Pontine Stroke Recovery – Corey Getz

After experiencing a pontine stroke, Cory Getz did a ton of physical rehabilitation and also recognized the importance of taking care of his emotional recovery.

Instagram

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Transcription:

After experiencing a pontine stroke, Cory Getz did a ton of physical rehabilitation and also recognized the importance of taking care of his emotional recovery.

Cory Getz 0:00
And then, but that being said, I want to use my experience to help other people. And what I’ve been gifted is the opportunity to the people that I know to create this cannabis care network and where I can take brain-injured adults that have medical cards and bring them in.

Cory Getz 0:24
It’s going to start early next year, but up to 50 In Orange County, it’s going to be the pilot program for the US. So it should be fairly important. So I’m in the early stages of writing out you know what I want it to look like.

Intro 0:45
This is the recovery after stroke podcast, with Bill Gasiamis, helping you navigate recovery after stroke.

Bill Gasiamis 0:58
Hello, and welcome to recovery after stroke a podcast full of answers, advice, and practical tools for stroke survivors to help you take back your life after a stroke and build a stronger future.

Bill Gasiamis 1:09
I'm your host three times stroke survivor Bill Gasiamis. After my own, life was turned upside down and I went from being an active father to being stuck in the hospital. I knew if I wanted to get back to the life I loved before my recovery was up to me.

Bill Gasiamis 1:23
After years of researching and discovering I learned how to heal my brain and rebuild a healthier and happier life than I ever dreamed possible. And now I've made it my mission to empower other stroke survivors like you to recover faster achieve your goals and take back the freedom you deserve.

Bill Gasiamis 1:39
If you enjoy this episode and want more accessible training and hands-on support, check out my recovery after stroke membership community created especially for stroke survivors and caregivers.

Bill Gasiamis 1:51
This is your clear pathway to transform your symptoms, reduce your anxiety, and navigate your journey to recovery with confidence head to recoveryafterstroke.com To find out more after this episode.

Introduction

Bill Gasiamis 2:04
But for now, let's dive right into today's show. This is episode 173. And my guest today is Cory Getz who experienced a pontine stroke that left him with deficits on his right side. These days, Cory is back to surfing and is involved in a CBD trial in

an attempt to uncover how CBD may be useful in stroke recovery.

Bill Gasiamis 2:28
Now, just before we get started, if you are enjoying these episodes, and you believe they are useful, please leave the show a review on iTunes or wherever you get your podcasts from.

Bill Gasiamis 2:39
And if you're watching on YouTube, please give the show a thumbs up and subscribe and share and tell me your thoughts by leaving a comment. I love reading them interacting with the show actively rather than just listening passively.

Bill Gasiamis 2:53
Will make a tremendous difference to how many other stroke survivors can find the show and that might help support someone that is doing a tough at the moment to feel like they are not alone on their own recovery journey. And now it's on with the show. Cory Getz welcome to the podcast.

Cory Getz 3:10
Hey Bill, how you doing?

Bill Gasiamis 3:12
Doing good. How are you? Man?

Cory Getz 3:14
I'm doing excellent. What part of the world are you in?

Bill Gasiamis 3:19
Melbourne, Australia.

Cory Getz 3:21
Alright. I have a lot of friends in Australia. I'm in a surfing group. And yeah, a lot of the guys are down under so yeah, how's it going? I haven't had a chance to really dive into your podcast.

Cory Getz 3:38
But the stroke community is very close. And I find that a lot of us all glom on to the same, you know, we all get around and support each other. It's really a welcoming thing.

Cory Getz 3:55
I was really surprised on how much support I got and when I was going through the process. And that has helped me be my best person to help the next set of people that are coming along because it's unfortunate but as strokes happen way too often in this world and and they're not coming to an end anytime soon.

Cory Getz Early Stage of Recovery

Cory Getz 4:22
So our focus is going to be on recovery. And that being said, for those of you who had or are in the early stages of your stroke recovery, the mental aspect of this is really tough.

Cory Getz 4:40
You have to keep a positive attitude going into it and you have to remain in that positive mindset throughout the whole process that it'll better your chances of a better recovery if you're always telling yourself what you don't have what you wish you had, the negativity piling up, you know, your body responds to what you say.

Cory Getz 5:09
And if you're talking to it in a negative way, and then it's gonna respond in negative way, I truly believe that part of my recovery is the positive attitude that I brought to the table.

Cory Getz 5:25
That and just a ton of rehab. I mean, I was a water polo swim team in high school, from a really elite swim team. And so maybe my level of work ethic and, and level of exercise is maybe a little bit more than what you would normally come across.

Cory Getz 5:51
So that being said, I still had every single problem that all of us face when your limbs don't work. And when you're in your mind and you're telling it you know, walk, and you get, like, maybe a jolt. And you kind of fall forward and hope that you're leaning in the right way.

Pontine Stroke

Cory Getz 6:13
I mean, I remember it all too well. Everything from the hand. I had speech, I didn't have too much speech problem. I'm sorry, let me just tell your audience that I had a pontine stroke. So I had a stroke in the pons section of the brain.

Cory Getz 6:35
And out of those of us that have strokes, only 6% of us have pontine strokes and of that 6%, 60 or 70% of us die unfortunately, because parts of the pons help run your your breathing your heart rate your blood pressure.

Cory Getz 7:03
There's certain parts of the pons that want once they're damaged, it's really unfortunately, but they they're not able to save them as they are. Other types of strokes.

Bill Gasiamis 7:20
Yeah. How old were you at the time, Cory?

Cory Getz 7:23
Oh, I was 50. Yes. 50 years old. Yeah, two years ago, two and a half years ago.

Bill Gasiamis 7:30
Would you call yourself somebody who was healthy fit and well, or were there some issues that you weren't taking care of?

Cory Getz 7:41
Well, I was a bit of a party animal when I was young. And you know, I was drinking heavily at the time. And I never quit smoking cigarettes. So I mean, yes, I was active and I was fit and I was in fairly good shape at the time, because I always surf.

Cory Getz 8:07
But they really do blame it on the cigarettes now. I wasn't a heavy smoker. It was just that I never quit. And, that's about the only thing that could really chop it up to.

Bill Gasiamis 8:20

So was it a clot in your blood or what was it?

Cory Getz 8:24
Yeah, it was a clot of blood. And I had a real slow stroke. So the onset of the symptoms were very slow. At first, the very first I lost my balance and immediately I wanted to go to bed which was very strange because it was really early in the evening.

Cory Getz 8:54
That was really right there we missed it, we missed our sign, you know, I fell into the wall walking down the hallway. I kind of like just brushed it off. Like it was nothing. And my wife even I remember her even asking me, you know, to raise my hand and smile.

Cory Getz 9:16
I know that she noticed that it was something wrong. But we both just I don't know we just both walked away from the situation. I really really wish I had that time back to get medical help.

Cory Getz 9:34
As you know, six o'clock with guests at our house that just arrived and and all of a sudden I'm going I have to go to sleep. Yeah, it was really weird. And then the following morning I woke up with I had an unusual temper tantrum like immediately upon waking up.

Cory Getz 10:00
And then the symptoms came along further till the afternoon I remember talking to my wife on the phone and she said that she couldn't understand me anymore that I was slurring too bad and that I needed to go get help.

Cory Getz 10:15
And then I made another mistake and driving myself to the doctor at that point. And that was when I started noticing I was having trouble with the braking, and the acceleration.

Cory Getz Dealing With Emotions

Cory Getz 10:29
And then by the time I got, I went to my own physician, I did not go to the

hospital, I still was going to the doctor, which I was just wasting time precious time. I'm sorry I'm holding it back, but I'm doing pretty good.

Bill Gasiamis 10:50
So it seems like a really emotional time for you is it? Still pretty fresh it happened in 2019, so is it still raw and emotional?

Cory Getz 10:58
Oh, yeah. Yeah in fact, yeah, the emotions are probably my biggest nemesis at this point. Yeah, it kind of took away my middle zone, you know, I used to be able to have like, it wasn't so zero to 100. Now, I either get all the emotion, or I get none of it. So I find that really difficult.

Bill Gasiamis 11:29
So you know, that that's called a pseudobulbar affect? So it's a condition, it's a common condition after stroke, that people get highly emotional, where they can't control it, and it just breaks out. And it happens, you know, at times where you would prefer it didn't happen. Often when people are recalling their story and talking about what's going on.

Cory Getz 11:54
Right I use a lot of emotional intelligence coaching to help overcome some of those situations, because I put myself in a position to speak on behalf of plant medicine and stroke recovery.

Cory Getz 12:13
So I'm forced myself to repeat my story numerous times. And yes, it is getting easier. But But the day of it's excruciating I mean, I know it's coming. And yeah, I have all the same thoughts.

Bill Gasiamis 12:40
But what is it with anniversaries? Like, why is it so excruciating? I mean, the anniversary actually doesn't really mean anything, because any day you wake up could actually be an anniversary. So it doesn't really actually mean anything, but we make it mean a lot do you sort of have a sense as to why that is why it means a lot to you?

Cory Getz 13:02
Yeah, I don't know that it means a lot to me. That day, mine was May 1, so it was

Mayday. I mean, that's kind of the only joke that we I don't know if you'd call it a joke. But, this incident has blessed my life more than it's taken away.

Cory Getz 13:28
Through all of this, I have a whole new second chance in life that was brought upon me at after the stroke that would never have appeared, I can't explain that I do believe that it was presented to me in divinity that these doors were opened for me and that this was the course that I was supposed to take.

Cory Getz 13:54
And now, I don't know that anybody else would believe that but me but I mean, we're talking about you know, your own interpretation of the attack on your soul, and how do you deal with the you know, for me, I want to give back and for me, I don't get this blessing without giving back.

Cory Getz 14:23
So for me, I'm in the early stages of starting a brain injury group in Orange County, California. And it just so happens to be a compassion care group. So at the end of our would you call it meeting, you know, and then they'll get a compassion donation of cannabis at the end.

Cory Getz 14:47
So I'm in the early stages of developing that right now with the Orange County normal and L.A normal, which is an organization in normalized plant medicine. And I did use CBD in my recovery. And there's plenty of evidence for CBD in recovery for stroke.

Bill Gasiamis 15:10
And so how did you use it? What did you find it helped with?

Cory Getz 15:16
Well, I started out with the type of the cannabis, I used cannabis CBD, there's both cannabis CBD and hemp CBD. The actual molecule CBD is the same in both plants. So the only difference as I took full spectrum cannabis CBD, which means it includes all the chemicals in the plant, along with the CBD.

Cory Getz 15:42
So that's what the term full spectrum means. And what did it mean on my impact of I did not take CBD before the stroke. So I only took it after we'd gone to some

classes to learn about CBD and autism because my son has autism.

Cory Getz 16:06
So that's actually where we got the information about how CBD was useful in all sorts of banks, because we had taken a couple of classes. And next thing you know, yeah, the stroke happened about a month after those classes. And then she went straight back to the dispensary and got the CBD we get CBD from a dispensary.

Cory Getz 16:32
So it's highly tested. It's tested for heavy metals and mold and all the bad things that would be accumulated by these plants, because these plants will clean soil, meaning they'll take up all the heavy metals and bad things unless it's grown organically.

Bill Gasiamis 16:57
So what were the conditions that you were left with after the stroke? What happened that you felt like the CBD would help?

Cory Getz 17:08
Well, I use it during the recovery. So like, every time that I would do the rehab. So let's say a typical day would be I wake up and then in the morning, I would do my leg workout.

Cory Getz 17:24
And I would take some CBD, and that would give all I got like in early days it was maybe 10 minutes, you know, or five minutes eventually got to an hour but that took some doing.

Cory Getz 17:41
My leg would only work as a lego. You could only impulse your leg like to make a jolt you couldn't really like direct it. You couldn't set it down. I could only send one thing of electricity to it and just kind of just fling it out.

Cory Getz 18:01
So I did just just, I had no expensive rehab center. I had an outpatient therapy, and I just took the therapies that they gave me and I just repeated them 1000 times at home. Like until I was out of energy.

Cory Getz 18:26
I used every bit of my energy every single day in my rehab. And for that three months I made it back to surfing in 180 days. Which is pretty remarkable. I had a lifeguard out there in the water watching after me because I know my wife was paranoid about me getting back.

Cory Getz 18:54
But at that point I was already swimming like 60 laps in a pool three or four times a week, as soon as I could get back in the pool and swim. Then I was swimming my whole rehab was swimming.

Cory Getz 19:09
Other than that the fine art skills which I took up later, I didn't want to lose my ability to paint and color. So I continued with my rehab after you would think that your normal function had come back to regain the fine motor skills and that was actually harder, the fine motor skills that rehab was quite a bit longer, more drawn out than than the other.

Cory Getz 19:42
And to this day, I'm still getting function back. The most the most of the problems that I have is with heat, not being able to regulate my temperature. I had trouble with my urinary tract. It's mostly the problem of the heat, being able to keep heat in my body most of the time.

CBD in Stroke Recovery

Bill Gasiamis 20:13
You know, when you started taking CBD, did you notice a difference in your symptoms in the way that the stroke was impacting you? Did you have like, wow, this is actually worked. And it's done this for me or it's done that for me.

Cory Getz 20:31
It's really hard to explain the CBD. It's, more of a lack of feeling. I know it sounds weird to say it that way. But it would be like, I can't really attribute it directly. It's a good question. I'm just trying to answer this correctly. Yes, I wholeheartedly felt that it was a great addition to my rehab. But that being said, it's an addition.

Intro 21:04

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?

Intro 21:22
Doctors will explain things that obviously, you've never had a stroke before, you probably don't know what questions to ask. If this is you, you may be missing out on doing things that could help speed up your recovery.

Intro 21:34
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 a seven questions to ask your doctor about your stroke.

Intro 21:48
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.

Cory Getz 22:07
I do believe that the positive mindset and the number of reps is equally important, if not more important, but I do believe that the CBD had a part in in playing a rewiring part of you know when it came to because we had to rewire right?

Cory Getz 22:32
We have to run that side of your body. Now you have to run the reps. So you gain the the neurons so that it can run everything. And then you need to do the reps until it solidifies, instead of jumping from one to the other in it's in the continuous chain.

Cory Getz 22:59
I don't know how I'm really not a neuroscientists, but early on my leg was delayed by a split second or two. But now, just in the last month I've regained my right hand is become dominant again.

Cory Getz 23:20
Which I really was not expecting. I didn't think that I would regain right hand

dominance. But yeah, it just happened. And by the way, I continue to work out every day, I only do a half an hour. But I do a half an hour every day.

Bill Gasiamis 23:40
Did you take the CBD in conjunction with your other meds with the doctor's knowledge? Or was there a discussion with your medical team about CBD?

Cory Getz 23:51
No. They gave me blood thinners, the neurologist did. And then my wife and I were really plant forward and so we're not so Western medicine. And so other than the blood thinners you know, I'm on Lipitor for like cholesterol, which I'm okay with, you know, I understand that there's some aspects of meds that you have to deal with and there's some that you don't.

Cory Getz 24:27
But, they did not recommend it. Yes, I told them that we're taking it but no, there was no that I shouldn't or there was definitely no recommendation to try it. But the imaging people they were all for it. Because I went back to go get the images later the CT scans.

Cory Getz 24:56
And I made sure that they knew that I had fully recovered, and I'm now surfing. And so I had the whole staff signed my surfboard. And they were also backing plenty of stories of CBD being helpful in different circumstances. Guys, it's not the end all to everything. But it does have its place in the medicine gap.

Bill Gasiamis 25:24
Yeah. How long were you in hospital in total?

Cory Getz 25:30
I was in for three days initially. And then I came back out for two. And then I went back in. We thought it was a second stroke, but it was just a continuation of the first one. It was a really slow stroke. So I continued to lose things over the course of days. So finally it ended like five days later. So yeah, it was in for three came out for one, and then back in for a day and a half and back out.

Bill Gasiamis 26:07
So in that time, were you able to continue caring for your son who I imagined requires a fair amount of support?

Cory Getz 26:15
No. We had her brother out of town. So I presume that they were of help. You know, honestly, I have no idea what went on. I really don't. Chaos I mean, it just must have been just horrible. I really can't imagine. Because I know how it would affect me. And yeah. It really breaks me up right there.

Bill Gasiamis 26:54
Sounds like it was rough. And how's your wife now? Is she able to sort of relax a little bit now that there's some time that has elapsed? Or is she still concerned that something might be going down?

Cory Getz 27:10
Well, no, I'm more concerned about something that may go down. Like, every once in a while. I'll go on like stroke watch, you know, the whole thing I started like with a pain in my leg.

Cory Getz 27:22
So whenever I get like, shooting pain or anything like that in my legs, and all of the sudden I'm like, I'm on guard. Like, it's like I wake up it's a couple hours I start taking my blood pressure thing and take the temperature or sorry.

Bill Gasiamis 27:47
Blood pressure

Cory Getz 27:49
Yeah, thank you very much. So occasionally It's always in the back of my head. It's always in the back of my head that a it could have been again. It's just one of those things you live with. But you know, I'm not letting that stop me from living my life.

Cory Getz 28:11
That that was so that was the whole thing. Yeah. Are you gonna sit there and be worried about the next stroke for the rest of your liife? Or are you going to actually get out there and live? And I chose that I was an athlete and I was gonna do this.

Cory Getz 28:30
Guys, I'm extra lucky I got my physicality back. For those of those that don't, I mean, I have the most sympathy, the most empathy. I had to learn how to walk. I

know exactly what it feels like. Man, do I know what it feels like.

Don’t Give Up – Cory Getz



Cory Getz 28:56
I remember the day that okay, he had me in one of those walking. I don’t know where they hold you up from behind. And he had asked me if I was ready to step off the cement. And you know, just like oh, I’m really positive.

Cory Getz 29:13
I was like, oh, yeah, of course. I just one step on the grass and that man I just lost mean I did I fell. I mean, he held me up with the belt and because my brain couldn’t comprehend all the angles that the foot was feeling

Cory Getz 29:13
So it didn’t it didn’t know which way was flat. And, and then all of a sudden, there was no flat like I couldn’t comprehend level and then I just went whoa, and just, I just felt like it was crazy. But that’s the thought, I remember that thought because that was the day that I started to learn how to walk again.

Cory Getz 30:04
And man, it’s tough. I read on all my buddies, all my buddies on Instagram. I’ve got a lot of, I’ll call them, I reached out to them, just to encourage them. And just tell them to not give up. The main thing is don’t give up. Right?

Bill Gasiamis 30:26
Yeah, absolutely, man. I mean, what’s the point of giving up? Giving up is hard, because then you’re not recovering and you’re getting better. And recovery is hard, because you have to do the work to get better. So if you’re going to do something, you may as well do the hard thing that’s going to get you a good result.

Cory Getz 30:46
That’s what we’re talking about. Yes. Perfect. Exactly.

Bill Gasiamis 30:51
So you’re being been through serious health issue up until that issue? Had you had any setbacks in life? Did you have anything that you could draw on? With

regards to recovery that you could say, Okay, I've been through something like this before, I'm going to apply what I learned then, to this, this stage of my life.

Cory Getz 31:19
I did have shoulder surgery, and knee surgery. But even those recoveries, they don't really compare, I guess there were some physicality to them, but not the hours that I was putting in for the stroke recovery.

Cory Getz 31:42
And that, really, like I was getting up like before everybody, so I could do an hour and go back to sleep, and then get up again to do another hour like, so I mean, it was, I remember the day after I had a stroke, I had told my wife that I would serve again in six months now I knew that was crazy.

Cory Getz 32:12
I knew I was probably lying to her and I was lying to myself, but I was gonna convince myself that this is a goal that we're gonna do. And I said it out loud. And I did it in three months, which looking back at it, it just seems impossible.

Cory Getz 32:34
Guys, get your reps in. Listen, the what is it, the PT and the other? They only give you like, maybe 10% 20% of the reps that you need to get your movement back. You guys have to put in like five to a thousand reps a day.

Cory Getz 32:57
That's daily. So please it mean, if you're not getting close to those numbers and you know, I mean sometimes early on, I didn't have the energy. I get that. Yeah, I get that. But I wouldn't spend energy on anything but rehab.

Cory Getz 33:16
So during those first three months, any energy that I spent was only on rehab. And then because I had nothing else to do, I was not gonna be in a bed. I was I was not. I was not gonna. I was gonna listen. I didn't know I would get it all back. I did not know I'd get it all back.

Cory Getz 33:40
And I was gonna accept whatever level that I was gonna get back. But I wasn't gonna accept not trying. Right? I Yeah. I mean, I'm, I'm gonna go all out, try to get whatever I can. And then we'll come to a realization after that. But I never so

during that first year, I never looked at myself and said, Oh, gosh, I can't lift that cup.

Cory Getz 34:10
That means I'm going to be left handed. You know. I mean, you go down this train, like I won't ever do this, and I won't do that. And listen, I still had a year to get it all back. It was only month three yes I couldn't lift that cup just yet. But it was only month three. I still have 9-10 more months to pull this together. So I think that early on. That mentality is probably the toughest thing early on.

Bill Gasiamis 34:44
Did you have fatigue days where you were kind of out of it? And you couldn't really focus on anything or do anything was that something happened?

Cory Getz 34:53
Yeah, cuz like I said, I was. I was very active swim team surfer. So, every once in a while, I would double my rehabs. So like, one week, I would be okay, I had that that week was good. So I'm just gonna double my numbers. And that was just never a good idea. I do not recommend that to anybody.

Cory Getz 35:20
Please don't. Because I sat myself right back into the chair for like, a couple days after those. Yes, I needed to work out, but at a certain cost cost to my overall like, you know it because listen when you're still recovering from a huge brain incident.

Cory Getz 35:43
So, I mean, so there was a sweet spot in between working out and not causing yourself like to exhaustion to where you have to spend a couple days to recover just to get the energy to work out again.

Bill Gasiamis 36:04
But did you also benefit from that? Because what you're doing is you're finding where your limit is, and then you're minimizing, like you know where it is now. So if I've put in an hour and a half, and that's too much, then you know that you can stop it an hour and 20. And maybe that's better. Did that support that?

Cory Getz 36:26
Yeah, that's exactly what I was doing. Yeah. In fact, yeah, that's what I was doing.

And that's what I told myself every time that I said, Okay, well, and then I would just adjust accordingly. And I thought that was important because I was always striving for more.

Cory Getz 36:44
And I was never satisfied, guys by the end, I was in better shape than I was to begin with. That's where I ended up. And to this day I continue with that, because I don't know I watched what is it? Forks Over Knives on Netflix? And then I switched my whole diet to a plant based diet.

Nutrition for Stroke Recovery

Cory Getz 37:11
So I'm about 70% plant based. I don't eat meat, but I do eat fish. And I do have some dairy only cheese but not really that much. And gosh, I've just felt I've never felt better than my whole life. Tell you the truth last year that with the CBD and the whole plan and the exercise. The combination of the three got me really excited for some longevity. I'm gonna speed around for a while.

Bill Gasiamis 37:48
Did you stop smoking?

Cory Getz 37:51
Yeah, I stopped everything, stopped smoking, stopped drinking, stopped caffeine. There's one thing I didn't stop I vaporized cannabis. I don't light it anymore. I do not light it with an ignition.

Cory Getz 38:09
I just heat it and vaporize it but and then I do some tinctures. So I take CBD CBG CBN. Those are like cannabinoids. And I do that with the oral tension. Yeah. So but yeah, as far as alcohol all that I once do, the tobacco, alcohol, and caffeine in the same day.

Bill Gasiamis 38:41
I mean, yeah, I get it. It's important. Right. And did you have withdrawals? Any any caffeine kind of cravings? Any cigarette cravings?

Cory Getz 38:54
It was alcohol. Yes. So I craved fresh fruit. Yeah. So I replaced all the alcohol

sugar with fresh fruit. So for the first few weeks of the recovery, yeah, I had them cutting up so much fruit. It was really kind of that's kind of where I started wanting to get better faster.

Cory Getz 39:19
Because I had all these people waiting on me that guys, I was too young. I don't want people waiting on me. I want to help other people. I don't want them helping me so so I was always trying to I was always trying to do something I just would not sit still.

Cory Getz 39:40
I just I don't know if it's my ADHD I just wouldn't sit still. I don't like it. I I wasn't going to be a part of my life. I was gonna walk no matter what. Whether it was limping or whatever it was. I was definitely yeah. I'm not sitting down.

Bill Gasiamis 40:02
Has ADHD been an issue for you in life in that? At the beginning it was causing you challenges and problems. And then you've kind of learned to use it and harness it. And did that support you in recovery? Or did the H ADHD make recovery a little bit more challenging?

Cory Getz 40:24
Well, Mom, my ADHD in particular, I like repetitiveness. So, for me, it works for me in that sense. My dad's more of work on perfectionist where he is, like, has that extra motor, that extra speed? So I have a little bit of that in me also. But yeah, I did I, yeah, I channeled that into recovery, right, I just said, channeled all that energy into recovery. And it definitely helped me.

Bill Gasiamis 41:04
Okay. So there you go. There's ADHD, which has actually come out to be more than useful at some point in life where people normally talk about ADHD as being a an issue. Were you ever medicated for that? Because I know a lot of people are medicated for it so that they can, yeah, focus on tasks on one task. For our time, early on.

Cory Getz 41:29
When I was younger, yeah, I was medicated with the Adderall. And then later in life, led me to the abuse of drugs. And so now I do not use either. Yeah, yeah, that was a bad chapter in my life.

Bill Gasiamis 41:53
What's the one of the drugs attempt to do what's the, the thinking process? Or maybe there's not a big thinking process, but why did the drugs become involved? What were they supposed to support or help do?

Cory Getz 42:06
Oh, no. I mean, I just got to dig into the Adderall. And I like the feeling of the, you know, the feeling that it was giving me. Actually, because with ADHD when you take it up it calms you down, so it didn't necessarily bring me up, but just the fact it just wasn't good for me. Both of those weren't beneficial for my life. Yeah, I didn't realize it at the time. But neither one was beneficial for my life. I'm much better without them.

Bill Gasiamis 42:50
So the Adderall was that right?

Cory Getz 42:56
Yeah, it was Adderall.

Bill Gasiamis 42:58
So the Adderall is an upper. And when they give that to somebody who has ADHD it brings them down?

Cory Getz 43:04
Correct? Yes.

Bill Gasiamis 43:06
Wow man, that's nuts. So what they do is they give people the Adderall so that it can bring them down. And what does that supposed to help them with?

Cory Getz 43:18
That focus. Yeah. So you don't have the scatterbrain, you'll be able to focus on one task, see it through and not be distracted, very typically, we'll start a project here, starting a project there, and bouncing between the two or three of them without ever sticking to the task, getting this one thing done, moving to the next, getting that done, move into the next.

Cory Getz 43:47
We have a hard time with stick to itiveness and distractibility. And yes, it

absolutely helped me with that. It's no doubt but my addictiveness and where I'd save some during the week, so I can have extra on the week. I mean, it got to a point where it was pure abuse like I would save them to go party and stay up, it was no good.

Cory Getz 44:22
It was, like I said back to it was a bad part of my life. But I learned a lot and I don't regret it, but I see it for what it was. And it was just a young kid. I was just a young kid.

Bill Gasiamis 44:39
Has stroke changed the way you experience ADHD now?

Cory Getz 44:45
No I would say it's about the same. Yeah, I would say it's about the same I just use cannabis instead which is you know, less up and downs, and there's no addiction and sleep is no problem. And so anyhow, that's where I'm at right now.

Bill Gasiamis 45:04
Yeah. So it sounds like after the stroke, you've made a few massive changes, you've improved a few things, your diet, you stopped smoking, you stopped drinking alcohol. It seems like you've taken these steps so that you can be better healthier, so that you can support other people.

Bill Gasiamis 45:26
Why was it important now? Was this the big aha moment for you? Was this like, Hey, dude, you got to do something serious to change the way you're going about life? Do you feel like you got away with dodging a bullet? Like, why the massive shift?

Cannabis Care Network – Cory Getz

Cory Getz 45:43
Yeah, It's more of that. I think I got away with dodging a bullet. Yeah, I would say that rings a bell much more than, like, all of a sudden, I'm just on the high road. Yeah, it was, it was like a serious wake up call was like, dude I mean, yeah. It's unbelievable that I made it through this.

Cory Getz 46:06
And I'm sitting here and talking to you today. But that being said, I want to use my experience to help other people. And what I've been gifted is the opportunity to the people that I know to create this Cannabis Care Network, and where I can take brain injured adults that that have medical cards, and bring them in, it's going to start really next year, but up to 50 in Orange County, it's going to be the pilot program for the US.

Cory Getz 46:42
So it should be fairly important. So I'm in the early stages of writing out the, you know, what I want it to look like, and, you know, I've been to a couple of brain injured groups. And usually it starts at one table, and it goes from one bad story to worse to another and to where it's just, it's very difficult.

Cory Getz 47:10
Some of those are really difficult to be in to sit through. And, so I want to create another group that has similar things, but it doesn't have such the downer feel to it. And then I want to give them tools on how to reword the world.

Cory Getz 47:37
And so it makes sense why this person's angry, because, you know, they, in a separate in their own life, have a whole bunch of things going on, they're lashing out on you, because you're the scapegoat for their anger.

Cory Getz 47:54
And then as you get more emotionally intelligent, you're able to write off these hateful opinions so much easier and actually feel sorry for him. It's incredible when you're able to really grasp what's going on and you're not in that primal brain lashing out with the fight or flight, you know, and you can take it and listen.

Cory Getz 48:28
Like you are an extremely good listener Bill. You sat there almost this whole time, listen to me ramble, I go off. And so let me commend you for an exceptional ability to listen, I really do appreciate, feel it feel like I've been totally heard on your program. And I really appreciate you contacting me and having me on today for sure.

Caring For Stroke Survivors

Bill Gasiamis 48:55
We need all sorts of voices in this community talking about what's going on for them. You know, we need different neurological states, we need different emotional states need at all. You said some really wise things there you said, you know, emotional intelligence is really important.

Bill Gasiamis 49:09
That's the only thing you and me have spoken about, which is interesting, because on most other episodes, we only speak about the physical recovery or the mental recovery. So we very rarely talk about the emotional recovery. And a lot of people don't understand the difference between emotional recovery and psychological recovery.

Bill Gasiamis 49:28
They don't realize that the emotional intelligence starts at the heart. You know, we talk about feelings. And we talk about all those things that are related to how we interact with people and our relationships and the psychological recovery. You know, talks about you know, how we make meaning of our world what it means to us, when that person who had a bad day, reacted angrily and caused us harm.

Bill Gasiamis 49:56
You know, we made meaning with our head. You hurt emotionally in our heart. But we made meaning in our head, if we make a different meaning, then it will hurt us emotionally less. And the example is that, if we just ask ourselves, what is that person going through in their own life that makes them respond in a negative way to me, because if I do that, then I come up with a different answer.

Bill Gasiamis 50:21
And then hopefully, I'm not taking a personally, and then my feelings are being hurt, and then my heart is not being hurt. And my emotional intelligence increases, and then we become sympathetic to that person. And instead of arguing back and being angry at them, they come down, they interact differently with us, because they've felt like, you didn't have a fight with them, or they felt heard.

Bill Gasiamis 50:48

And then they have a better acceptance of the kind of person you are, because most of the other people in their lives, they go nuts at them, they get angry at them, they yell back at them, they abuse them, and they make it more personal. But realistically, most of the attacks that we experienced, they're not personal.

Bill Gasiamis 51:06
They're just the other person not having the right way to communicate what they're in trouble about right now in their own life, what's causing them pain and suffering. And they express it in a way that because we're not emotionally intelligent enough, we miss the opportunity to have a real connection, heart to heart with the person and we're doing gut to gut reactions. Does that make sense?

Cory Getz 51:34
Yes. Well said, yes. It makes perfect sense. We're, busy reacting to what's being said, and not analyzing the complete situation that brought it all about? Yeah, it's very quick to react in the primal brain, and, and lash out, and it takes a much more intelligent person to hold on to those feelings and then expressing them intelligently.

Cory Getz 52:08
And, like you said, the difference is the response that you get from the other side, where they actually felt like they've been heard. And, they have they have been heard. And, and, that makes just a world of difference. It's just amazing. Yeah, I've only been doing that since the stroke. Yeah. And I use a coach. And, it's just been the greatest gift. I tell you, It's really wonderful to not live in the primal brain all the time.

Bill Gasiamis 52:49
Yeah. If you had these skills, when you were growing up, experiencing interactions with people when you're highly affected by ADHD, and the other people don't get it. If you had these skills, would that have made your life a little easier?

Cory Getz 53:04
Yes. Oh, yes. Yeah, that would have made a lot easier. Yeah. One it makes you. Well, you're able to reframe the conversation, to explain yourself in a better manner. When you're not yelling at each other, then the conversation becomes

about solutions instead of arguing about problems.

Bill Gasiamis 53:41
And most people do focus on problems, don't they? I mean, if you focus and put your energy on problems, you get more problems, and then trying to solve them is impossible, you just go around the loop of more and more problems, you know. And if you're focusing on solutions, you get more solutions and less problems.

Bill Gasiamis 53:58
And you get better at solving problems, because you're really good at coming up with lots of solutions. And we just don't realize when sometimes when we're stuck in a cycle of problems, where stroke is shit, right, it can create a ton of extra problems for us.

Bill Gasiamis 54:16
We've already got enough in our lives. But for every problem, there's definitely a solution. And it might not be what you had in your mind. It might not be the ideal solution, but there is a solution that's better than the situation that you find yourself in right now.

Cory Getz 54:31
Right, exactly. Yeah, I don't really want to step on what you said, I mean, listen, Bill, how long has it been since you had a stroke?

Bill Gasiamis 54:51
First stroke was in February 2012. So next year's coming up on 10 years, and then I had surgery about three years later, in November of 2014, almost three years later, to remove the faulty blood vessel that was in my head that was bleeding. And then I had to learn how to walk again. And then I had to learn how to use my left side again and get back to work and get back to driving and all those things that people miss out on after stroke, you know, had to go through that.

Cory Getz 55:23
So that was after the surgery to repair it, right?

Heart Intelligence

Bill Gasiamis 55:27

Yeah, that was after the surgery. So they've done something during surgery that's impacted my body, which is, you know, I accepted quite early on because it removed the possibility of that thing killing me. So it was kind of like, you know, something's gonna have to give a little bit.

Bill Gasiamis 55:44
And this is what I had to go through. And, look, I use the emotional intelligence as well, that's when I learned about it. I learned about it at 37. When I had the first bleed, about nine months later, after that, is the first time I actually discovered the term, I first time I found about heart intelligence.

Bill Gasiamis 56:06
And I found out that I have a heart, like, I knew I had a heart, but I didn't know what it was there for other than to send blood around the body. Honestly, I thought it was just a pump, you know, but it's not. It's where our emotions are. And I learned that that's where they are, you know, and it was a real big eye opener for me.

Bill Gasiamis 56:24
It was a real aha moment, that meant I started to connect with my family better to my children. With my wife, I started listening more, I started being empathetic. And instead of, you know, having solutions to everything for everybody else's problems, I just, you know, was trying to learn how to lend an ear and try and focus on solving my own problems.

Bill Gasiamis 56:26
I went to counseling, I did a lot of counseling as well, because I needed to learn how to interact with people better, so that I wouldn't get upset and annoyed with them. I never had a real understanding of why they were acting out and giving me a hard time when, in fact, they were just again, like me struggling to communicate effectively.

Bill Gasiamis 57:09
And they were struggling to go to their heart, you know, to where their emotions are. And to access that in appropriate ways. And I started to fix relationships and start to make things better, which was really important to me, because I didn't want to die being an asshole. I wanted to, if I died, I want it to be the guy that remembered as a nice guy, you know, who really tried and really succeeded in, in

changing his communication skills from being angry, to being calm and understanding and listening.

Cory Getz 57:42
And you know, that's really hard in the moment. You know, I mean, it's easy for us to talk about doing but when you're faced with the moment, and you're able to choose the calmness. It really is an eye opener to a whole new world, that you don't have to ruin your day over such little things anymore, and you won't carry anger into the next thing you know, the next moment, it really changed my life to tell you the truth it really has.

Bill Gasiamis 58:27
Yeah. Anger and frustration is not really supportive of stroke recovery is it? I mean, it doesn't do anything for it. It just makes it harder and worse. And I know when I'm angry, and frustrated, it just makes my deficits feel worse. My left side goes numb. I can't walk properly. I get really fatigued, so it's not worth it.

Cory Getz 58:45
Yeah, that fatigue cuz, because yeah, you're spending energy. Yeah, yeah. And if you're gonna spend that energy, you Why not focus on healing. If you can do that to your body and send it in a tailspin with negativity, then you can also uplift it and repair it. If you send that energy in a positive manner to your limbs and you can tell yourself that we are going to heal.

Cory Getz 59:15
And you can tell yourself that we are going to walk, they listen to your body responds to what your mind tells it guys, listen, you can tell it what you want. Don't tell it negative stuff. Don't tell your body negative stuff. That's my main thing is to please just regardless of your recovery, and where you're at in your recovery, because everybody needs to recover at some point. Even without my stroke, I mean, this would be invaluable information.

Bill Gasiamis 59:56
Yeah. And everybody needs support, right. That's why I offer coaching, so that people can get support in their recovery so that they can find somebody who can guide them. And that's why you went and got support. And that's where I went and got support, because you can't do it alone.

Bill Gasiamis 1:00:12

We've never been through this before, we don't know how to do it properly. It takes a long time, the longer it takes, the less likely we are to get back to a life where we are feeling fulfilled again, you know, so I really wanted to get there quick. So I threw a ton of time and energy into coaching, counseling, you name it, learning about stuff like emotional intelligence, and how that was going to support my recovery.

Bill Gasiamis 1:00:39
So I came across this book, have you heard of this book? It's called Emotional Intelligence, by Daniel Goleman.

Cory Getz 1:00:50
I have to check it out.

Bill Gasiamis 1:00:52
Yeah, right. It's a real scientific Lee kind of backed up and proven book. And it talks about how emotional intelligence can be used for benefit in the corporate world, but also in the regular world, where it's not about corporations, but how much of a difference, and a positive result you can have when CEOs and general managers and vice presidents are emotionally intelligent.

Bill Gasiamis 1:01:19
And how that will help them grow their business and their companies. So that they're doing good for everybody, you know, the people that they're supporting with the service they're offering, but also the people that are working for them.

Cory Getz 1:01:33
Right. I mean, I know that people listening might think that we're using like a catchphrase or something. But it's really important, because what we're talking about is active listening, and problem solving, but where you're actually hearing the person's needs, and you're not overrunning them with your own ideas and thoughts, and, and it's more of a two way conversation, I don't know how to explain.

Bill Gasiamis 1:02:04
Yeah it's heart to heart, it's a more deeper connection.

Cory Getz 1:02:09
Yes. And then people respond to that connection, like you said, in a completely

different manner. So I can only imagine if you were a business partner, or somebody, I'm using it in business, where you would probably get so much more productivity out of your workforce if you used "It's not what you say, It's how you say it".

Cory Getz 1:02:42
And then you would be able to get so much more productivity out of, let's say, your workforce with a different approach that it takes in consideration their feelings, and you know you can go on and on from there, but I'll definitely check out that book. Based on your recommendation, I would be excited to check that out.

Bill Gasiamis 1:03:06
Yeah, it's a great book now. Just as we go to wrap this up, I'm wondering, so what's next for you? Are you still in the process of trying to get some additional wins on the board? Where are you at?

What's Next for Corey Getz



Cory Getz 1:03:21
Currently, I currently surf so I'm learning to surf bigger waves at the moment. Really big waves, like five or seven foot? Like they're 10 foot on the face, yes. So now I didn't really take on those kind of big waves. But I've been training and doing some surf specific training, and I have a surfing coach.

Cory Getz 1:03:49
And therefore I feel like I can start to take that on. But it's, again, a learning process, but it's something I'm excited about. But what I'm more excited about is this brain injury group that I'm in, this is really where I'm at. I want to give back I want to give back with my knowledge of emotional intelligence and help people also with CBD, and then help them in their overall recovery.

Cory Getz 1:04:21
Be a positive light and change in their life. And encourage their growth. And, and then just see where that goes. I'm in charge of the pilot program, they've done some cannabis, veteran groups, but this would be the first outside of the veterans. So I would like to set up something that can be repeated. And I want it to be

really well written and really structured so that it's really a strong program that can be copied and that would really make me happy.

Bill Gasiamis 1:05:04
And it sounds like it's gonna be scientifically based, and you're gonna have some data and you're gonna be able to report on that data, and then you're going to be able to improve on the program.

Cory Getz 1:05:14
Yes, yes, absolutely. Coming in, you know, coming in, we'll give them some questionnaires and probably, you know, score sheets. And then, you know, eight months down the line, we'll give the same thing you know, see where they're at. Once you start using the tools of emotional intelligence, serious things start happening and it improves your life, guys, it improves your life so much.

Cory Getz 1:05:47
Because you're not taking on somebody else's grief and you're not taking on that. It just enlightens you so much not to carry these burdens. Look, if you're not into it, please look into it. Bill will tell you himself that I mean he's got the book straight in front. And these tools are highly useful to all humans, not just stroke rehab people to any adult that's looking to grow into the next level. If you need, you're looking for some spiritual growth, and you really want to look into your soul, then this is the direction you need to head.

Bill Gasiamis 1:06:35
Cory gets thank you for being on the podcast.

Cory Getz 1:06:38
All right. Thank you, Bill. Yeah, this is great. I really appreciate you having me on.

Intro 1:06:44
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Intro 1:07:01
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