

# Part 2 - Tips To Manage Anxiety



Transcription:

Bill 0:00

Healing our gut, then we can actually support the brain in healing.

And it's counterintuitive, because what we're doing is we're not focusing on doing anything directly to the brain or to the head

what we're doing is we're focusing on our belly, and then automatically, that supports the brain healing. And you have this amazing loop of supporting and healing that's occurring.

Bill 0:23

That is counterintuitive that you're not actually focusing on the brain, you're just focusing on your belly. And the reason why I say you need to focus on healing your belly is because that's the one thing that you can influence directly through food. And I'll talk about nutrition in a little bit. But you can't necessarily influence the brain because you can't get to it.

Bill 0:42

And you can't open up your head and you can't do any of that stuff. Thank God and the neuro surgeons can do that. So you're going to get to the point where your healing is happening in your gut, and that will support the rest of your body

and the brain to heal. And there's massive amounts of research into that. In a work that can be done from you without needing to invest into anything spectacular, or spend a heap of money.

Bill 1:08

Now, once you begin the process of healing the gut, you also then, I believe, need to understand what neuro plasticity is. And neuroplasticity I've done an interview on the podcast with Dr. Michael Merzenich. It's around podcast number 23 or 24, where we talk about specifically neuroplasticity and how that supports healing the brain in gaining back functions that were once lost, like being able to walk again, or use an arm that has a deficit and so on, memory, speech, all the things that people experience deficits around after stroke.

Bill 1:48

So neuroplasticity is something that you should really understand and get to know. I spent a lot of time focusing on learning about neuroplasticity, and understanding how I could Use it to benefit me. But there's also a dark side of neuroplasticity where if you don't actually put into practice some things that are going to support new brain cells, a new neurons growing new pathways, if you don't put the work in neuroplasticity happens in a negative way, which enables bad behaviors to get locked in and then be difficult to overcome.

Bill 2:25

So, neuroplasticity, the gut, the heart via emotional intelligence and mindset, are the four key things that begin the healing process, and one of the most important things to all people on the planet for brain health is getting a better night's sleep. And that is a key element to healing any person's brain, whether they've had a brain injury or not, and to creating an environment for a long life without dementia People that experienced the stroke are at greater risk of experiencing dementia later on in life.

Bill 3:05

So we need to be more vigilant. And one of the best ways to intervene into dementia is to actually deal with sleep. The people who have the least sleep are at the greatest risk of dementia and an unhealthy brain later on in life. As far as we are concerned, we can easily intervene in that space by getting more sleep.

Bill 3:30

And if you don't sleep well at night, it's okay you can get more sleep during the day by having cat naps etc. is a massive field of study into the sleep and into sleep and how it helps to regenerate the brain and keep it healthy long term. Once we understand sleep, we need to also then understand nutrition. Without a doubt this is definitely the most spoken about thing with regards to recovery after any illness, but nutrition will support that gap that I was talking about earlier, which will, in fact, then support the head.

Bill 4:05

And nutrition is going to support blood vessels. It will support, you know, the healing aspect of stroke, decreasing inflammation. And if you take certain things out of your diet, you're going to benefit your brain more than by the things that you put in. So what a lot of people don't know is that certain foods cause inflammation and make stroke worse. And one of those foods is gluten. Another one is alcohol. Another one is sugar. I've made a podcast series of five interviews with a nutritionist who talks about all the things that we should avoid eating after stroke, including alcohol.

Bill 4:48

No doubt, we should also avoid smoking. So anything that we put into our body is considered nutrition or not. And what we want to do is we want to take stock of the foods that we're eating And decide whether or not in fact, they are nutritious for us. And there's tons of studies these days to reverse some of the old school thoughts about what is nutritious and what isn't.

Bill 5:12

And I would suggest that you get really active in finding out what that is. So here's a really cool one that will help you in your recovery after stroke that you don't have to really put a lot of effort into. How about meditation, the more we meditate and become one, the more we connect with our body. The more we experience our body, the more we get insight into what's going on in our body.

Bill 5:42

And we can understand that when we're feeling something it's okay to feel that thing. And to try and work out what it is that's making us feel it. And meditation has to be a practice. It can't be something that you just do, willy nilly, or every so often or not often at all. There has to be a practice so that when you wake up in the morning you do a meditation.

Bill 6:02

And a meditation can be done so easily. All you have to do is find a free meditation from anywhere on YouTube or Spotify or iTunes, and play a guided meditation with somebody who's just guiding you through something that is making you feel well. And there's no right or wrong way to do a meditation. I lie down in bed, while I'm listening to this particular track in the morning or in the evening. And I go through anywhere between two and five minutes.

Bill 6:29

And it makes me feel amazing. It makes me notice things in my body and get a little bit clearer on what's happening. And I try not to make meaning of what I'm noticing. I just try to experience it and be okay with the experience. And then move on. Meditation is a really effective and cheap way to experience something amazing after stroke without having to spend any money or go anywhere. So really get to know meditation.

Bill 6:57

Now exercise is the next thing exercise is one of those things that if you do after stroke, you will help support new brain structures, new pathways growing in your brain, and it will create a space to begin healing the brain. And I know you're gonna say some of us we can't exercise after stroke because we're struggling, we're in a wheelchair, we have left side deficits, exercise what you can, however you can, if you can only use one side of your body, just use that one side shaped around do that. Any thing that you're doing that's raising your heart rate is actually supporting your brain after stroke.

Bill 7:36

So slowly and surely get to do more and more exercise and get to find a space that you can go to perhaps and do wheelchair yoga, or do another form of pilates. That doesn't require you to get on the ground and get up off the ground and roll around on the ground. anywhere that you can do. Perhaps a Tai Chi from a seated position will help support recovery after stroke and it also helps with modal motor function loss and getting back your coordination.

Bill 8:06

So definitely look into getting some exercise. And once again, if you can't get out of the house yet, that's okay. Do it from home, do it in front of your TV, do it in your lounge room, do it wherever you spend the majority of your day. Shake

around in your chair, if you can't get up, just do crazy things, do whatever you have to do. So, nutrition is something that we need to consider and exercise and meditation is also something we need to consider.

Bill 8:31

And here's something that you don't have to pay a single dollar for. How about having some kind of purpose in your life? Discover what your life's purpose is? Go in and look around within yourself and find out why you've been put on the planet hard question to answer at the beginning, perhaps, but definitely something that I've found.

Bill 8:52

And you might have guessed my purpose in life is to help other stroke survivors do it easier than I did when I was recovering from stroke. More than seven years ago, I experienced stroke in February of 2012. And things were starting to turn about the type of help that it was available online. But there wasn't a lot and I had to do a lot of research and find a lot of time to educate myself about how I can take some of the control back in my own recovery.

Bill 9:20

So I would suggest that you look at what is your purpose in life? How are you going to make a difference in somebody else's life? What can you do to support somebody that's going through what you have already been through, but they are right at the beginning of the journey. You will be amazed how much better you feel after you do something for somebody else. I go, and I present on behalf of some organizations in Australia where I talk about stroke prevention and awareness.

Bill 9:50

And I share my story to people who are at the high risk stage in their life of stroke because they might be over 60 And as a result of that, they asked me some amazing questions that get some great feedback. And a lot of people, they take action then to start doing things to support themselves so that they can avoid stroke.

Bill 10:13

That makes me feel amazing. I would hate for other families to go through what my children and what my wife went through when I experienced three brain

bleeds and brain surgery. So they are some of the things that I would suggest that you consider when you're on the path to recovery after stroke. And I'll just go and give you a little bit of a rundown on what they were. As we wrap up, we said take a look at your mindset.

Bill 10:42

Make sure you have a mindset recovery mindset journey in place, make sure it's a mindset recovery, or recovery mindset. Consider your emotional intelligence. Check in with your gut understand what neuroplasticity does and doesn't do, get a better night's sleep. Look at your nutrition, exercise more, do some meditation, and live a purposeful life, which will help you create an amazing community and make you feel more connected to other people after stroke, that's going to help you avoid potentially feeling upset and down.

Bill 11:28

Or at least when you do feel upset and feel down and a little bit depressed perhaps at times, unless you have some people that you can speak to to help you overcome the challenges that you're experiencing. Now, I'm Bill for [recoveryafterstroke.com](http://recoveryafterstroke.com). Thank you for listening. If there's anything I can do for you, please reach out like Stuart did, send me an email, and I'll respond. All the things that I mentioned will support people to decrease their anxiety after stroke. And if you don't believe me

Bill 12:01

Give it a try.