

Stroke The Greatest Thing That Happened To Me - Lianne Karla Bigornia

Lianne Karla Bigornia was a registered nurse who then became a call center agent and was working from 9 pm to 4 am. Living an unhealthy lifestyle caused her to have a stroke due to high blood pressure and AVM.

Instagram: www.instagram.com/better_by_stroke?igshid=1hfu20hhv1zkw

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Transcription:

Bill 0:00

Your skull is in your stomach?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 0:03

Yes, doctors are supposed to put the skull inside the stomach, just to make sure that it doesn't die.

Bill 0:13

Are they gonna put it back one day?

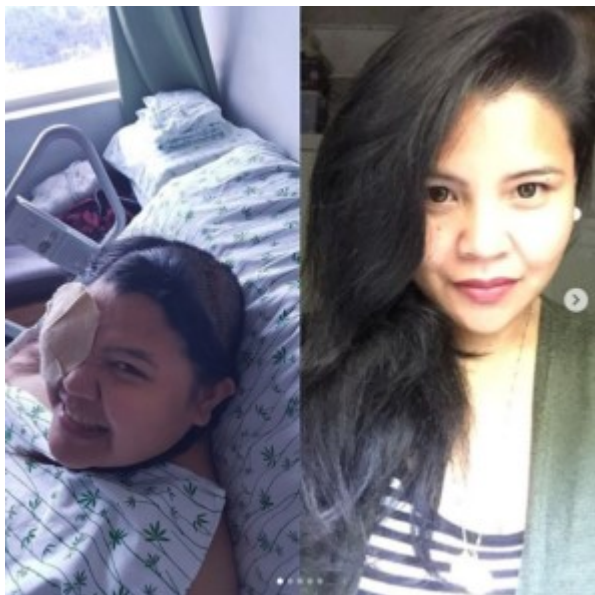
Lianne Karla Bigornia 0:16

Not anymore. They're supposed to do it three months after the stroke, but then it's been three years. But my parents and I decided not to put anything into it, I guess. But I just want to make sure that I don't hit my head or else I die.

Intro 0:46

This is recovery after a stroke. We Bill Gasiamis. Helping you go from where you are to where you'd rather be.

Introduction



Bill 0:52

Bill from recoveryafterstroke.com. This is Episode 105 and my guest today is Lianne Karla Bigornia. Lianne is an AVM stroke survivor. And when I came across her Instagram bio, it wrote, my stroke was the greatest thing that happened to me.

Bill 1:09

This is something that about three years after the first bleed in my brain, due to a ruptured AVM, I was able to say, and I could say this, even though I had deficits and my future health and well-being were somewhat uncertain. Some time ago, I put out a call on Instagram to ask people who felt the same way to connect so that I could interview them and find out if there were any similarities in how they got to be able to say that stroke was the best thing that ever happened to them.

Bill 1:42

Early interviews of the people who related to that statement and agreed to be interviewed revealed that there were similarities in how stroke survivors were able to get to that place where they could say that stroke was the best thing that happened to them, and a pattern began to emerge.

Bill 1:58

The participants demonstrated a growth mindset had an upgrade of emotional intelligence improved their nutrition, began connecting to their internal voice found ways to exercise more, created better sleep habits, connected with their community, and found the purpose for their existence amongst other things.

Bill 2:19

What I've learned from these interviews is that there is a way that we can move people from stroke being the worst thing that has ever happened to them to potentially being the best thing that has happened to them, and all they need to know is how.

Bill 2:32

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Bill 2:55

It's perfect if you like to take notes highlight sections of the discussion that you found interesting or just prefer to read rather than Listen, simply go to recoveryafterstroke.com/episodes, scroll to find the name of the episode you just listened to, click on the link, scroll down until you see the orange download button which says transcript.

Bill 3:19

Click the Download Transcript button. Enter your email address and your download will begin. Also, when you get to the end of this episode, whether you are watching on YouTube or listening on your favorite podcast app, please do me a favor and share this episode in other groups you hang out in this will help someone who is doing it tough at the moment perhaps feel a little better about the journey that they are currently on.

Bill 3:44

Also, if you like this podcast, and you think it makes a massive difference to you and the stroke community, please do me a favor and leave a five-star review on iTunes or wherever you download your podcasts from and now it's on with the show.

Bill 4:01

Lianne Bigornia Welcome to the podcast.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 4:04

Hello.

Bill 4:06

Hello. Thanks for being on the podcast from the Philippines.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 4:10

Yeah, it's great. Thank you for this opportunity to finally share my story.

Bill 4:16

Yeah, you're my very first guest from the Philippines. So I'm really glad to meet somebody from different parts of the world.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 4:26

Oh, that's great. Thank you. This is awesome.

Bill 4:29

You're welcome. Lianne, before we get started, can you just tell me a little bit about what happened to you?

Before the stroke

Lianne Karla Bigornia 4:41

Well, before my stroke, I've always been super fat. I would just eat whatever I wanted. And I didn't take care of myself and I also worked as a call center agent so I would work at night. 9 shift, 9 pm to 6 in the morning. And I've been doing it for like more than three, four years, I guess. I didn't know that. I shouldn't be working like that because I had high blood sugar and high blood pressure, and I didn't drink my medications as often as I should.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 5:30

And then, I noticed that I would always have a lot of headaches, like maybe every day, but then I didn't really think a lot about it, but I just, thought just maybe because I didn't sleep well or you know, something like that. And then one day I was with my friends, and we went to the mall, and we bought some phones.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 6:17

And after that, I was supposed to go home because I was going to go home but

then I noticed that we had to renovate our home, so I couldn't sleep there. So I went to my friend, and because I had a new phone, I always check on the settings and like you know, just check, everything's fine. So I didn't sleep well. And then I noticed that I had a crazy headache. It's not the normal headache I usually have. And then I told my friend that I thought there was something wrong.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 7:13

And the crazy thing was that I couldn't see from my right side. I couldn't see anything. And then I wanted to vomit and I vomited twice. And then finally, I told him to call an ambulance and tell them that to call to call my dad. Since my dad is a doctor, he is part of the Emergency Rescue Unit Foundation.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 7:54

So they know us like our family. So they immediately knew that it's different or like if I say that it's a call for dad, and it's immediate, so they called, and I think my dad didn't answer them the first time. But then the second my dad answered. So they said, Dr. Bigornia, your daughter, there's something wrong. We're going to go to the emergency room, which hospital do you want to go to?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 8:32

So they found me in the emergency room, and my cousin my brother, and my dad were there, but I didn't know what was going on. Because I was going in and out of consciousness. Thank you. After that, we had I think, my mom, and everyone, except my dad was in Cebu everyone else was outside of the outside of city so they immediately arrived. And they were told my dad was told that my blood pressure hit, I think 250.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 9:42

Yeah, and then, the doctor said that all the patients that he had 250 blood pressure would die like they already told him just let you know that all of my patients are in a bad position, but we'll do whatever. And then actually my dad asked for a priest first before the O.R. It's a good thing that there was one room that said they could do it.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 10:39

And then I think after that they just thought that I would be in a coma. Like, longer than I should have been. I think I was in a coma for 4 or 6 hours, I think. And then when I woke up, I didn't understand what was going on. My sister was

joking and she just said, Karla, you've been asleep for two years. And then I cried. I cried, because two years, I had a boyfriend then.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 11:23

And then she was laughing she said, No, no, no, I was just kidding. But you don't have hair anymore because they had to remove it. So I didn't have hair here in the back, except for the front part. So I cried even more because my hair was so long. That was the best part of my body, and my sister said, I didn't have hair anymore, I cried even more.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 12:11

And so, I didn't understand what was going on. I just noticed that people were visiting and I didn't know I was in a hospital. I just kept telling people, hey, you want to eat? You know, what are you doing here? Then they said, we're here for you do you know what's going on Karla? I didn't even know my parent's names. My sister's names. I didn't know anyone.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 12:44

Except for I think I had one friend. A few friends who like I always know their names. But the rest No, so they cried. And I also cried I was just worried. What was going on?

Bill 13:03

Yeah. So how old were you at the time?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 13:05

30.

Bill 13:06

30.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 13:09

I was 30 that's it that time. That was on November 22, 2016. So, four years, almost four years, I think.

Things Lianne had to relearn after the stroke

Bill 13:25

When you finally realized when you finally got out of the hospital, what did you

need to relearn how to do again?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 13:32

Yeah, um, I was in the hospital for three weeks. And then after that, a good thing. I was able to have Christmas with my family and friends. And after that, I immediately had speech therapy. from the hospital until now, or a few months after, I had speech therapy and I was told why I needed to have speech therapy. So I had to go back to ABCs and had to learn ABCs again, numbers, everything. names of people.

Bill 14:27

Did you need to learn how to walk again, or was there any challenges?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 14:38

No, while I was in the hospital. I had physical therapy while there, they let me walk first, slowly, but then they asked, can you still do it? And I said, Yeah, I can do it. So I did it once and then the second time was outside the hospital. And after that, I no longer needed physical therapy. So what I needed was just speech therapy.

Bill 15:23

Did you need to learn how to speak English and Filipino?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 15:29

My first language is English. And everything that I spoke to while in the hospital was all English. So, everyone, I didn't understand a lot. I didn't understand what they were saying except for English. So, my friends would text, or like, send me messages when I was in the hospital. I didn't understand what was going on. Or like what they were saying and my messages? I just like the heart.

Bill 16:10

Yeah, I understand. So when you went home, what was your memory? Like? Did you have some memory problems? Any other issues apart from speech?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 16:29

I didn't know that I couldn't sleep. I noticed that one morning. When I woke up, I could see things or places and people and I was on a beach I think, in that dream and then I said It was so weird I could see things so I googled like Google was my best friend the whole time. I googled stroke patients sees things like maybe

googled for stroke patient sees things and then I went down, down down, and just checked until I saw the word dream.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 17:49

And then I realized, Oh, I was dreaming. After that I would always write if I dreamt, I would write it down what I dreamt. And what day what time? And how I felt, you know, everything like a scientist. Just to make sure I had everything like even about my speech and things or feelings that I would need to write down. I would all write them down.

Bill 18:31

So what's the biggest challenge that you have now with regards to the aftermath of the stroke?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 18:38

Now? Not really. Now I'm okay. Although like I'm talking to you right now. And I'm excited. So blah, blah, blah blah. I should calm down and talk to you properly, so that's my problem. But I don't think of it as a problem. And also, from my head as a nurse from my head to my, toes. I wrote everything like number one in my head. My skull is still here actually, it's still soft. My parents decided to keep it soft. And my skull in my stomach because just to make sure that if I have another stroke, the pressure is not that high.

Bill 19:50

So at the moment, you're missing a part of your skull?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 19:54

Yeah.

Bill 19:55

And where is it?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 19:57

It's here in my stomach.

Intro 19:59

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 recover? What things

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

Intro 20:24

If this is you, you may be missing out on doing things that could help speed up your recovery. If you find 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. 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, [recovery after stroke](http://recoveryafterstroke.com). Calm down and download the guide. It's free.

Bill 21:11

Your skull is in your stomach?

A skull fragment inside the stomach

Intro 21:15

Doctors are supposed to put this cell inside the stomach just to make sure that it doesn't die.

Bill 21:29

Are they gonna put it back one day?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 21:32

Not anymore they're supposed to do it like three months after the stroke but then it's been three years but my parents and I decided not to put anything for it I guess. But I just want to make sure that I don't hit my head or else I die but it's fine. I've gone to concerts with my friends and I don't need to wear a helmet, but, it's fine.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 22:13

I just want to make sure that it's all fine. It's cool. And then my friends, especially the guys, I would tell them about it. And they always freaked out. Are you sure you're strong? I asked them a challenge. And then when they try to hold it or touch it, they always freak out.

Bill 22:40

Yeah, amazing what the doctors can do these days. That's just amazing. And that the skull, the part of your skull is in your stomach. That's amazing. Do you feel it in your stomach?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 22:55

Not really, at first Yes. But it's fine. It's nothing. I don't feel it anymore.

Bill 23:07

Okay. How big are we talking about? What size is it?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 23:10

It's like this small.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 23:14

And then after, aside from the head is my hand, it was my hand that everything else is fine. I didn't have problems with my feet or anything except for my hand. It was this. It was just like this the whole time in the hospital. And then I was talking to my sister one time, and then I said, Tina, that's her name. Tina, what is this?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 23:46

And then she said, it's your hand. I said no, this is my hand. I have my hand. She said, no. Karla, you have another hand. I mentioned that I bought a new phone, right? So I put the phone here, and then said, oh it's for my phone. I thought it was just like a holder or something. And I needed therapy here for my hand.

Bill 24:21

So you didn't realize that the hand was attached to your body?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 24:25

Yeah, yes, exactly. I didn't know. I just thought it was like an extra thing. Do you know that something? I can see from this I couldn't see from this the right side. And I didn't know that there was a problem. I just I just noticed that there was something wrong with my eye so I asked my sister. I told her Tina, how come there's something wrong with my eye?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 25:04

And then she told me that this part was a bit blank. So she asked me what could see. Oh, here, here, I can't see. So everything here is all back then. But now it's

colorful. I can see colors so I can see If people like if someone comes here, I can see that there's something wrong. like something's here beside me. Okay, yeah.

Bill 25:39

You can see that there's something near you.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 25:43

Yes. And this was one of my goals. I've never been to a cinema or watched a movie by myself after the stroke. Until last year I think, I put it as my goal, one of my goals was to finally watch a movie by myself and not be anxious because I couldn't see right for a few years or a few months and then I would be anxious because I couldn't be sure like, I might hit somebody but after that, I think two years or a year and a half, I was able to go out with my friends all by myself. I didn't have to ask my sister to come out or go out with me.

Bill 26:48

That's so good to hear. Right now your hand is yours you know that the hand belongs to you the vision is back. You have some colors. You know, when someone's around, you can speak well. seems to have settled down a lot. Now you were a nurse. Is that what you were doing?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 27:13

Before that, I was a nurse in the emergency room. That was like three or four years ago oh, five years and then I worked in a call center again.

Bill 27:32

So you weren't working as a nurse at the time. But as a nurse, you know how important it is to look after your blood pressure?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 27:42

Yes. I know. It was crazy, right? Which is so bad. I know it's bad. But you know, like when people say that the hardest patient is yourself. So yeah, that's what happened. And I would always go out with my friends drink smoke because of the stress of work. And I know it's bad, but I've changed everything I no longer smoke and drink.

Bill 28:24

Okay, so you used to smoke as well okay? So you had all the risk factors for a hemorrhagic stroke as a result of high blood pressure.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 28:35

Yes, but my stroke I'm sorry.

Bill 28:37

Go ahead your stroke.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 28:39

My stroke is actually because of the AV malformation I was born with it's already in my head.

Thinking a stroke can never happen



Bill 28:53

Yeah. So there seem to be a lot of people who have had an AVM on this podcast I had an AVM I didn't have high blood pressure. I had an AVM that burst and I used to smoke and drink and work too much and all those things. So very similar in the way that you used to live your life. Did you think you were like "It's not going to happen to me"?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 29:19

Yes, definitely. I did not imagine that that would happen. But actually, you know what? I'm, I don't know. Have you tried like, you just think that there's something wrong with my world? I just want to change new I want to renew something. Because at that time, I was praying because of the time when I was in the hospital, before the stroke.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 29:56

I was wondering what my purpose is and what's going on. Because I was supposed to work again as a nurse, but in a call center. And in that way, I could

work in the same company, but then go to America. That was my goal. But then I had a stroke.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 30:29

At first, I did not think of it as something good. I was wondering what was going on. While I was in the hospital while my sister was sleeping, I cried. Because I realized I no longer have a job. I am going to resign or I would never be the same Karla and my boyfriend at that time left me while I was in hospital.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 31:03

So everything was crazy but then, but before that because I was super fat and I was always depressed. I was mad at everybody, and I would just, I would be with my friends or my family, but I wasn't there. I was always looking for something else, something new something. I wanted to renew everything or reset everything. And then when the stroke happened, and then I had my speech therapist.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 31:47

The craziest thing or the miracle that he told me was Karla, there are only two things you have to do to renew or recover. I said, Okay, what's that? Two things sing and dance. And I was like, Are you sure? Because singing and dancing are my favorite things. I was supposed to take Theatre Arts. But then I was a nurse. But I realized it was a miracle. The way that God made me recover was through singing and dancing which I love. So yeah, I was oh my gosh, it's so cool.

Bill 32:41

So you, you do sound like me. I was 37 right and working too many hours. I wasn't happy. I was always angry and yelling at everybody my friends. I was always wanting something different and something new to happen. I wanted to make massive changes. I didn't understand how to make those changes. I didn't have people around me that I could ask questions or get advice from. I didn't know who they were or how to bring them to me. And I was always stuck in this loop of going and doing things that I didn't enjoy. I didn't know what my purpose was I was just working to make money to pay the bills to pay everybody else. And I had no fun no joy in my life.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 33:30

Yeah, exactly. That's exactly how I felt. And then I had a stroke. And that's why that's the best thing that ever happened. And I realized, like, when I was in

hospital, right, and while I was crying, I cried, cried, cried, cried, and cried. And then I told myself, Karla, tomorrow, renew and change everything. So I did. I changed everything.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 34:02

When I came home, I would exercise and then I would eat a diet that the doctors told me to take. But then after a few months, I was wondering why I still didn't lose weight. So I checked YouTube, and my other best friend and I found keto and intermittent fasting. I saw Dr. Eric Berg. So I did keto and intermittent fasting. I lost 82 pounds.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 34:55

But then I also gained it because I had depression and because I would eat my emotions away I gained again but then I realized that I didn't want to go back to that. And now I'm going back to the beginning and back on keto. I also had an out-of-body experience did you try that?

Post-stroke depression



Bill 35:38

Okay, so before we go there, let me just say 82 pounds is 37 kilograms for people who are in another country that is half my body weight at the moment. That is a massive amount. So congratulations on that. Now I understand why you went back and put on weight because, at the beginning, you're deciding your health and well-being. And you're sticking to that and you're going to get yourself better, but you're not dealing with emotional challenges that you haven't dealt with from

a long time ago. And a lot of people use food to feel better at that moment when they're feeling bad.

Bill 36:25

Depression is very common in stroke survivors, because I think the statistic is something like 33% or more of people who experienced stroke will experience depression. So that's very common and one way that people use food is to overcome those negative feelings at that time. That makes sense why you went there, but the great thing was now you had this tool of how I already lost weight once now you can do it when you deal with your emotional problems and overcome them. And let them free and release them. Then you can go back to this keto or this intermittent fasting diet, which works for you.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 37:15

There's something else. I don't know if you felt that or if you tried, but it's just the past months. I think that I realized that before now. Yeah, a month ago. It's like I wasn't in my body. It's like, I lost the weight, right? I lost the weight. But I was always saying, oh, how come there's something wrong? It's like, I'm not in a new I thought it was in my new self. But then I wasn't me.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 38:00

Like, they're real, Karla until this month. And then I felt weird. And I was wondering. I looked at the things, my pictures, my videos, and things that make me happy. And then everything that mixed and then that just felt that's kind of came together.

Bill 38:33

So was it an external thing that happened or did you feel it on an internal of your body?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 38:38

Both. It's both. It was so weird. It's like, one day as if ok it's Karla.

Bill 38:48

So you found your identity? Was it your identity that suddenly became apparent to you?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 38:55

Yes. Like before time I was in the hospital. I just think like when I lost the weight,

like, It's a new Karla. But then where is Karla? Where am I? Like where have I been? Then I looked at my pictures, I looked at my friends and then just, it's just weird, it's like it's not me until this month. And that's why I wanted to make sure that I talked to you about it. Because I'm not sure if it's just me or like if other people feel the same way.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 39:39

Wow, other people feel the same way, especially with what you've spoken about. Often when I speak to people who say that stroke was the best thing that happened to them. They say almost exactly what you said they talk about. It wasn't the best thing at the beginning. Then they talk about there was some kind of purpose that needed to happen, they needed to find then they talk about God or some kind of external being or external force in the universe.

Bill 40:15

They also talk about changing their exercise and food. They also talk about dealing with emotional intelligence and they also talk about this identity change that happens they change from being somebody who is not their best self who they change, into who is their best self, and all of the puzzles come together. And they start to see themselves as somebody who has had a great experience and it's difficult at the time and it caused a lot of problems and some of them can't walk yet or can't move their arms and some of them have memory problems or speech problems, but they still think that stroke is the best thing that ever happened. For me, it took about four years as well.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 41:10

Oh, yeah. You mentioned that, so cool.

Bill 41:18

Yeah, to somebody and I didn't know why I said it or how I came to say it. And then I got really curious, am I the only one saying this? Am I crazy enough to be the only person to say this there must be other people and of course when I asked other people on Instagram, many people said the same thing.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 41:38

Yeah. It's just so cool, right? Like I don't know. It's so awesome. But like, and now I just want to make sure that everything is balanced. Like physically, spiritually, mentally.

Bill 42:02

Yeah. So tell me Karla, how did you deal with the emotional challenges? So did you do some kind of therapy? What was it that helped you overcome those problems?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 42:23

I think it was just a few years ago, I was able to go to a psychologist. I think I did the same thing that she told me to do before. Write your emotions. Write, write, write. And I think that's what I did. I would write and I just added aside from writing, I would also sing and dance. So I think I just did that.

Bill 43:15

So you started to do a journal about what you were feeling? And when you put that in the journal, what did it do to those emotions? Because if you're feeling sad or anxious or depressed, putting it in writing, what did that do for you?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 43:32

For me, it's my way of saying goodbye. I think like, I write the words. Then I would, for example, I would write Dear, blah, blah, blah. And then I wrote something like a, letter to myself five years ago. And I'm writing Dear Karla, do you remember when you. And then after that, I would cry and then let it go. That's it. I think that's what I did.

Bill 44:26

That sounds cool. When I coach somebody who's going through emotional challenges, I try to encourage them to go to where the problems started. So, some people will talk about, you know, I was in a relationship, the relationship broke up, I felt really sad. And then since then, I haven't been able to have a new relationship again. And usually, it's because they've not dealt with the relationship issue from the past.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 44:55

And going back to the past and checking in with those feelings and emotions. And dealing with them there makes it go away. Like you said, it doesn't mean that the breakup didn't happen. It doesn't mean that the emotion wasn't difficult. It just means that it's not anymore. There, and therefore, they had an experience. They dealt with it, and now it's not affecting them in the future.

Bill 45:22

It sounds like you did that on your own. But was that a tip that you got from your counselor or your psychologist?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 45:29

Yes. yeah. She told me before she told me to just write your emotions, on anything, and always put on the date and the time and why you're writing this. So I think that helped. And also my friends and my family, of course, but sometimes I would, because I don't share my feelings. So, I would just keep it to myself until it's just too much for me. So that's when I would sing and dance or like, listen to rock. And then I would feel better.

Bill 46:23

Yeah, tell me. How important is it to have a purpose? And what does that mean for you to have a purpose?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 46:32

Oh, that's awesome. I didn't have a purpose or didn't know what my purpose was before. As you said I would just work for the money until the stroke and then I kept asking myself what my purpose and I think this year or a few months that I realized that I think my purpose is to share my story, especially on stroke aphasia, on keto and intermittent fasting, a mix of everything, and depression and you know what you've been through.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 47:29

But to just share your story. Anyway, because I'm such a talkative person. I think my purpose is to share because not all stroke patients are in depression. Like you said, some people see stroke as the greatest or the best thing.

Identity after the stroke



Bill 48:05

I understand the people who don't see it yet. Stroke it's not an easy thing to deal with. And for a lot of people, it causes a lot of problems. So you have this new purpose, you focus on food and you're exercising differently. You've had this emotional release, where you've released a whole bunch of emotional problems that you've held on to, and you've found your identity. So describe your identity now. So who are you now? And how is that different from who you were before? Like who are you now?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 48:50

I also wrote who is Karla, you know, like, in my core, who am I without the money, not a nurse, no nothing? Like, so who am I? I am someone who has my culture, and then my family everything that my grandparents, my parents, my cousins, and my friends know me as, that's Carla in my core. But then to add that what things I love that's in my core right?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 50:02

My culture as a Filipina, family traditions, and what makes me happy. And then love of course faith hope and love. And then after that, but outside that, the things that I'm into like, stargazing, puzzles documentaries. I said that road trips and poetry, you know, I just wrote everything about that and then yeah, and then I would see also this is Karla, this is who I am like whatever happens because before I would always I would be depressed.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 51:07

Aside from that, I would also be anxious. Like, what if someone thinks that I'm,

there's something wrong with me that I can't see because, you know, because of the stroke, but then because they can't see that I had a stroke? They can't, they wouldn't understand why I can't see. So I would have to explain again and again, then, or like, I have a stroke.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 51:38

So people say, Are you sure you don't look like you had a stroke? Like, okay, so that would explain again, what happened. And then I realized that my stroke I didn't see it as a bad thing. My stroke, as I'm like a super Superman and like Superman now For me, it's a national. Yeah. Superwoman. Yeah. A super is something additional, instead of a minus.

Bill 52:13

I see what you're saying. So who you are didn't change. It never changed. You just reminded yourself and before you weren't being that person, you knew who you were, but you were being somebody else to make money to have a job to do all these other things. And you forgot who you were and then stroke helped to remind yourself of that.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 52:39

Yes, but before I would always I didn't. I always wanted to make sure that everyone liked me. Um, but I think like I would always be I was always worried. Like, people might not like me or like, you know, things like that, but then With a stroke now, I would, I wouldn't I don't really. It's bad, but I make like, I don't care. Okay, I'm I Yeah, I am. Okay, I am fine. I am patient. I mean, I am at peace with who I am. Whatever happens, like, if someone says something bad or something like, what you had a stroke, you know, you mean, like they see stroke as something bad. And I would always say no, actually my stroke is the best thing. And they were wondering why.

Bill 53:43

You know, when did you notice that like what happened? One day stroke wasn't the best thing and then one day, it was like, how did you notice that?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 53:55

When I was thinking about I will I wrote everything, my story. And then I realized that the way that God just wrote how it started, right the stroke. And then I saw, I like who I was, and then what happened to the stroke? Like what would happen

because of the stroke? And then I also realized that the part that the miracle was, um, that the stroke happened. You know, the way that God let it happen.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 54:41

That's when I realized that Oh, so I was always sad, right? And I was mad at everyone before the stroke and then I was looking for a way to reset and then realized when I had a stroke. And then, I saw that the only two things I needed to recover were seeing and dancing. And then there's like, also this is God, God's way of saying, Carla, you wanted to reset. Here it is.

Bill 55:19

I'll ask you a question. It's not something that happened. But what if you weren't able to get back to singing properly if your voice wasn't perfect? Or dancing properly? What would that mean?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 55:33

Actually when I was in the hospital and then, and then my speech therapist, and my sister said, Karla, okay, sing this song, what's your favorite song? And then I realized I couldn't sing it. I couldn't remember the lyrics. And then I was so sad because I didn't know how to do it. And then, you know, I was so sad that time when I said this is I have to do it, I have to change it.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 56:11

So every time I try to sing a song. I would try to remember anything about the lyrics. But since I've, I've always loved learning about the lyrics or the why, why the song is. I would. Yeah, after that I would write the lyrics and then sing. I think that's the thing that made me stronger. But if I did sing and dance I don't know. I think I'd be super depressed and worried because like right now I'm talking to I said oh my gosh, yeah.

Bill 57:02

So that's bothering you that maybe if you didn't get back to doing that, you wouldn't have been the best. But do you think there's another way you can still do singing and dancing? Even if it's not like before? Is there any other way that you can still have a singer's identity and a dancer's identity? If you couldn't walk? Or if you couldn't make a beautiful sound with your voice? Can you still be a singer? If you can't make a beautiful sound with your voice?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 57:37

That's if I couldn't know how I didn't know the lyrics. I would still I can still hum. Although it's not so nice. But I like let's say something with my throat. Like I can sing it. Or like, um, yeah, sing anymore. Um, I can sing Listen, I can listen to the song. I guess Yes. So, anything with music I think is the best thing that you need.

Bill 58:08

Fair enough. I understand that it would be difficult if you couldn't sing and dance, it would be even. But I've come across a lot of stroke survivors who aren't walking yet. And because one of their legs is not able to help them walk at the moment. They still participate even in their wheelchair In, types of events that are similar to dancing or, or being on stage, and they're still acting and they're still in the theater.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 58:36

And even if they didn't get there, the old voice back, they are still able to sing, even if the voice doesn't sound the same and the singing process, and maybe they're not singing to create a brand new album or create a brand new record or whatever, but they're still able to have the experience of singing. So it didn't go away completely. It's just different. than what was before.

Bill 59:03

Yeah. What a fascinating story of recovery and stroke. And then this shift from stroke being the worst thing that happened to you to the best thing that happened to you. What do you hope to do in the next few years ahead, what do you hope to achieve in the next few years ahead?

Plans for the future



Lianne Karla Bigornia 59:27

There's a lot. I have so many goals. I spoke about stroke intermittent fasting and Quito and aphasia. Um, I, aside from finishing my book, I want to also do podcasts, like yours. Yes. And I also wanna I wanted to, I would, I told my friends, I have We have already had it planned.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 1:00:02

But because of this lockdown, you can't do anything but just sign up, we're having to have, we're planning to have a big second stroke, a stroke, like a three-day stroke fast or something like that. They were, you know, all the people who are sharing their diet, like keto and intermittent fasting, low carb, low sugar, and, you know, things like that.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 1:00:40

And then another side besides that, you'd be like gyms, like people from the gyms like we'd have this race, like one for like five people from the race, who are the gym, and then one stroke patient They would it would be like a mix of brain and physical or brain and body. Yeah. And the body with them, of course. And then the brain because I noticed that patients would who were stroke who had a stroke would always think that they would no longer be useless.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 1:01:28

That's how I thought. And then you would also think that the family just you know, some families would always put that patient put her beside or just in their room, given just food and that's it. You don't they don't take care of her or him. So that's what I want to do. It's like a one-on-one weekend. Where spa muscle-up

massage and therapy or whatever, and all the patients and also the speech therapists, speech therapists, and speech therapists and physical therapists and everywhere in one place, and all there for the stroke and aphasia.

Bill 1:02:24

Did you also experience aphasia?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 1:02:26

Yes. I had. Yeah, I had to start the ABCs I had to learn ABCs read, and write.

Bill 1:02:35

Awesome. So tell me what's the book gonna be about?

Lianne Karla Bigornia 1:02:40

My book is gonna be who like before the stroke-like in the middle is gonna be about like my stroke. But before that, like, why I'm like that, like why am I strong? Because of my grandparents, my dad, my mom, my sisters. They're also pro-strong. I see them as my idols, especially my dad, and my mom, but I'm like, there's always something that I am, I am who I am, because of them.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 1:03:25

And I made sure that I would read recover because of them, like, um, so that they will not be worried or be depressed for themselves. So yeah. Yeah, that's what I want for me. And then also the book and also be about keto, intermittent fasting, and how I recovered because that's what helped. Because of Oh, I'm sorry, I forgot to mention when I had a speech therapist, he had me tested. Like the aphasia was, so, I had a so my score was 77%.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 1:04:21

So I failed, but then eight months later, I hit 97.5%. That was, so it's 97% and that's past and I no longer had aphasia. There was like eight months, eight months after the stroke, but then, uh, I think the best thing that helped that was the diet, keto, and intermittent fasting.

Bill 1:04:56

That's amazing. Karla, thank you so much for being on the podcast and sharing your amazing story. I appreciate you being here. And good luck with your book and everything that it is that you're going to do.

Lianne Karla Bigornia 1:05:10

Thank you Thank you.

Intro 1:05:11

To discover how to support your recovery after a stroke go to
recoveryafterstroke.com