

So I Decided to Create a Stroke Recovery Podcast - Bill Gasiamis

I was looking for a stroke podcast.

I never thought that I was going to be the host of a stroke podcast.

As an owner of a Property Maintenance Company, the road that led to the work I do today emerged from the most hostile conditions.

After experiencing the first of three brain hemorrhages (hemorrhagic strokes) in Feb of 2012, I became frustrated with the fact that when I went home from the hospital the support my family and I needed to continue my recovery and avoid a re-occurrence of the brain bleed came to an abrupt end.

I began my search on the Internet to find ways to recover my health, heal and avoid ending up in the hospital. It took ages and was very time-consuming. Regardless I did come across some amazing information from leaders around the world and was learning so many things that I wanted to share but I did not have a platform and I did not have a way to collate all the information and share it easily.

After brain surgery became unavoidable due to a 3rd bleed in Nov 2014, I woke up and was not able to use my left leg and needed to learn how to walk again. Booked into rehabilitation now and while being prepared by the nurses to leave hospital for rehab I was taken to a part of the hospital call the Transit Lounge.

And it just came to me! A transit Lounge is a place I have been to before. In the context of an airport it was to a place where I currently was (like cold wintery Melbourne Australia to a place I would rather be. (like warm and always lovely Hawaii)

What a great metaphor for life I thought.

So the Transit Lounge Podcast Was born. Most recently it was rebranded to better reflect my passion and is now Recovery After Stroke



A podcast show allows me to collate all the amazing things I am learning in one place, easily share the information and get to speak to some of the most amazing thinkers and doers from all over the world, people who are making a real difference and improving peoples lives to and helping people go from where they currently are, that might not be ideal, to where they'd rather be in health, happiness, life, relationships and any area of life that matters to them.

If you asked me which was my favorite episode to date, I'd say "how could you make me pick?" It's like asking a parent which is their favorite child?

I am proud of all my stroke podcast episodes because they all offer a lot of great information to assist all kinds of people to be healthier than they began. But if I really must choose it is the interview with Michael Merzenich, the scientist that has dedicated his life to learning and teaching how everyone can change their brain with Neuroplasticity.

I do hope you will get a lot out of this show and if you enjoy it and find it useful please share it with anyone that might benefit from the wisdom that my guest give their time up to share.

Highlights:

00:20 Introduction

03:13 The Transit Lounge

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15:16 The third bleed that leads to surgery

16:51 From where you are to where you'd rather be

Transcription:

Intro 0:04

The transit lounge podcast moving you through life's transit lounge and helping you go from where you are to where you'd rather be.

Bill 0:14

G'day, everybody. Welcome to the very first episode of the transit lounge podcast.

Introduction

Bill 0:20

My name is Bill Gasiamis. And I'll be your host. And today I just wanted to share a little bit about how this particular podcast came to be. On November 27, in 2014, I was admitted into the hospital for surgery to repair a faulty blood vessel that had burst in my head three times over the previous three years.

Bill 0:46

And in this particular situation that I found myself, there was a lot of challenges and issues that I had to overcome to get to a stage where I was feeling well and one of the challenges that I had with that is Especially after the first time the blood vessel bled, was that there was not really one place that I could go to and get the amount of information that I felt I needed to really help me recover.

Bill 1:13

So I did, what most people would do is I went to the internet and I did a fair bit of searching with the help of my wife at times to uncover how somebody that has bled in the brain three times could recover from the symptoms or from the impact of a brain hemorrhage.

Bill 1:37

And then put all that information together and found myself coming up with some sort of strategy, some sort of a plan to achieve the outcome that I was after, which was to get back to full health and to get back to a place where now I could go about my life as usual.

Bill 2:00

And even live maybe even a better version of my life. So I figured that if I want to do that for myself and I had a lot of trouble getting that information myself and recovering that information from all the different parts of the internet that you could possibly go, I thought that it would probably be handy if I could make that kind of a one stop place to get health information and recovery information and other types of info available to other people.

Bill 2:33

Because one of my passions is to help others and to give information where I can to encourage people to never give up and to get better. And I was sitting in the recovery area after my surgery, where when I woke up,

Bill 2:50

I noticed that I couldn't walk and noticing that I couldn't walk meant that the doctors were quite concerned and myself side was the side that was affected, something that happened during the surgery on my head. And as a result of that, it gave me this situation where my left side couldn't feel anything.

The Transit Lounge

Bill 3:13

And because it couldn't feel anything, my leg wouldn't support me. As I was being taken off to rehab, the doctors and nurses who prepared me, put me on to a portable bed and with wheels moved me into a place of the hospital called the transit lounge.

Bill 3:34

And this seemed familiar to me. You know, I had been in transit lounges before, but the transit lounges I had been to were usually at an airport where you're waiting in transit to go from a place where you currently are to a place where you'd rather be.

Bill 3:51

So I found this really fitting because I was definitely in transit and I was definitely waiting to go from a place where I was. That place was where I couldn't walk, and had all these challenges, to now hoping to get to a place where I'd rather be where I would learn how to walk again. So that's what happened. And what came

to me during that time there was this idea for a podcast, go figure, the places that we get inspiration from, but this is what happened to me.

Bill 4:27

And now this is why you're sitting here listening to this first episode of the transit lounge. And hopefully, in the months and years have come many, many, many more. So I'm gonna share a little bit about how it came to be for me to end up in hospital now that you know a little bit of the background of how the show was developed. So I woke up one morning and I noticed a numb sensation in my big lift tote. And it was nothing major. It was just numbers.

Bill 5:02

Even though I noticed that it didn't really concern me or bother me or affect me. So what I did was put my shoes on and went to work as per normal, nothing really concerning nothing going to stop me really from getting to work. I was running a property maintenance company.

Bill 5:19

And you know, we had some staff in different parts of Melbourne, in Australia where I work and live. And I needed to get to them. And I needed to organize them in these two different locations to do some painting work on two different buildings.

Ignoring the signs of stroke

Bill 5:37

So that was my job. I was a property maintenance manager or ran a company that managed certain properties. And I was a really busy guy had a lot to do and really didn't have time to work out what was going wrong with my numb toe. So as the days progressed after first noticing the numbness in my toe, I noticed that the numbness started to spread.

Bill 6:05

And eventually, after the first couple of days, it got to around about the bottom of my, of my knee. And my whole leg to around about the knee was now numb. And it was feeling a little bit strange wasn't stopping me again from doing anything other than I was just noticing that it was a little bit annoying. And being numb, I thought that maybe I had done something to one of the nerves.

Bill 6:32

So I contacted my chiropractor and I suggested to him that I needed to see him because as per usual, I've done something to my back again, you know, lifting something without taking care, etc. And that I needed him to sort my back out so I could continue working and get about doing all my tasks. And this particular time, my chiropractor saw me and said, hey, look, there's nothing going on with your back that I can see at the moment, perhaps it's some inflammation that's occurring.

Bill 7:06

And it should either recover over the next few days. Or you might notice it get a little worse. And if it does, make an appointment and come and see me again so we can get to the bottom of it. So that was at the end of day two and day three.

Bill 7:22

And as the week progressed, the numbness now started to spread above my knee, and by about the third or fourth day, and going on to the fifth day, the numbness spread pretty much up and past my hip. And I could feel now really strange sensations around my whole left leg. And my wife was even noticing that I was walking a little funny.

Bill 7:48

When she told me that I was walking funny, I ignored her. I said, Look, I don't know what you're talking about. You know, I don't think I'm walking funny. I'm walking fine. And you know, as wives do when asked Don't listen to them. You know she gave me the look. And she kind of was a little bit concerned. But she believed that I was okay.

Bill 8:09

And she kind of let me get away with it there for a moment. Now, around the fifth day of feeling this numbness, I started to get concerned again and I contacted by a chiropractor, and I asked him whether it was possible to come and see him. And he said that they were quite and the receptionist said that they were quite busy and was it urgent?

Bill 8:29

And of course, I said, Look, I don't think it's urgent. It's just a little bit numb, but I feel quite well otherwise. And what I need is to just come and see him and get it

sorted out so I can get back to work because I've been really busy.

Bill 8:43

Well, she told me that since it wasn't urgent, she said, Why don't you come and see us? in a couple of days, that's our first opening. And there happened to be a Friday afternoon. So I thought great, I'll be able to go to work do the things I've got to do and Friday afternoon at the end of the workday. I'll go and see the chiropractor.

Bill 9:02

Now when I got there, the chiropractor within about a minute of seeing me, and now hearing from me firsthand how the symptoms have changed, and me now telling him that the numbness had spread to my whole left side and my face was numb as well as my arm. And my leg said that maybe I should go straight to the hospital.

Bill 9:24

And I looked at him with a little bit of a puzzled look. And I said to him, why would I do that? And he said, Because whatever's going on is not caused by your back, and you should go to the hospital. Well, I argued with him for about five or 10 minutes until he finally sort of sent me on my way with the stern warning of you know, you need to go to the hospital. It's probably something that you want to get attended to quite soon.

Bill 9:51

So I went home, and I was greeted by my wife who asked me how I was feeling and what the chiropractor said. And I told her that it was suggested that I go to the hospital. But I can't do that, because I've had a really busy day tomorrow, I'm working.

Bill 10:10

There's 15 guys relying on me, we don't have another window of opportunity to get this job done. And I don't want to let the client down. So my wife being a little bit concerned about what the chiropractor had said, suggested that I seriously needed to consider going to the hospital.

Bill 10:28

And I kept arguing with her, I wasn't going to let her convince me either way. So after a couple of minutes of heated conversation, my wife said, Look, why don't I

take you to the hospital? They'll tell you there's nothing wrong.

Bill 10:47

And the next day you'll be able to go home and you'll be able to go to work. And I thought, well, that's great. Actually. That's good idea. We'll do that. We'll go to the hospital. They'll tell me there's nothing wrong and I'll be back Back to work the next day everything will be fine.

Everything wasn't okay because of stroke

Bill 11:01

Well, as you can imagine, I've got a hospital and they told me that everything wasn't correct and everything wasn't okay. They noticed that there was a bleed on the brain. And this bleed had leaked slowly over that period of seven days. And it started to create a numb sensation in my toe and as the bleed started to get bigger, the numbness increased from my toe to my whole left side, including my face.

Bill 11:26

And I wasn't going to be going home in a hurry because they needed to work out what was going on. Well, it took seven days for them to work out. The reason for the blade was a blood vessel that had burst but they couldn't work out why it had burst.

Bill 11:44

And the reason was because the blood created a stain on the MRI and as a result of that, they couldn't see beyond this particular stain just because the image was blurred by the blood in the brain. Six weeks later, had six weeks had passed now and I hadn't been to work and I hadn't gone back to my normal way of life because doctor's orders were don't go to work.

Bill 12:10

They were don't do anything strenuous, don't drive. And I found myself at home, just trying to recover, trying to keep things going, trying to keep the business going. And with little information about what was happening to me and how to help myself heal and recover.

Bill 12:32

At the six week mark, when it happened again, I ended up in hospital again and

found that this time, the recovery was going to take a lot longer than the initial six to six weeks to two months, that the doctors sort of assumed that I'll be out of action. Because we believed of such a small nature. Usually it doesn't repeat itself. It doesn't happen again.

Bill 12:55

And when it did, it actually bled into a larger space and my brain started to question a lot more issues. Now the issues that they caught that it caused on top of the numbness and the sensations on my left side was I couldn't speak properly. I couldn't make sentences and finish sentences. I couldn't remember certain words. I didn't remember people had come to visit me.

Bill 13:20

I couldn't drive. I couldn't concentrate, typing email. I couldn't do any paperwork. I couldn't do my quotes. I couldn't really interact well with other people. I experienced challenges going outside and being around loud noises.

Bill 13:40

All in all, I was doing a quite rough and I was really scared because I didn't know what my future held. I didn't know what was going to happen to me in the near future. So I started to do the only thing I could do, which was whenever I had the energy I would type brain hemorrhage into Google and try and discover what kind of research was out there to help me in my recovery.

Bill 14:08

This took quite a long time. And I was out of work for around nine months, until I started, finally, to discover that there were things that I could do to help me get better. And as I started to get better, and as the blood started to subside, I started to get more energy and found myself going to work and found myself starting to take some chores back on, I was finally given the opportunity to drive again, and things looked like they were going well.

Bill 14:39

The whole time I was under observation. And during the time that I was under observation, doctors were just trying to confirm that the bleed had stopped and discover what it was that actually caused the bleed in the first place so that they knew how to deal with it.

Bill 14:56

So surgery was always an option, but it wasn't certain that, that's the way that we're going to go. It took around three years after the second bleed for the doctors to finally get a bit of a better understanding of what it was that caused the bleed.

The third stroke that leads to surgery

Bill 15:16

And they discovered that all it was was a faulty blood vessel that burst and it needed to be extracted. But because it hadn't bled for a significant period of time after that second bleed, they thought they would monitor it and I kind of convinced them that I wasn't ready for surgery and didn't want surgery. Now almost at the three year anniversary mark of the first bleed in November 2014 is when the third bleed happened. And this time I wasn't going to get away with surgery. As doctors do.

Bill 15:49

They give you all the information about what could go wrong in surgery, and they then try to calm you and allay your concerns by telling you that that shouldn't happen. The only thing that I was really concerned about during my three-year ordeal before surgery was that there was not enough evidence-based research and information given to me about what I could do to support my brain, my blood vessels and my recovery. And that's where I think modern medicine falls over.

Bill 16:24

Now, I'm not against modern medicine, I actually think it's an amazing opportunity for us to understand more about the human body. And without it, we would be struggling with a lot more problems, and I certainly wouldn't be around. But I do think there is a bit of a gap and the gap is around how to support people in the road to recovery. And I understand that doctors and nurses may not have all that information.

From where you are to where you'd rather be

Bill 16:51

And what I would rather have though, is I would rather have a system that refers people onto others to help them go from one They currently are with their health to where they'd rather be. Now this podcast is called the transit lounge. And it is

about helping people go from where they are to where they'd rather be. So my interviews are going to be mixed and varied.

Bill 17:13

And they're going to be with people that do help others to go from where they are to where they'd rather be. And it might be in health, it might be in business, it might be in a number of different ways that I feel people could be supported to help them go from where they currently are, that's not serving them or is not ideal for them to where they would rather be and build the life and create the environment that they feel that they're going to be able to flourish in.

Bill 17:44

So I hope that gives you a little bit of an insight into what I'm about into what this shows about and how I intend to support as many people as I possibly can by providing a One-Stop place for people to get a plethora of information about health, recovery, and living the kind of life that is going to really help you flourish. I look forward to going down this path with you.

Bill 18:14

I encourage you to contact me and let me know how you're doing. And let me know what you want to hear. And I really look forward to going down this path and on this journey with you. So thanks so much. Once again, I'm Bill Gasiamis. And I will be the host of the transit lounge podcast, helping you go from where you are to where you'd rather be. Thank you.

Intro 18:42

The presenters and special guests of this podcast intend to provide accurate and helpful information to their listeners. These podcasts can not take into consideration individual circumstances and not intended to be a substitute for independent medical advice from a qualified health professional

Intro 19:00

You should always seek advice from a qualified health professional before acting on any of the information provided by any of the transit lounge podcast. This has been a production of recoveryafterstroke.com/ Check out our page on Facebook and start a conversation by leaving a comment at [instagram.com/recoveryafterstroke/](https://www.instagram.com/recoveryafterstroke/). Subscribe to the show on iTunes and check us out on Twitter.

Smiles Bill Gasiamis

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