Pseudobulbar Affect And Stroke – Will Perringwood

Living with Pseudobulbar affect and uncontrollable emotions after a stroke is one of the things Will Perringwood has lived with since the 2013 subarachnoid hemorrhage he experienced.

Instagram

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Transcription

Bill Gasiamis 0:00
So you know the situation with your emotions that you're not able to manage sometimes. How do other people you met that don't understand deal with that? because I reckon it would make a lot of people feel uncomfortable at the beginning before they get to know you.

Will Perringwood 0:16
And that's exactly the right word uncomfortable. Because me, for example, like always the most emotive situations that when it rears its ugly head so for example, when I got married, I mean, I've never been so dehydrated in my life. I literally wept throughout the whole ceremony and when our son was born I wept so much.

Intro 0:46
this is the recovery after stroke podcast, with Bill Gasiamis, helping you navigate recovery after stroke.

Bill Gasiamis 0:58
Hello, and welcome to episode 210 of the recovery after stroke podcast if you are a stroke survivor with a story to share about your experience with stroke, and you have been thinking about reaching out to be a guest on the show. But were waiting for the right time to reach out, this is it.

Bill Gasiamis 1:15
If you go to recoveryafterstroke.com/contact you will find a form that you can fill out to be a guest on the show. As soon as I receive it. I will respond with more details on how you can choose a time that works for you. And may to meet over zoom.

Introduction

Bill Gasiamis 1:31
Now my guest today is Will Perringwood, who in March 2013 experienced a subarachnoid hemorrhage that amongst other things has left him with pseudobulbar affect and uncontrollable crying. Will Perringwood welcome to the podcast.

Will Perringwood 1:50
Thank you. Nice to be on here.

Bill Gasiamis 1:53
Nice to have you here mate all the way from the United Kingdom. Which part are you in?

Will Perringwood 2:01
I'm in a place called Leicester which is in the East Midlands

Bill Gasiamis 2:06
Of England?

Will Perringwood 2:08

England. That’s right.

Subarachnoid Hemorrhage

Bill Gasiamis 2:10
Yep. And tell me a little bit about what happened to you.

Will Perringwood 2:15
So in 2013, I was living in a place called Gloucestershire, which is in the southwest of England working as a sports journalist absolutely loving life. And then I’ve been on a night out with a few friends the night before. And I parked my car, bizarrely, really strangely at an old flat that I used to live at, which happened to be located across the road from my work.

Will Perringwood 2:49
Friday night, I’ve been out for a few drinks. And Saturday morning, I thought to myself, I know, I’ll just go for a run and go pick up my car. So I went for a run and went to pick up my car and bizarrely, I just collapsed outside my car. And it was found fitting when old next door neighbor which still to this day, I’ve never ever met before.

Will Perringwood 3:01
But I’m so so grateful to them. And they found me fitting and they rang an ambulance. And the ambulance came pick me up and found that I’d had a subarachnoid hemorrhage, which is a bleed on the brain. And I was rushed to hospital immediately for surgery to have the damage removed from my brain. But the diagnosis was I’d never move the left-hand side of my body ever again.

Bill Gasiamis 3:27
Intense when was that?

Will Perringwood 3:32
That was back in 2013. So that was nine years ago, march 2 2013. A date that’s forever etched on my brain now.

Bill Gasiamis 3:41
And your how big was your drinking session?

Will Perringwood 3:48

I do connect the two because sports journalism was definitely an industry where there's a lot of drinking involved, say for networking, for connecting with people. And I did go out with a very good friend of mine that night, actually. So there were quite a few drinks shared, shall we say it was a good night.

Bill Gasiamis 4:10
You're 30 years old, right? So you've got no idea that there's something going on in you that might be putting your life at risk. Was that the first time you realize there was an issue you found out there was an issue? Was there anything in hindsight that gave warning signs?

Will Perringwood 4:34
Not really, no. Because obviously so many appointments, so many hospital appointments and doctor's appointments afterward, they found or they told me and my family, they found that I was born with a birthmark on my brain and they described it these are their words the ticking time bomb, that at some point in my life, it would just go off just like that, and I would not be pre-warned I'd have no idea when it would happen. And it just happened to be that day march 2 2013.

Bill Gasiamis 5:08
Well, was it an arteriovenous malformation or was it a cavernoma?

Will Perringwood 5:14
It was called a subarachnoid hemorrhage.

Bill Gasiamis 5:17
But the blood vessel wasn't described any further beyond this supposed what was it on your brain?

Will Perringwood 5:25
So it was bleed on the brain but the medical term is a subarachnoid hemorrhage.

Bill Gasiamis 5:33
But what did they describe it as?

Will Perringwood 5:36
They just described it as a bleed on the brain?

Bill Gasiamis 5:38
But didn't they say it was something else? They said it was a scar on the brain or

something on the brain or a birthmark.

Will Perringwood 5:46
Birthmark on the brain, so potentially, I could have been living with it all my life, just waiting to go off at some points in my life was a birthmark. So it could have been born with it, could be born with a birthmark on my brain, I would have no idea that I was walking around with this ticking time bomb all of my life.

Bill Gasiamis 6:03
I'm gonna give you a bit of because I'm a qualified neurologist and I know these things. Yeah, absolutely. In my dreams. It sounds like it was an arteriovenous malformation. So that's what I had, I had a bleed in the brain. That was as a result of a blood vessel that was malformed that I was born with, that was a ticking time bomb, that could have bled any time and just happened to bleed when I was 37.

Bill Gasiamis 6:39
So it's the same story that I get from everybody who's had an arteriovenous malformation or cavernous angioma, which is also known as a cavernoma. So it's interesting that they've given you guys the I'm going to, quote-unquote, the "dumbed down" version of the description by describing it as a birthmark on your brain. It's far from a birthmark. I mean, there's no resemblance to a birthmark.

Bill Gasiamis 7:11
But I suppose it does provide a picture of what the difference between that part of your brain looks like and perhaps another part, but it sounds like it was a blood vessel that was sitting there and some people have them burst many, many years into their lives some very early on in their life that can be properly deadly. And then there is a weird cluster of people that I've interviewed that had this issue, who were all in their mid 30s to mid 40s, when it happened.

Living An Unhealthy Lifestyle Before The Subarachnoid Hemorrhage

Bill Gasiamis 7:50
So that seems to be the sweet spot. And I've concluded again, because I'm a professional researcher, I have concluded that it's got to do with our lifestyle, having ramped up to the point of stress excetera. And a lot of other factors

coming together in a negative way to create the perfect storm to give this thing, an opportunity for it to bleed. Does that description fit your lifestyle at all? What was your lifestyle like at that time?

Will Perringwood 8:30
I've got to say you absolutely hit the nail on the head there. 100% it's amazing that you phrased it like that it was absolutely spot on. Because in so many aspects, like I was told I was working in a very, very stressful job as a sports journalist, which had been my dream all my life. So I had achieved that big tick. I loved it, but it was incredibly stressful.

Will Perringwood 8:57
So for example, at the time of my bleed, I had worked, I think an estimated 30 days consecutively straight, no day off whatsoever and it's a very, very stressful job because you're working to daily deadlines every single day you under the cosh you are under pressure to get everything done.

Will Perringwood 9:17
And so to cope and live and work with that pressure every single day, that is going to have an effect on you. Definitely. So I can definitely see your point about lifestyle. 100% I agree with you that is absolutely spot on. Thank you.

Bill Gasiamis 9:34
I can understand why it's necessary to work 30 days straight in any career. I know that people do it and I certainly wasn't a person that worked 30 days straight, but I did work a lot of hours and for many days in a row but never 30 days.

Bill Gasiamis 9:50
So I thought that sports journalism is really cool. You get to go to a lot of sports events. You get to interview your heroes. You get to chase down BEX and see what they're up to, and all that kind of stuff. Explain to me how it becomes so ridiculous that you have to work 30 days in a row, because clearly it didn't start that way. Is it you or them? Or was it a combination of both?

Will Perringwood 10:18
I think it's a bit of both. I mean, I do think and this is absolutely no disrespect to the profession and industry whatsoever. But I do think and whether it's more this country in Britain than it is in America, I don't know, because I've never worked

in America, but it just seems like they take advantage of people like myself, who have a massive love and passion for the industry.

Will Perringwood 10:39
So no, you're completely right. So I mean, for example, like I have reported at three Rugby World Cups in my life and my career, which is a huge privilege. So for start, I reported at the 2011 Rugby World Cup in New Zealand, which was just a huge, massive experience for me.

Will Perringwood 10:57
And then I had my brain injury in 2013. And I never thought I'd come back from it. I never thought I'll work ever again. But then I'm so lucky and grateful that my work, were willing to accept me and take me back in 2014, and they started me on a graded return to work.

Will Perringwood 11:16
Start by working a couple of hours a week, and then gradually build it up, up, up, up. And eventually the 2015 Rugby World Cup was around the corner. And I was lucky enough to report on two matches at that, which was just a huge privilege against that was my second World Cup.

Will Perringwood 11:33
And then in 2016, or something called the junior or under 20 Rugby World Cup. And that was in Manchester in England. And I got to report at that. So that was my third World Cup, even though it was horrendous what happened to me in 2013. And the kind of outlook I've taken for me, is you've got to look at the positives. And positives with me that since my brain injury, I've still managed to report at two World Cups, which is incredible.

Bill Gasiamis 12:06
I agree. Absolutely. You sound like Mike Smith, guy who I interviewed on Episode 198, who was a reporter in the United States. And he was doing ridiculous hours as well, just non-stop. And then he had a an issue with his heart that caused the stroke.

Bill Gasiamis 12:06
And that stopped him from going back to that profession, because he did not want to go back into those types of conditions. And he was a reporter who was doing the nightly news reporting, and what he was reporting was a lot of the negative

stuff, a lot of the, fatalities and car crashes and all that type of thing.

Bill Gasiamis 12:56
So he didn't go back to it. But he's teaching now. And he's feeling a lot better about the fact that he doesn't have to work seven days a week and he's not always on the clock. Did you adjust your hours so that they are more reasonable? Did it go back to what you were doing before?

Will Perringwood 13:20
Well, I mean, unfortunately, in 2017, the chance came up to take redundancy to lose the job. Because with the sports journalism industry, unfortunately, A is quite cutthroat and B is contracting as well. So they're losing a lot of jobs.

Will Perringwood 13:39
And unfortunately, I lost my job. But again, one thing I've learned is not to dwell on the negative but to focus on the positive. And at the same time, 2017 my wife's teaching contract was coming to an end. And she was eight months pregnant.

Will Perringwood 13:57
So we saw it as a, perfect storm, I think was a phrase you used earlier and it was just a perfect storm of I was not enjoying it, I saw it as the cause of my brain injury. The fact we're bad start to family, the fact that her teacher contract was coming to an end.

Emotions After Stroke

Will Perringwood 14:14
So we just took the decision just to basically move away from the place we live in, which is called Gloucestershire in the southwest of England, and move down south to the very south coast, which is where my wife is from originally. And moving with her family have our little boy.

Bill Gasiamis 14:34
Awesome you're an emotional feller.

Will Perringwood 14:42
Well, this is one of what's called the hidden aspects of brain injury is a part of my brain that was affected a part of the brain that controls emotions. So because of

that I often can't control my emotions.

Bill Gasiamis 15:08
And is crying the one that expresses itself the most? Or other emotions as well?

Will Perringwood 15:15
Yeah, definitely crying.

Bill Gasiamis 15:17
And is that usually when you're talking about something that's emotional? Like your little boy? That's emotional.

Will Perringwood 15:26
Yeah.

Bill Gasiamis 15:29
It's a pretty good reason to get emotional and cry.

Will Perringwood 15:32
Just my little boy, or my wife those two.

Bill Gasiamis 15:42
And were you an emotional guy before?

Will Perringwood 15:46
Sorry about that.

Bill Gasiamis 15:46
No it's all cool man. Don't apologize. We've all been there. I know all about it. Don't worry. Most people listening have been there. And I think most of them try to cover it up or hide it or whatever. Is it difficult for it to express itself in situations where you prefer, it didn't.

Will Perringwood 16:13
Yeah, definitely. So I mean, I remember there was a television program, which could sound weird, but my sister had watched one night, which was an audience with Michael Bublé. One of the audience members asked him, you know, Michael Bublé, a great international singer, surrounded by an audience all asking questions, and said, you know, like, Michael, you know, on a first name basis.

Will Perringwood 16:48
You sing and you write such emotional songs and such emotional lyrics, how do you sort of hide or control that emotion? Or how do you stop that emotion being released? And he said something like, I sing, or he said to me, like, I find if I sing these things, and it manages to control it.

Will Perringwood 17:13
And that was really interesting, because one of the biggest impacts of my brain injury has been my memory, particularly my short term memory. And again, like this, to throw it a boring statistic at you, but one that I learned that doctors or medicine have only discovered or only know 80%, about the brain, which I find absolutely fascinating.

Will Perringwood 17:36
So therefore, there's there's still 20% left to discover for them for modern-day medicine, which just absolutely crazy, it just absolutely baffles me it really does. So how I liken it to is, so therefore they only know 20%, about brain injuries in general as a field. And so therefore, there's 80% left to discover about them about recovery, about courses, about plight, about everything has to get better so 80% left alone, which is a big number, I think.

Will Perringwood 18:15
Anyway, coming back to Michael Bublé. So one of the biggest impacts to my brain injury is my memory, so my short-term memory is not very good. So I can remember, bizarrely, having worked as a sports journalist for 15-20 years, I can remember obscure, useless sporting information from the 1990s. But I can't for example remember what I had for breakfast this morning. And that's the crazy thing about brain injuries people often don't appreciate the difference between short-term and long-term memory.

Bill Gasiamis 18:49
Yeah, yeah. So if I asked you, what did you have a breakfast, any chance that it will come to you or is it not there until later on?

Will Perringwood 19:01
Well, this is where you have to develop what's called strategies in speech marks, you have to develop strategies basically to navigate your day. And one thing I have to lean upon very much, so is my phone calendar. So I remember a couple of

years ago, so you have to develop a strategy of writing things down.

Will Perringwood 19:19
I remember my wife saying to me, like she's just randomly going through, well not going through my phone calendar. That sounds wrong, but she was like, I was mentioning my phone calendar, and she was kind of commenting.

Short-Term Memory Loss Caused By Subarachnoid Hemorrhage

Will Perringwood 19:37
Why have you got this written down in your phone calendar? Why you possibly interested in what you've had for breakfast, and when you've had breakfast? And I said, pure and simply because my brain doesn't allow me to remember it.

Will Perringwood 19:51
So it's very, very sad. But every day on my phone calendar I write. Every single meal I've had throughout the day. And it came about because I literally could not remember what meal I'd had for breakfast, lunch and dinner, and therefore I wasn't sure when to eat again.

Bill Gasiamis 20:21
Okay, so you remember to write it down. But you don't remember what you ate. So nuts, I get what you're saying everyone's fascinated about their brain after they realize they've got one when they have a blank a brain bleed, or when they have a stroke from an ischemic attack.

Bill Gasiamis 20:45
So it is it's just completely ridiculous. But I get what you're saying, I like that strategy that you do write it down. And as a result of that, is that the only thing that you have to strategize to write down, I have a friend of mine, I asked, because I have a friend of mine, who's 48. Now, when she was 21, she had a aneurysm burst in her brain.

Bill Gasiamis 21:10
And as a result of that, still today, she writes down things every night before bed that she needs to remember in the morning. And she just puts it on her

nightstand. And she kind of laughs about it. And she tells us, I still write things down and all that type of thing. And this is what I had to write out that and might be the most bizarre, strange, obscure things.

Bill Gasiamis 21:33
Sometimes she has to make sure that when she wakes up, she knows she's waking up next to her husband. And it's just in that moment, just in that moment. Once she knows that in the morning, again, it's fine. But she did on her honeymoon, they were in the United States in Hawaii, she woke up next to a stranger. And she was losing her shit, not realizing. Now this guy's meant to be here, and it's all good.

Will Perringwood 22:02
Now, I can completely understand and relate to that, because one example I'll pull out is the film The Guy Pearce, film momento. Such a brilliant film, Christopher Nolan directed, it was one of my favorite films, anyway, I loved it. But then when how my brain injury and the whole, I guess the journey or exploration of memory became more and more prominent.

Will Perringwood 22:29
And it just became more and more fascinating about the sort of different types of brain injuries and therefore the different repercussions that you can have of a brain injury. Because I think, whether it's in America or in Europe, everybody, it's a bit of a blanket term brain injury, like people think it covers just one thing or one disability or one visual effect.

Will Perringwood 22:52
And it's such a wide-ranging spectrum of effects. And that's what's so amazing about the brain, it's like depending on whereabouts in the brain, even like the left-hand side, the right-hand side, the front, the back. It just affects you in so many different ways.

Bill Gasiamis 23:10
Yeah, absolutely. It's not like saying "my hand was injured." It's a completely different thing. Saying my brain is injured, which part, where, how severely, how long, it just doesn't end and then everyone's lobes, generally doing the same thing. However, some lobes are slightly operating differently at one point than another point while the other person so there's never, you know, what do they say

about strokes? I think they say they're like snowflakes not one of them are alike.

Will Perringwood 23:46
Snowflakes, yeah.

Bill Gasiamis 23:50
Yeah. So that's interesting. So what is your new career?

Will Perringwood 23:59
Well, I'm now working in a supermarket, which is not to be critical or downplay, first, I'm just incredibly grateful to be employed, and have any job and have any income whatsoever. And that's one thing. I've definitely taken or learned through my brand-new journey. It's just gratitude. Because it's like to be trusted.

Will Perringwood 24:24
To do a job is massive. One word I would kind of use or point out now is closure in terms of like, because like I said, I took redundancy. I chose to take redundancy in 2017 at the time, because all the factors came together at the same time. But because I'm still an ambitious person, and the fire within me of ambition still burns, to try and be a sports journalist. Now, whether that is advisable or not, I don't really know.

Will Perringwood 25:05
Because I said my wife, very much, there are times when I agree with her about this, she believes that my brain injury was caused by my career, which I completely take on board. Because as we've just discussed, you know, having working so many days and so many hours constantly, is going to have an effect.

Will Perringwood 25:23
So she can't really understand why I'm still chasing this unobtainable dream, if that makes sense. And I completely respect that viewpoint. But still, it's an individual thing, like you're still chasing, you can't really shelve, or put to bed a dream that you've always had.

Finding The Right Balance

Bill Gasiamis 25:40
I'm gonna throw my hat in the ring, give you a little bit of my thoughts on that. I know your wife's concerned, she says, and if he goes back, he's going to do 30

hours a day again, and he's gonna work seven days a week again, and he's gonna get unwell, and he won't be with us. And it's like, she's thinking, well, that's not worth it.

Bill Gasiamis 26:03
Pretty cool, I get that. And then on the other hand, you're going, well, it's my career, it's my dream, it's my love. It's my this my that. And that is legit too. The question is the balance, can you find a balance to do it, and if you don't do it as a career, maybe you can just become a sports journalist on Tiktok, there's a ton of people following their dreams on Tiktok in the sense that they're reporting obscure things, or important things or whatever they want.

Bill Gasiamis 26:33
Some of them are bloody reporting things that are not necessary for humanity to know. But a Tiktok that you're doing, that expresses your love for one of the sports or for multiple of the sports is a great way to express yourself and do that, and interact with people in that way, at your pace with your own content, without anyone going, "Wow, that's not good enough, do it again." Or "this is not enough, do it again."

Bill Gasiamis 27:05
And you know, the best part about it is, you could do it from your armchair, you could just watch the bloody thing, and then report on what you saw from your TV. And I'm like "how is that?" You know, that would be amazing to be able to do, so that you're expressing yourself in that creative way that reporters can get to do about your passion without putting yourself at risk. And you just never know what might come of it, I think it's just a gentle way to do something and keep yourself in the loop of that industry.

Will Perringwood 27:41
And it's strange. And this is again, connected to my memory issues. Because if I watch a football match, or sorry, a soccer match, or a rugby match on television, I obviously cannot remember what happened or the final score, or who won, for example. And like I said, before I live and die by my phone calendar, I really do.

Will Perringwood 28:05
And I even still, I'll be watching the game, and I'll be making notes about who scored first how they scored, when they scored. So I'm kind of doing like a

detailed match report in my calendar. I'm just not doing it to be paid. That's all, but I'm only doing that as again, as a memory strategy kind of thing. But I think what's difficult is, it's this classic, what they call looking over the garden neighbor's fence. Analogy, because my best man, who I went to university with, he is now a fantastic sports journalists.

Will Perringwood 28:37
And he's doing really, really well. And it's that classic, you know, looking over the garden neighbor's fence like, "oh, well look what they're doing that." And because we trained at the same time, we got the same qualifications at the same time. And if you think of like two trains that leave the station at the same point, that same time, they've just gone on different paths, a different journey.

Will Perringwood 28:57
And it's very unfair to compare the two situations and say, well, I should be here, I should be at the same point he's at, because there's been various differences, you know, such as having a brain injury, but I just think it's human nature to just compare two similar situations.

Bill Gasiamis 29:14
It's definitely human nature, it's not useful in your situation to compare to him. Your gratitude probably serves you better and supporting him in his dreams, and getting him to express himself in that way. And you kind of living a part of your dreams through him would be great.

Bill Gasiamis 29:36
But also, there's no reason why you can't convert those memories that you're writing down into a sports report and just report them into a Tiktok account, like absolutely no reason and I know you're not getting paid for it, but it's allowing you to express yourself. I compare myself, I lost 10 years of income. You know, before I was able to get back to work in the capacity that was making me a decent income.

Bill Gasiamis 30:02
My incident, the first one happened in February 2012. And to lose 10 years of income in my prime is hard thing to get my head around because I also sometimes when I'm having a shit day, compare myself to somebody else and go "oh look how far they've come and look what they're doing, look what they're running and

look how much their business has grown."

Bill Gasiamis 30:33
And it's such a stupid place for me to be in, it does nothing for me except make me feel worse. And it's like, I'm kind of doing this, I'm not happy for where they are, because I'm not there as well. And it's such a terrible thing as if I'm not happy for my mates doing well. And having an amazing business of getting rewarded for the effort that they've put in. I was getting rewarded too and I was flying.

Bill Gasiamis 31:01
And thankfully, they don't have something in their head that bloody caused them to be unwell. I did. And that's really, I find myself there. But it's like, it's not really me, when I get into that state, it's somebody else who I don't recognize and I do not like. And I have to remind myself that, again, I've got a lot to be grateful for, I made it to the other side, I'm still living with my deficits quite functionally and quite well, they do impact me every single day.

Bill Gasiamis 31:37
And that should be all that I'm focusing on this new version of myself. And, you know, I had this desire to express myself for very many years before I had a podcast. And I was always afraid to say what I thought because people would criticize it. And then I felt like what I had to do was defend myself. But you don't really have to defend yourself, you just have to speak your truth, and allow that to come out.

Bill Gasiamis 32:15
And if you notice something, bring it up, have the guts to bring it up. And to defend your thoughts from a point of view of like, they're my thoughts, what you think matters, too, we don't have to agree. But I do have to express them, especially if I'm expressing them in a positive light. And I'm not just shitting on somebody for the sake of shitting on them, I would never do that.

Bill Gasiamis 32:44
So the podcast allowed me to be that guy that I'm describing to you on Tiktok, it allowed me to be the guy who gets to express himself every single week with people from around the globe, who I've never ever would have had the opportunity to meet before, who have got a lot of things in common with me. And

it’s bringing me a sense of satisfaction that I cannot describe. And I will never would have had it if it wasn’t for the stroke.

Will Perringwood 33:18
Yeah. I mean, one of the many, many cliche phrases that have come to my mind or that I use is recognizing achievement, or appreciating achievement. So something for yourself personally that you will see as huge, as massive, might not be as big or as important to somebody else.

It’s About Freedom of Choice

Will Perringwood 33:41
As Joe Bloggs in the street, you know the stranger you just met something might not be as important to them but it is huge to you. I mean such as for example, like you know, I was told I’d never walk again, so therefore, I now do quite a lot of running, and in 2018, I ran the London Marathon.

Bill Gasiamis 34:16
That’s awesome. I would never bloody do it, but congratulations.

Will Perringwood 34:23
Thank you. But in the last week or so I’ve genuinely signed up to more half marathons or full marathons. Because it’s that kind of like it’s not just stubbornness. It’s not like somebody saying you can’t do ABC. Therefore you’re going to do it out of spite and stubbornness, it’s not that at all.

Will Perringwood 35:06
It’s about choice or freedom of choice. I mean, I take no pleasure in the fact that it’s gonna sound really arrogant to say, I’ve defied doctors.

Bill Gasiamis 35:26
That’s a good statement mate

Will Perringwood 35:29
By them saying you will never walk again, and I’ve run a marathon. So therefore, I mean, for example, like this last week, I’ve been out for three big runs, you know, sort of 5k 10k. And I say you just appreciate it. So much more.

Bill Gasiamis 36:00
Yeah, I never appreciated running when I could properly run. I did do because of fitness and all that kind of stuff and trying to stay healthy. I did used to run 5K's every Sunday on the treadmill, because I hated running outside. So when I got to rehab, one of the first things they asked me, was what you wanted to do, you know, what were the goals that I had, and one of them was to run.

Bill Gasiamis 36:32
But my run was to be across the road, so that I don't get hit by a car. That's as far as I wanted to run. I never once said I want to run a half marathon or a marathon, or get back on the treadmill. But I know why you appreciate it. Because your legs weren't working properly together beforehand. And it's like, man, they do now. So yeah, this is really cool. Of course, it's cool.

Bill Gasiamis 37:02
And that's great, I do have a similar feeling of gratitude about all the things that I can do. Absolutely. And I think that's important. And if you can be grateful, that really helps to shift you from focusing on all the things that happen, that strokes done to you or taken away from you. Because there can be a lot of those. And I think, although they need to be focused on from time to time, I think they shouldn't be at the forefront of someone's mind all the time.

Bill Gasiamis 37:41
There should definitely be something that we go to every once in a while, from the perspective of trying to improve the situation. That's my reason for going to those places. And when I start comparing my life to somebody else's, I have every blessing. And it's like, why would I focus on the one thing that they have that I don't to make myself feel bad about it? It's nuts. So when's the next marathon?

Will Perringwood 38:18
Well, I've got two half marathons I've signed up for which, once you've done a full marathon, the half marathon's nothing, really. But no, it wasn't just me, like, my sister-in-law, who's amazing. She ran a marathon for the same charity. And one of my wife's friends run a marathon. In fact, she ran two, she ran London and try New York as well. So because of me, and that's not to try to be big-headed. But like three other marathons have been ran.

Bill Gasiamis 38:54

Why are there crazy people?

Will Perringwood 39:00
Like X, Y and Z, thousands of pounds have been raised? Because of my story, because my clients, which is just fantastic.

Bill Gasiamis 39:12
That's a great way to express gratitude or, you know, the meaning behind your ability to walk or to run. That's a great way to channel that energy. And to make it not only about you, but also about other people. That's awesome. I love it.

Will Perringwood 39:35
It's this phrase my wife came up with which, if I've said it already, then I apologize for repeating it, which is, "don't, focus on the positives. Don't dwell on the negatives." That really occurred to me because it's that kind of haves versus have nots kind of thing.

Bill Gasiamis 40:01
Yeah. So you know the situation with your emotions that you're not able to manage sometimes. How do other people that you've never met that don't understand deal with that? Because I reckon it would make a lot of people feel uncomfortable at the beginning before they get to know you.

Will Perringwood 40:25
And that's exactly the right word, uncomfortable. Because I mean, for example, like, it's always the most emotive situations that when it rears its ugly head, so for example, when I got married, I mean, I've never been so dehydrated in my life, I literally wept throughout the whole ceremony.

Bill Gasiamis 40:51
Is that a risk of being highly emotional, you get to dehydrate from crying?

Will Perringwood 40:56
So it's anything to any emotive situations like getting married, which is obviously a once-in-a-lifetime situation, oh, and when our son was born, I wept so fast.

Bill Gasiamis 41:15
I hope it is a once-in-a-lifetime thing for you, mate, because I know people that have been married four times. And could you imagine how much a liquid they

would lose if they're in your situation?

Intro 41:27
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 41:51
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 42:10
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, and 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.

Will Perringwood 42:31
Really interesting you raise to other sort of side tangent because like we as brain injury survivors, I don't know if you find this Bill, but we become focused and almost bordering on obsessed with certain things like statistics or facts that you learn or hear about brain injuries. And my current one at the minute is that 85% of marriages involving brain injury break down, I seem to be very, very focused on it. And that is just absurd.

Will Perringwood 42:59
I mean, like, we're always hearing in the media or TV programs about how 50% Or one in two marriages don't work, whether that's in America or the United Kingdom or wherever. And that's high on its own, then you throw in a brain injury involved until it shoots up to 85%. That's just easy.

Will Perringwood 43:18
And once I had heard that statistic, that fact, it then made me look at all the people I've met through my brain injury journey because this fantastic charity

that I ran the marathons for called Headway UK, the national brain injury charity who are amazing. All the brain injury survivors I met through them.

Will Perringwood 43:40
I kind of, it sounds patronizing, say I kind of looked around the room, I love talking to them all. But a lot of them were sort of telling me the tales of broken marriages or separated marriages and just kind of thought it's just such a shame.

Bill Gasiamis 43:57
Yeah. I don't know, I have a theory on that, is that the marriage is probably on the way out. Anyway, it's just that the incident that needed to trigger it hadn't happened yet. And then it happened. And it's like, I met a few people who have gone through that over the years as well. And one of the examples was, this wasn't somebody who I interviewed.

Bill Gasiamis 44:23
One of the examples was that, that person who left the stroke survivor, the wife, left because he was an asshole anyway. And she was sure as shit not going to be around to wipe his ass for him. Her words and that's like, okay, I can kind of grasp that, I can kind of get that situation. And then the other unfortunate situations of it being so triggering to the spouse.

Bill Gasiamis 44:58
That the spouse doesn't have the the resources, the skills, the tools, the resilience, to hang around and deal with such a dramatic situation, because it would negatively impact their life and they decided to leave. And I think that that's a great reason to leave a marriage. Because if you're going to be that bad at going through what the other person is experiencing, you're not going to be offering any support or help, you might as well not be there.

Bill Gasiamis 45:27
So some of it, I think, is positive, absolutely positive. Although it appears not ideal. The last thing you want to be is in a marriage where one person resents the other, and then one person doesn't have the skills to support their partner or to manage to deal with it themselves, you know, so many marriages are not dealing with day to day life. Imagine throwing in a brain injury, and all the stuff comes with that.

Bill Gasiamis 46:13

And if some people don't see it, as their responsibility or their right, or their role to be the caregiver for another person for the entirety of the rest of their lives, and putting everything that they've ever dreamed of on hold. So, at the beginning, I was like, yeah, I was very shocked by the statistic. But I was also concerned about how can somebody be so harsh or so cruel? Or, but sometimes, I think it's the best thing that they can do is decide not to hang around there.

Will Perringwood 46:54
I mean, I think not just us as brain injury survivors, but the general population just don't appreciate what, how can I phrase this, the strain it will put on a marriage, because, for example, the way it was explained to me was you literally change overnight into a different person.

Will Perringwood 47:13
So there's a great online, i think it's another podcast, or something else I follow called the identity thief, really interesting blog. So you have a brain injury and your identity is stolen. And I can completely relate to the fact that somebody, male/female, has fallen in love with a certain person. But then suddenly, overnight, that person is literally dead, or is literally not there anymore.

Will Perringwood 47:38
And they wake up the next day, and there's a pretty completely new person that they have to not only get to know, but somehow try and find a way to fall in love with again, and it's just a complete different person. So I can completely understand why so many marriages have failed involving a brain injury because it's literally a different person.

Bill Gasiamis 47:58
Yeah. And the person on the other end of it, the person who hasn't had that injury has to grapple with their own identity, the identity of the person who's changed the joint identity of what it was like to be married, and what that meant, and what their combined dreams were and all that type of thing. Yeah, it's such a tough thing. And I'd like to make people feel better about it.

Bill Gasiamis 48:26
If people listening and watching this have been through a divorce after the stroke, hopefully they haven't taken it personally, it says more about perhaps the strength of the marriage anyway. And then maybe it says a lot about where the

other person was at. So I think for some people to leave, I feel like it's like a selfless decision as well, because they've put themselves first.

Bill Gasiamis 48:58
And so if you caregivers do that, and then they become collateral damage. And it's so terrible, to be involved and to see people who need help and support and their caregivers pass before them or become mentally unwell as a result of what it is that they have to step up, supposedly to do. So marriage is one of those things I know that in the Greek faith, the Orthodox Christian faith, you know, we don't get up and say, till death do us part or any of that stuff.

Bill Gasiamis 49:39
And I don't know if that phrase till death do us part makes it harder on people who have gone through a marriage ceremony that makes them say that during the vows, because that's all they say. They just say till death do us part, they don't say till death do us part and for disability and for all this other stuff. I feel like that those words can potentially impact people to stay in a marriage where perhaps they would rather not be there and then they become a lesser person.

Bill Gasiamis 50:22
And that impacts everybody negatively. I'm not saying that in my marriage just because I didn't say till death do us part, we didn't take it as seriously. But I just feel that adds another layer of complexity, although, in our situation, we got married for the same reasons. We just didn't say those words, we didn't have to say them because it's not part of our ceremony.

Bill Gasiamis 50:56
So it's a real, it's a conundrum man. And I'm just hoping that people feel okay about doing the best that they can with the resources they have, and the information they have at the time, you know, you cannot, not everybody can navigate this beautifully. That's just not possible.

Will Perringwood 51:14
I mean, I'll just pick up on one word in particular, which is spot on, which is caregiver. Because it's about roles, the roles you play in life and the roles you play in a relationship. And suddenly, you've gone from being a, you know, for example, if it's a female, girlfriend, or fiance or wife, and suddenly you're thrust and you're thrown into this chasm this world, you're now suddenly, not just a girlfriend,

fiancee, wife, you're now a caregiver.

Will Perringwood 51:43
And that is such a massive, heavy term, that is, where you've literally got to the responsibility lies with you to look after absolutely everything to do with this other person. And sometimes this other person, your boyfriend or husband might be older than you, for example, they might be more successful than you, they might earn more money than you.

Will Perringwood 52:02
But suddenly you're the caregiver of that person, you've got to look after them in every single aspect of life, which is quite daunting prospect. And that's going to weigh heavy upon the caregiver, I think.

Bill Gasiamis 52:19
Yeah, absolutely. It's a statistic 85% of marriages, you know, that don't work out. But I think, we can make statistics look as bad as we want them to, and we can make them tell the story that we want to tell them. I think that's a far more deeper and complex conversation about that. One worth having but a statistic generally, that seems that high in potentially being a negative thing.

Bill Gasiamis 52:52
I think it's still worth sort of paying attention to and pricking our ears up, you know, and kind of getting us to the point of saying, Okay, why is that? How can we improve that? Do we need to improve that? I don't know. It's such a complex topic. I don't think there's enough resources, governments wouldn't have the resources to allocate to every illness that humans can have, and say, okay, cancer, guys, they get this much for marriage counseling, and stroke survivors, they get this much for marriage counseling.

Bill Gasiamis 53:34
I don't think there's enough support in any way, shape, or form. And the worst part about it is the stroke survivors usually don't have enough resources to put towards all of the services that they need to get through or to come out of it less and less impacted, I suppose. How can you? For me, it was such a terrible way for me to find out that I am incapable of managing my day-to-day.

Bill Gasiamis 54:11
And now I've got to manage my day-to-day with stroke. And I say I mean, I was

incapable is because all I knew was how to work a lot of hours. And I hadn't yet mastered the art of being a better father, being a better husband, being a better son, a better brother, a better friend. It was something that I aspired to, but I wasn't doing a lot of work to get to that point because I didn't know where to start.

Bill Gasiamis 54:41
And I felt like I was lacking some life skills at 37. I was trying to improve myself and be better. But then when you're lacking just life skills, generally speaking, because you're still a bit naive or wet behind the ears or are afraid to take on new challenges or do things differently. And then you're thrust into the stroke world, then you really work out how inadequate you are and how unable you are to navigate life because no one's ever taught how to navigate stroke. And God forbid they ever get to find out.

Will Perringwood 55:19
I don't know if this is a phrase that's used much in America. But over here it gets used a lot in ranger, which is sink or swim. So you literally get like you say, you get thrust into a situation and you have the choice. You can either sink or you can literally swim you can either thrive, well one thing we came up with was thrive not just survive.

Bill Gasiamis 55:45
Yeah, yeah. That's a great thing to aim for. Something a little bit about your son. I'll see if I can make you cry a little bit more.

Bill Gasiamis 55:53
I knew I could get you to cry. I'm so mean. How old is he?

Will Perringwood 56:11
Well it's his birthday in two days.

Bill Gasiamis 56:16
Wow, that's awesome.

Will Perringwood 56:18
He's gonna be five.

Bill Gasiamis 56:20

It’s such a cool age 4 5 6. It’s such a brilliant age.

Will Perringwood 56:27
But it’s the thing like the brain injury is, how can I express this correctly? Brain injury is obviously the hardest thing you’ll ever go through. But then that is met or confronted with like the best thing which is parenthood. And being a parent is hard enough for anybody. But to do it with a brain injury is even harder. And like, I’ll give you the most obvious example, which is changing nappies.

Bill Gasiamis 57:13
Uh huh. Yeah. You got out of it, right?

Will Perringwood 57:15
Well, no, my wife was incredible. I mean, I would say hand on heart, I’m sure she’d agree, she changed the majority. But I did my best, you know, the messy nappies. I never shied away shall we say. But it was I mean, because, and this is another thing about brain injuries is how they affect you in two different ways, both the mental or hidden ways, or the physical ways.

Will Perringwood 57:49
And it’s, again, what I found really interesting, like, this is absolutely no disrespect to anybody else that’s had a brain injury. But like, if you’re in a wheelchair, or if you have a cane or something like that, somebody can look at you or see you.

Will Perringwood 58:04
And they can see there’s clearly a physical disability, where someone like me, and to use this phrase, again, Limbo, or purgatory, where you’re in the middle of two worlds, but in the middle of the able bodied world, and the disabled world, and you’re right down the middle of it of like either one or the other. So it’s like, this word, with such a heavy word that we’ve discussed a lot, which is disabled.

Will Perringwood 58:30
And my wife’s often said to me, and we’ve talked about it, it’s like, do I consider myself disabled? And it’s like, because it’s such a big definition. It’s really difficult to sort of say, and that’s not even taken into the consideration, you know, the governmental benefits aspects and things like that is purely a personal thing.

The Meaning of Disability

Will Perringwood 58:46
Like, do I consider myself disabled? And it's like, well, on paper, yes, because I've technically had a brain injury, I've technically had a stroke, as in I've had a blockage to my brain, there's been a blockage of oxygenated blood reaching my brain, which is on paper, the definition of a stroke.

Will Perringwood 59:05
And so, again, the definition of disability is that, but it's just like maybe it's a personal thing. I don't know maybe it's just me. Because it's such a heavy-loaded word or heavy-loaded term. It's all of that that encompasses and incorporates.

Bill Gasiamis 59:23
Yeah, the thing about the word disability, it's just inability. And and that's the part that I don't like about it, because there's lots of people who are very, very abled in wheelchairs, you would know, participating in sports all over the world.

Bill Gasiamis 59:41
There's an amazing lady who I've interviewed on the podcast, who is a somebody who experienced a stroke, and she lives with left side or right side, one on one. Well, perhaps it was hemiplegia, I don't know exactly the term, but it means that her left leg or one of her legs, I'm going to call it the left because I forgot which one it was, her left leg and her left arm, she's unable to use them fully.

Bill Gasiamis 1:00:19
And yeah, she's a powerlifter, she doesn't use that side of her body to lift these ginormous boulders and pull trucks, and semi trailers and all that kind of stuff. But she's doing it. So she has, if you look at her, you know, the definition of disability applies, you'd be able to say, well, you know, she appears disabled.

Bill Gasiamis 1:00:50
But she's far from that she has found a completely different way to do that. And then the wheelchair basketball guys, or the wheelchair tennis guys and girls, and even the athletes in the Paralympics, that run, track and field and all that kind of stuff, that whole bunch of people are so abled.

Bill Gasiamis 1:01:15
And yet, the word the best word that we came up with as a society is disabled. So

I but I know what you're saying about where you sit, you sit from that space where people recognize that you've got a challenge, and you're struggling with a physical limitation.

Bill Gasiamis 1:01:38
And that other place where you appear like you don't suffer from a physical limitation, like as if the physical limitation is the only thing we can suffer from. There's also that mental limitation that people experience in life, generally speaking, you know, through mental health issues. And then what a stroke could do to somebody's mental state.

Bill Gasiamis 1:02:04
And they're invisible disability side of that is the part that I think you're describing, it's that we, I appear normal on the outside, and everyone concludes, or assumes that I am. And that's okay. But I live with my deficits every single day, just nobody can see them.

Bill Gasiamis 1:02:27
That's pain on my left side, that's tightness. That's a limp when I get tired, and not on a limp that anyone can see only the one that I can feel, and notice it dragging me to the left. And I have lately, I've become aware that I have a vision issue, a very small one, which my left eye does something weird, sometimes at certain amounts of sunlight, when I'm wearing sunglasses.

Bill Gasiamis 1:02:55
It kind of flickers in the top left-hand corner, and it makes my eyeball feel weird. I've only just maybe now associated it to perhaps it's part of the left side deficits that I have. And that's how it's being expressed in my eye. So it's a real conundrum is does it really matter that people don't understand and that we have to re-educate them all the time? Do you try to re-educate them? Do you try and bring people on board to get a grasp of what you're experiencing? Is that necessary?

Will Perringwood 1:03:35
Well, this is one of the reasons why we did I mean, I started a blog. I mean, I'm far too old to understand or really know what a an online blog is really, I was never really there was never really my thing but because my wife who's younger than me.

Will Perringwood 1:03:50
And a lot of cooler than me, you know she has a finger on the pulse of this modern, I guess technology, whether it's online, whatever, and she really into a blog and vlogs, which is fantastic. She encouraged me to start a blog, which was great.

Will Perringwood 1:04:27
Because of my memory issues, and like a touched upon before that I couldn't remember that day. And we do this thing where like, we'd get to the evening, and we get into bed and kind of looking back on the day that it just occurred.

Will Perringwood 1:04:42
And as strange as it sounds. It's really difficult to understand or comprehend for anybody that doesn't understand this world of brain injury. I could not remember, like we said before I couldn't remember what I had for breakfast. I could remember much of that day.

Will Perringwood 1:04:54
So she encouraged me to do an online diary. And that's how it started basically became an online diary. And also because we were living the part of the country that was far away from my family, and they'd often be ringing us or contacting us and saying, Well, what have you been up to this day? What I've been up to recently, and it was just like, no disrespect, it was like a really easy way of saying, well, have a look at the blog.

Will Perringwood 1:05:23
It's a good idea. If they wanted to find out then look at the blog. And it's a good way for them to touch base with us in a way. But no, I mean, it also helped me because another phrase that was stressed upon us by doctors and specialists with brain injuries, love routine.

Routine To Help Memory

Will Perringwood 1:05:41
So your your memory is really poor. But what helps it is by having that structure having that routine, and like I was always somebody that I wouldn't say our rejected routine, but it's like, for example, like, I didn't like having the same meal every Monday night, every Tuesday night.

Will Perringwood 1:06:00
I like to have a bit of variety. Well, I wouldn't say routine was boring, but I wouldn't say I embraced it as much as I do now whereas now is crucial. So I do tend to be like, Oh, what did I have a breakfast? I can't remember, therefore have the same thing for breakfast every single day, because therefore it trains your brain into remembering what you've had for breakfast, because it's that routine again.

Bill Gasiamis 1:06:27
I see what you're saying. So your blog is From Reporter To Supporter or is that the one?

Will Perringwood 1:06:35
Yes fromreportertosupporter.com.

Bill Gasiamis 1:06:37
Okay. I'm trying to bring it up. It's not coming up.

Will Perringwood 1:06:45
No, we stopped it a few years ago. And basically when other things took over, like becoming parents. It was a great way of chronicling or detailing our lives and my life with a brain injury. But it got nominated for an award which we was blown away for because we never went into it to search or seek out awards or recognition.

Will Perringwood 1:07:09
It was just purely an online diary to keep track of my memory really, any attention to you the word we got from it was hugely appreciated. It really was. I really enjoyed doing it because I struggled to remember what I was doing each week. It was like, if I did the same thing every Monday, then that somehow got ingrained into my brain.

Will Perringwood 1:07:33
So we used to set aside whether it was Monday or Tuesday became like write my blog day kind of thing. And that became set in the routine it was those little strategies or techniques was really, really helped with my memory.

Bill Gasiamis 1:07:44
Yeah. So me, suggesting that you get onto Tiktok and do a Tiktok thing. That

means you actually didn't know what I was talking about earlier. You got no idea what Tiktok is, if you don't even know what a blog is, you wouldn't know what Tiktok is. You don't do social media, do you?

Will Perringwood 1:08:04
No, I do social media. But I would say at the age of 39, turning 40 this year, I'm far too old for Tiktok.

Bill Gasiamis 1:08:13
You know, I get what you're saying, you don't have to do the other things that other people do on Tiktok, but I love what you're saying I think you've got a lot to offer is what I'm saying, you've got a lot to offer. And the fact that you're a reporter and you have a way with words anyway. So you'd be able to express things that other people can't express or don't know how to express as effectively as you, you've got that skill. Were you a live TV reporter? Were you a newspaper reporter?

Will Perringwood 1:08:43
I was a newspaper reporter. That's very kind of you, the things you said. That's very appreciated. Thank you.

Bill Gasiamis 1:08:53
Yeah, absolutely true. I mean, I say that because I've started to write a book recently. And I realized how terrible I am at putting things in words. It's not that I don't know how to express myself, it's that I can't concentrate long enough to put a good effort in on a daily basis, so that I can have it done by a period of time. I can't meet a deadline if my life depended on it. But I'm seven chapters into a 10-chapter book.

Bill Gasiamis 1:09:19
It's going to get edited and read by other people, and they are going to help me out with it because there's no way I can do it on my own. And that's cool. That's all good. But I learned a lot because I now read books. And when I read, I'm not reading as a reader. I'm reading them as an author to see how other people have written.

Bill Gasiamis 1:09:44
And I learned something interesting about Hemingway and how he revolutionized the world of books by providing a similar approach to writing a book or telling a

story to the same way that he used to write for a newspaper because he was a newspaper reporter. And he would use the same format of writing a newspaper article, he would use that for writing a book.

Bill Gasiamis 1:10:12
And that made the book extremely easy to read, extremely easy to understand, and engaging because his words and sentences were all short, sweet, and to the point. And I think he described it as there was never a wasted word in his books.

Bill Gasiamis 1:10:33
And one of the things that he did was he would go back, and proofread and read and reread and rewrite again and again and again, until it was just a really amazing combination of passages to express what it was that he was trying to express about his character, or about any particular scene.

Bill Gasiamis 1:10:59
So I think what I'm saying about you is that you would have that ability to really get a message across whatever that message was. So when you've got nothing better to do, and you've got heaps of time up your sleeve, maybe get back onto the world of social media or blogging, you know, who knows?

Will Perringwood 1:11:18
Yeah, definitely, I'd love to do that. Because like, for example, so many journalists, newspaper journalists, go on to become authors. So for example, like my favorite writer was George Orwell who wrote 1984. And he started off as a journalist for the newspaper in this country called the observer in the 1940s. And yet, he went on to be an author, as well do 1984 and do Animal Farm, and I'd say he's always been my favorite writer as well.

Will Perringwood 1:11:43
And I think when you have that skill set of writing of learning how to write, then it's obviously gonna lend itself or transcend itself to another world, such as writing books, and I would love to write. This was kind of my idea for a book. And this, if it sounds stupid, by all means, say it's stupid. But like, I was always really interested in the kind of the world of brain injury in terms of like, there's a patient in a bed.

Will Perringwood 1:12:11
And yet, there's this whole world going on around them. So there's like a family

and friends playing on this idea of, you know, brain injuries don't just affect one person, they affect lots of people. And yeah, all these people around this bed, all these lives going on. And I liken it to the planets in the solar system, how they're sort of circling or orbiting the sun, and the sun is like the patient.

Will Perringwood 1:12:34
And that's not to be sort of big headed or egotistical or anything like that. But how all these paths are going on around. And they're all following and treading these paths. And I find it really interesting. There's always sort of lines or train lines of journeys are going on.

Bill Gasiamis 1:12:49
I love it mate. I love it. I'll tell you why I love it. Because it's exactly what I've thought about a lot of times how life still occurs around the stroke survivor, regardless of what they're going through, and how terrible their time is. Life doesn't get to go on hold and you don't slow things down. Things just get remain frantic. And they continue around you.

Bill Gasiamis 1:13:12
And I say that because we had that experience, I had a bleed in 2012 in February, and then I had one in March 2012. And then in 2014, I had a third bleed. And that bleed led to my brain surgery. And two weeks before my brain surgery. My mother-in-law passed away.

Will Perringwood 1:13:33
Ah, so sorry.

Bill Gasiamis 1:13:35
Yeah, thanks. So it's that thing that you just described is that thing that I've thought of, a lot of times, it's how in the periphery, people are still going through life every single day, the ups, the downs, the joys, the sadness. And it's often an opportunity missed to share what it is that they're going through while dealing with the stroke survivor.

Bill Gasiamis 1:14:10
Because you're coming from a Greek family, we had 75,000 People that hospital every single day that I was unwell calling, ringing, checking in, and then going back to their daily lives. And then at the same time having me in their thoughts all the time. And then having my wife in their thoughts all the time and then my

children and it's exactly what you described.

Bill Gasiamis 1:14:35
The idea that you described in my mind is what I've often contemplated is how do other people coexist with a stroke survivor in that moment, and I think it'd be a brilliant story to tell

Will Perringwood 1:14:57
Or we should work on it together if you're up for it.

Bill Gasiamis 1:15:00
I'm up for it. I'm not sure what I'm going to offer, but yeah, you tell me and I might be able to assist let me get through this book, which I've been writing for about a year now. And it'll be done soon. And I hope that when it's done, it's really going to be successful not from the point of view that it needs to make money that I feel that it's actually valuable.

Bill Gasiamis 1:15:29
And it's good to read, and it's worthwhile and that somebody's going to pick it up and go, "Oh, my God, what a great insight." And as a result of that, it supports other stroke survivors is the main reason why I wrote it, you know? And once that's done, you never know, I might take you up on that offer. We can co-write something or create something, that'd be lovely. How good would that be?

Will Perringwood 1:15:29
That'd be brilliant. Because it's kind of the voice of strokes or brain injury survivors coming from brain injury survivors? Who's gonna know brain injury better than brain injury survivors themselves?

Remembering Emotions After Stroke

Bill Gasiamis 1:16:12
Yeah, I completely agree. So tell me about as we come to the end of this podcast episode, tell me about your strategy after this interview. So we're going to record this interview. And then we're going to edit it and I'm going to get it up in a couple of weeks, by you're going to remember that this was recorded. And will you listen back to it, to remember what it was that we discussed?

Will Perringwood 1:16:29

I'm gonna have to because for example, with all the best intentions, I'm sat here right now with a pad of paper and a pen, fully intending to write notes on everything that's going to be said tonight, but for some reason, I've just not felt compelled to write anything.

Bill Gasiamis 1:17:02
Yeah, maybe because you've got a recorded version of them.

Will Perringwood 1:17:08
I guess that's true. But like so when I look back on my days from the day before, I'll again live and die by my phone calendar. So I've had a pretty full on day today, which has been fantastic. As I said to my mum earlier, I love having busy days. So I'd rather be busy than not busy. I'd rather be doing stuff than not doing stuff.

Will Perringwood 1:17:28
And so I will look back on my phone calendar tomorrow and see oh, I had a podcast interview last night. That was really cool. You see the event in your calendar, but what it doesn't convey is say, for example, feelings or emotions. So it's pretty blank, you know, oh, podcast interview, 10 o'clock till 11:15. But I'm tempted to write in now actually, when it's finished and say, I really enjoyed it I had a really, really good time. And that's where the kind of blurring of the lines or the black and white is interesting, because it doesn't convey emotion.

Bill Gasiamis 1:18:05
It's just matter of fact, there was a podcast interview that we participated in. So when you hang out with friends, at the local pub, or at dinner or at a restaurant, do you take a pen and pad with you there as well?

Will Perringwood 1:18:21
When I have my phone, I do tend to write a lot of phone notes, even if it's just conversations or jokes inside jokes, or a lot of it is like dates not anniversaries but like if I need to remember something, I will write it down in my notes in my phone notes.

Will Perringwood 1:18:40
And like, again, it's something my wife picked me up on before about why have you written this phone note about this? It's so irrelevant, but in that particular moment, it may have been relevant or important to me, I won't be able to explain why it is important. But in that moment, I felt it was.

Bill Gasiamis 1:18:58
Yeah, I love it. Absolutely love it. I've absolutely had a blast chatting to you get to know you. And hearing your story. Thank you so much for agreeing to be on the podcast reaching out. And coming on man. It was really cool to have a chat with you.

Will Perringwood 1:19:17
Thank you. I really appreciate it. I hope people find it useful.

Bill Gasiamis 1:19:20
I'm sure they will. Absolutely. We spoke about some seriously deep stuff. And we spoke about some stuff that wasn't so serious. So I think there's going to be something there for everybody. And best of luck for your son's birthday celebration in the next couple of days and is it going to be a big party?

Will Perringwood 1:19:44
Well, we're all going down because they live in the south coast and we live in the Midlands. A lot of my family we're going down and on mass about nine or 10 of us are going down so we're gonna bombard them with so many people and I've got literally just to my right now I'm just looking at the pile of birthday presents I've got wrapped for him.

Bill Gasiamis 1:20:08
He's getting a pile of birthday presents.

Will Perringwood 1:20:11
And it's all dinosaur related cuz he loves dinosaurs.

Bill Gasiamis 1:20:15
Awesome mate. Thank you so much for being on the podcast Will, I really appreciate it.

Will Perringwood 1:20:19
Thank you.

Bill Gasiamis 1:20:21
Thanks for joining us on today's episode to learn more about my guests including the links and to download a full transcript of the entire interview, please go to recoveryafterstroke.com/episodes. If you'd like to support this podcast, the best

way to do it is to leave a five-star review and a few words about what the show means to you on iTunes, and Spotify.

Bill Gasiamis 1:20:44
And if you're watching on YouTube, comment below the video, like this episode, and to get notifications of future episodes, subscribe and hit the notifications bell. Now sharing the show with family and friends on social media will make it possible for people who may need this type of content to find it easier and that may make a massive difference to someone that is on the road to recovery after their own experience with stroke. Thank you again for being here and listening or really appreciate you and see you on the next episode.

Intro 1:21:16
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