is they might have an emotional, hurt or pain or suffering from the rest from parts of their life that is in the past. And what they do is they try to compartmentalize it, put it aside, try and push it away instead of dealing with it.

And then it takes away everything else from their life. And it makes them unhappy. And it makes them unable to experience joy and happiness and all these other things. Because joy and happiness is an emotion of the heart as well. It's if you can't access if you if you put a wall around your heart, well then you can't access all the other stuff that's in there that's going to make life worth living.

And that's kind of that leads to one of my things that I say forever, which is that stroke recovery is a three pronged approach. It's a head, heart and and physical

recovery. You have to do the emotional work. You have to do this psychological work and you have to do the physical work. And and do you feel now that you have this ability to understand that you've got to attend to your emotions, that that's supporting your stroke recovery, your physical recovery and your mental recovery?

Suzzane Eykholt 40:19

Absolutely, yeah. I mean, I feel like I feel like without, like, tending to, like the emotional recovery, you know, it just felt like I was just like, still living in that moment of fear when everything happened. You know, because I, sorry, I lost my train of thought.

Bill Gasiamis 40:46

I was asking about how tending to your emotional recovery and being able to go there has that helped you with your physical and your mental recovery after the stroke?

Suzzane Eykholt 40:59

Yeah, 100%. You know, I think that once I was able to start like processing what had happened, I was able to, I think, put the energy that I was putting into just like, just trying to get by, I was able to put that energy back into my recovery, whether it was like a physical aspect or like cognitive aspect, I felt like on the physical side of it, I was pretty fortunate to not have that many physical deficits after the stroke, but I had a lot of cognitive things that I was really struggling with, like my ability to use language, and writing and reading. And I felt like that was really hard. And I, in some ways, like, I felt like at times, I was only focusing on one, but I wasn't being that successful at it. And it wasn't until I would like, look at all three aspects together that I was able to see improvement.

Bill Gasiamis 42:06

Yeah, it's really important to focus on your wins and see what you've done. Either, even if it's like minor, because it's uplifting and helps you feel better about yourself. And it just shows there is progress. And that you're getting to the other side, whatever the other side is, or wherever it is, and whatever it looks like. But I think movement in any direction, kind of forward, whether you have to take a back movement, or a side movement, all movement, and that's really the key here is this the keep going and every bump as it comes along.

Suzzane Eykholt 42:44

It definitely hasn't been linear. I feel like there's some days where I have some symptoms that are like, they're worse than others. Like if I get really tired, I noticed that things kind of come back and resurface. Or if I'm really fatigued, or like after I exert myself too much. It's like, it's just not linear. For me, it's been, you know, where it's like, I'll have a really good day, and then I'll have, you know, a day where I'm not able to do that. Or I have to take a break. Yeah, I feel like the fatigue has been really hard.

Bill Gasiamis 43:22

When do you notice the fatigue gets worse? Have you seen a pattern that kind of, you'll become aware of? And then if so, are you starting to get in front of that to know what to do before the fatigue kicks in?

Dealing with post-stroke fatigue

Suzzane Eykholt 43:36

I felt like going at first, when I first got home from the inpatient center, everything was so exhausting. I remember like taking a shower would be exhausting. And I would want to take a nap afterwards. Or like just basic self care tasks were really exhausting. Or like making myself a meal was really exhausting.

Suzzane Eykholt 44:04

Going to the grocery store was really exhausting. And then that started to get a little bit more manageable. And then things kind of like I was able to like increase my tolerance for things. But going back to work was the biggest challenge for me. I felt like I wasn't able to. I needed a lot more rest than I think I was able to get so when I had to go back to work. I went back to work full time.

Suzzane Eykholt 44:36

I wish I had gone back part time and then increased to full time. But I didn't have that option because of my health insurance. And I really wish that I'd had the option to go part time and then full time because just jumping into full time. I was so exhausted. I feel like after work I wouldn't be able to talk to anyone. I would just like sleep.

Bill Gasiamis 44:59

Yeah, that's a common thing that happens, I'm going to say, I'm going to use the

word mistake. But don't take it a bad way. Mistake is, you've given it one take. And then you have to do another take. And I did the same thing. I went back to work full time. But I never, I didn't go back to my work. So I had a property maintenance business.

Bill Gasiamis 45:26

And that fell by the wayside, and it was kind of bubbling away, but I couldn't really do any work. So I just walked away from everybody, my clients, and everybody, and I just said, Look, I'm done for now. And then I went and worked in an office job. And I hadn't done an office job for many, many years. And I didn't realize what an impact monitors noise, people around me lighting, traveling to work and back, I didn't realize what an impact that would have on me.

Bill Gasiamis 45:55

And I was wasted. And I wasn't useful even at work. And only reason I stayed there was because I had a friend of mine, who gave me the job. He was the general manager there who supported me. But nobody else understood why I was so flaky. And even though they knew or had a stroke, they couldn't understand how it was so unproductive.

Suzzane Eykholt 46:21

Yeah, I felt like, so a little background about what I do for work. I am a medical receptionist at an urgent care. And I've been a medical receptionist for like, a few years now. So it was the job, I had pre stroke. And then that's the job I returned to. And, you know, I felt like pretty competent at my job before this.

Suzzane Eykholt 46:45

And I had been doing it for a while I kind of knew what to expect. And then afterwards, it was just like, everything was hard, like typing was hard looking at screens was hard. I remember my coworkers were really, really understanding a lot of them knew what happened. And were really supportive and had luckily, like a lot of them had some knowledge about the effects of stroke.

Suzzane Eykholt 47:12

Because I worked in a medical setting. But I felt like when patients would come in, because I don't look like I had a stroke. No one would know unless I told them patients would get really impatient with me, when I would ask them to repeat something. Or if I would make a mistake, it was really hard. I felt like people, my

co workers were really patient and supportive. But I felt like any customer facing job. People are kind of ruthless, sometimes.

Bill Gasiamis 47:47

Customer service is so important. You have to be on your game all the time. Even though I know I've been in customer service roles before and I know what it's about. And sometimes you're not on your game. But we've created such a customer service focused world where it's all about the customer experience. That the customer has really high expectations.

Suzzane Eykholt 48:14

Yeah. And also, to be fair, like, there's been so many people that came in to where I work that were so nice. And so patient with me. And I had like a lovely time talking to, and it's really far and few between that people would be really impatient and sometimes upset with me. But yeah it did stick out to me.

Bill Gasiamis 48:36

They're probably having one of the worst days of their life as well. They're probably sick, they're coming to a medical facility. You know, they just need stuff done, and they need to be fixed and they need to feel better. And they probably got work to go back to who knows what's going on. It's legitimate, that they're impatient. It's not nice when you're on the receiving end of it.

Suzzane Eykholt 48:58

Yeah, that's the thing is like I understood, you know, I understand that it's like people wanted you know, I think in some ways, I was ready to go back to work. But in other ways I definitely wasn't at first now I feel like I've gotten a better handle on things. But at first I just I didn't feel like competent at my job.

Knowing your limits

Bill Gasiamis 49:21

Was even though you kind of overdid it by going back full time and it wasn't necessarily in your control. Do you feel like pushing yourself a little further than where your comfort zone was helped you kind of get better than you were? You know that little push ourselves and can go beyond where we go beyond our limit. And then we can go ah, oh my gosh, I'm crashing but I know now where my limit is and I know how to approach it more gingerly. Did you experience that?

Suzzane Eykholt 50:00

Yeah, I noticed really big improvements with my typing, and my processing speed, like right away because I was just, it was this repetitive tasks that I was doing every day. And I feel like prior to going back to work, I would work on it with like my occupational therapists that I was with, and we would do it but like, you know, it wasn't the whole day, it would be like an hour that we would work on something together.

Suzzane Eykholt 50:28

And then all of a sudden, when you're kind of thrown in, it's like, you really have to, you don't really have another choice. So I felt like I do, you know, I felt like I saw a big improvement and in my recovery after going back to work, even if it was really exhausting.

Bill Gasiamis 50:48

So it sounds like a little bit of intense therapy at the same time.

Suzzane Eykholt 50:51

Yeah, it felt like a boot camp for like recovery.

Bill Gasiamis 50:55

Yeah. Okay. So not necessarily fully competent at work, but really doing a good job in recovering motor skills, and increasing your tolerance to fatigue and all that kind of stuff.

Suzzane Eykholt 51:08

And now I feel fully competent. And now I feel like I've gotten like a good handle on things. And I feel like I'm way more capable at doing my job the way I want to do it. But yeah, it was really hard to go back at first.

Bill Gasiamis 51:26

Yeah. You know, the days when you're feeling a little bit down, low fatigue, etc. What, what's kind of the, how does that come about? So for me, having a bad night's sleep, even now, 11 years out, even now will mean that my morning is really a lot harder than than it needs to be.

Bill Gasiamis 51:50

But sometimes I didn't cause the lack of sleep that particular night, something happened and I wake up, I couldn't get back to sleep. So what do you feel like

contributes to you having a bad day? Do you have any things that you know, definitely contribute to you having a bad day, the next day or the day after?

Suzzane Eykholt 52:11

Yeah, I felt like, when I would over exert myself, I would notice like the next day, it was just so much fatigue, I felt like I really wanted to push myself to kind of going back to like, my old life prior to this, and I would still want to hang out with my friends. And I would, I would want to go out and I would want to go do things.

Suzzane Eykholt 52:34

And I remember like the first time I tried to go to a concert, post stroke, and I was so tired. The next day, it took me like two days to just like lay in bed and recover because I was so exhausted. Or like I would want to go out with my friends and I just, I couldn't keep up or I would just be so exhausted, I'd have to go home early or so I noticed that was a big trigger for like me feeling really low the next day.

Suzzane Eykholt 53:04

Even though I think like emotionally, it's good to connect with other people. I had to adjust the settings I was able to do it in. And then if I have like a stretch of days at work where I'm working days in a row, I'll notice that like I need a day off to recover. If I don't sleep well, I noticed that too.

Bill Gasiamis 53:26

Yeah, the concert thing's interesting because I had a couple of opportunities to attend some concerts. And I didn't go on purpose. Because I felt like as much as I'd love to go to the concert, I'd be paying the price for a couple of days later.

Suzzane Eykholt 53:43

That's exactly how I felt.

Dealing with sensory overload



Bill Gasiamis 53:45

But then I felt at some stage I got to the point well, I'm prepared to pay the price to go and see that particular artist for example, because I'm gonna have a great time there. Even though when I leave there, I'll be tired and overwhelmed. Because there'll be too much noise too much light, you know, and, and I'll have sensory overload it'll still worth the experience because I can at least say I saw my favorite artists live one time, you know.

Bill Gasiamis 54:15

So there was that and then that also meant that I was finding ways to get out of going to the football when people would invite me or to other sports and you'd be probably in this two hours of sitting and screaming at the umpire or the referee about a decision they made is going to be really difficult for me to come away from feeling okay about and you know, it's never watching sport on TV, for example is you sit on your couch, you watch TV, and then you're at home magically when the game's over.

Suzzane Eykholt 54:50

Yeah, and you can kind of remove any like sensory information when you feel comfortable with it. I had so many issues with like sensory overload and overwhelm I still do.

Bill Gasiamis 55:01

You guys at your place share the space in with regards that the lighting, television and all that kind of thing because with my wife, we are now this we're in two different worlds, I've got to have no lights overhead on pretty much all at night, I've got to just put on lamps.

Bill Gasiamis 55:21

And she likes to have a bright lit room. So she's got to deal with my lack of lighting. And the volume is a weird thing, because she doesn't mind having the volume a little bit loud. And I tried to have it a little bit lower because it overwhelms me. So do you guys navigate that sort of stuff in your place?

Suzzane Eykholt 55:42

Yeah, I mean, it was it was hard at first, I feel like early on, like I couldn't tolerate bright lights at all. So I would always want to turn off all the lights in the house, where I'd want to have really dim lighting. And I would want to be really quiet. And I would want to, you know, close the blinds all the time. And I remember sometimes where it'd be like, I can't see it so dark in here.

Suzzane Eykholt 56:05

Like, can we just turn on one light, and it's but she was she was a really good sport. I feel like she definitely compromised on my behalf when it came to like the lighting and like the sound. But yeah, it was it was it was a big adjustment. I felt like I have my own space in the house that we live in, like I have my own room and I have privacy.

Suzzane Eykholt 56:30

So it was really important for me just to have like, a space where I could go, and there wouldn't be anything overwhelming. And so that was my room, where it's like I could go to my room, I wouldn't have any noise in my room, I could turn off the lights, or I could make the lights really dim. And like if anything was really stressful in the outside world. Like I needed a place where I could go, where it wasn't.

Bill Gasiamis 56:53

Where you can retreat.

Suzzane Eykholt 56:55

And recharge yeah.

Bill Gasiamis 56:58

That's definitely me. At night, in the, in my bedroom, there's the most dumbest of dim lights, where you can hardly see in there, but it's enough to it's enough, it's enough to be lit. So that it's not, I mean, they need sleep time, it's that, that moment when you're in your bedroom, getting ready for bed, but you don't want it to be dark, you need a little bit of lighting around there.

Bill Gasiamis 57:30

Whatever you're doing, you know, so there's this the dimmest of dim lights. And it's a really quiet room. I'll just go down there and lay for about sometimes 30 minutes an hour before I actually switch the light off and roll over and doze off.

Bill Gasiamis 57:46

My wife usually that comes to bed a little later than me. Or maybe I go to bed a little earlier than I used to. And therefore I get to have that one half an hour to one hour time to kind of unwind before bed. Does that make sense?

Suzzane Eykholt 58:05

Yeah, yeah, I feel like that's really important for me, too. It's funny that we're talking about lighting, because I have an overhead light in my room right now. And I like rarely turn it on. But I turned it on for this podcast, so you could see the screen. But I always have a lamp on instead.

Bill Gasiamis 58:23

Yeah, I appreciate that. And me too so in front of me, there's a light right on top of my monitor. Two monitors is a light right in front of me. And as you can see, as I do that it's shining right into my eyeballs there. And then there's another one to my left. And you can see that when I do that, it's which part of me it's lighting.

Bill Gasiamis 58:46

But if you look on, if you look on YouTube, the best way to light, a recording studio, or a room when you're doing a podcast, this is how they tell you to do it and if you don't do like this, you're not doing it properly. So it's, I recorded another podcast episode just before this an hour before our recording I recorded another one.

Bill Gasiamis 59:08

So this is going to be our two in three hours that I'm recording two episodes, and it's too much and I can feel that like I'm burning and etching something into my brain. I could totally feel it. And I can feel this one. And I don't know if that's weird. But I experience life differently. I experience it physically, I can actually feel the light. And that's not a warm light. That's like an LED the most pathetic little excuse for a light you've ever seen but I can actually feel its impact as if I was outside and the sun was shining on my body.

Suzzane Eykholt 59:52

I feel like I hit a wall sometimes like with the sensory input. Just where like if things are too loud or too bright? Or, like I just I feel like I shut down sometimes still.

The hardest thing about stroke - Suzzane Eykholt

Bill Gasiamis 1:00:05

Yeah. As we come into the end of this episode, I want to ask you a couple of questions. Maybe you can answer maybe you can't, but I just want to get your thoughts on it. What's the hardest thing about the stroke?

Suzzane Eykholt 1:00:19

I think the hardest thing, which also, I think you can look at it two different ways, the hardest thing, I think I felt so alone and isolated. And I'll circle back to the other part of what I was gonna say here, but I didn't know anyone that was my age that had a stroke.

Suzzane Eykholt 1:00:42

I felt like all of the recovery information I heard about was typically at people in different stages of life than me and I didn't know how to adapt it for my own life. And it was just, it was really scary. It felt really lonely and isolating.

Suzzane Eykholt 1:00:59

And, you know, I think, for me, that was the hardest part to grapple with, like immense sadness, that like I was just alone in this experience. But then on the flip side, I think because I've had a stroke, I've been able to find so many experiences, like talk to other people that have had experiences like mine.

Suzzane Eykholt 1:01:24

You know, I found your podcast through my endless Google searches about young stroke survivors, stroke survivors podcast, stroke survivor books, I try to find just any information I can about it, because I think I felt so alone and isolated, and I didn't find any information at first.

Suzzane Eykholt 1:01:49

But the more I've kind of gone through this recovery process, the more I found connection through this experience, just like with what you were saying, how we

get the chance to talk to each other.

Suzzane Eykholt 1:02:02

And I've been able to talk to other people that have had traumatic brain injuries that are around my age and share those experiences. And I think that's also a gift. And then I hope that like me sharing my experience, someone will feel less alone.

Bill Gasiamis 1:02:19

Yeah, that's great. Tell me about. So you might have kind of alluded to this in the last answer. But what has stroke taught you?

Suzzane Eykholt 1:02:32

Taught me, that I'm resilient.

Suzzane Eykholt 1:02:40

It's taught me that a lot of the things I thought mattered, didn't matter. And a lot of the things I wasn't giving enough time and energy to, how important they are. I think I took a lot of people in my life for granted, and things in my life for granted, because I just thought that they were always going to be there.

Suzzane Eykholt 1:03:00

And I feel like a really big level of appreciation for my loved ones, and my life. And I feel like if I go on a walk, and it's sunny outside, and just like being able to walk is fantastic, phenomenal. And I feel so lucky to be able to do that. You know that that feels like a gift now.

Bill Gasiamis 1:03:24

Yeah, I have a coaching client who just being able to go to his favorite beach location, even in his wheelchair, which he hasn't been able to do for four months, because he had a really terrible experience with stroke. And then he's in recovery, and they've just got home, but he felt isolated and stuck inside the house, right.

Bill Gasiamis 1:03:45

Just being able to work with him and his partner to just get them to work out how they could get to the beach, even if it was for just half an hour or whatever, was a big win. It made a big difference to how he felt emotionally, just being able to experience some simple joys, right?

Bill Gasiamis 1:04:08

That's kind of what you're saying. The final question is, what would you like to tell other people are listening that are going through what we've been through? Would you like to leave them with maybe a word of wisdom, thoughts of wisdom or just anything at all? What would you like to tell them?

Suzzane Eykholt 1:04:31

I think for people that have gone through something similar, just that it does get better. You know, recovery looks different for everyone.

Suzzane Eykholt 1:04:45

And I know that there are so many different forms of recovery that you can have post stroke, but if you keep giving it time, it felt really hopeless at first for me, but it gets better.

Suzzane Eykholt 1:05:01

I think that's something I would want to tell people, that's something I would want to hear myself. And then for people that maybe haven't experienced the stroke, you never know what someone else is experiencing.

Suzzane Eykholt 1:05:17

And that goes way beyond just a traumatic brain injury or stroke. Like we don't know other people's lives. We don't know what they've experienced, what they've been through. So I think just having patience with people and empathy.

Bill Gasiamis 1:05:31

Yeah, really lovely words, I think I agree with that. One of the things I'm really grateful for is the fact that now I know what other people are going through. And I've said it before, in a few episodes, that when I saw somebody in a wheelchair, I just assumed they were sitting down. And that didn't mean much to me. But it's just, I got to spend, say, three or four weeks in a wheelchair.

Bill Gasiamis 1:05:58

And I really learned deeply and very, very rapidly that I wasn't just sitting down, that I was dealing with a whole bunch of shit that I had to come to terms with as well as the fact that I had to be in a wheelchair, that I couldn't walk anymore, and somebody had to help me get around in the beginning.

Bill Gasiamis 1:06:19

And, yeah, that ability to empathize and see what's going on for other people because of my experience, has been probably one of the more eye opening parts of this, and I'm so glad I'm not that ignorant anymore.

Bill Gasiamis 1:06:45

I'm not as ignorant as I was, and I'm okay with the fact that I was ignorant in that. You've never been through it. So how can you possibly know? But the fact that I've learned that, I can relate to what you're saying. It's really helpful.

Suzzane Eykholt 1:07:02

Yeah, that's a gift I've taken from this experience as well.

Bill Gasiamis 1:07:10

Suzanne, thank you so much for reaching out. And being on the show. I really appreciated our chat and I think a lot of people will get a lot out of listening to your story.

Suzzane Eykholt 1:07:20

Thank you for having me.

Bill Gasiamis 1:07:22

Thanks for joining us on today's episode. To learn more about Suzanne and to download a full transcript of the entire interview, please go to recoveryafterstroke.com/episodes. If you'd like to try the course five foods to avoid after stroke, go to recoveryafterstroke.com/courses to get on board now.

Bill Gasiamis 1:07:43

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Bill Gasiamis 1:08:07

Any interaction with the show boosts the show's ranking on search engines and that means that more people who need to find the show will and that might make them feel better about their recovery. If you are a stroke survivor with a story to share about your experience, come and join me on the show. The interviews are

not scripted, you do not have to plan for them.

Bill Gasiamis 1:08:32

All you need to do to qualify is be a stroke survivor. Care for someone who is a stroke survivor or you're one of the fabulous people that help stroke survivors go to recoveryafterstroke.com/contact fill out the contact form.

Bill Gasiamis 1:08:47

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

Intro 1:09:03

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Intro 1:09:20

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Intro 1:09:36

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Intro 1:09:48

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Never delay seeking advice or disregard the advice of a medical professional, your doctor or your rehabilitation program based on our content if you have any

questions or concerns about your health or medical condition please seek guidance from a doctor or other medical professional.

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If you are experiencing a health emergency or think you might be called triple zero in Australia or your local emergency number immediately for emergency assistance or go to the nearest hospital emergency department medical information changes constantly. While we aim to provide current quality information in our content.

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