

# **The Stroke Of An Artist - Tracy Markley**

## **The Stroke Of An Artist with Tracy Markley.**

The stroke of an artist. Due to the gap in care for stroke patients after they leave rehabilitation, many stroke survivors seek out complementary methods to help them overcome their deficits.

When I was in rehabilitation I had 3 hours of rehabilitation every day 5 days a week for 4 weeks but when I was considered well enough to go home, outpatient rehabilitation occurred only 3 times a week for only an hour each time.

Of course my recovery had a long way to go and I was not going to be the best I could be with such a small amount of rehabilitation.

One of the keys to an ongoing recovery is to take responsibility for your own recovery and seek out other methods to heal and overcome your deficits.

That's what Gary did when he contacted Tracy. In the time that they worked together, Gary was able to make great steps to heal regain his ability to walk properly, and regain some feeling in his limbs

For more recovery stories check out Episode #29

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Intro 0:05

The Recovery After Stroke podcast helps you go from where you are to where you'd rather be.

Bill 0:14

Good day everybody and welcome to another episode of the transit lounge podcast. My guest today is Tracy Markley. Tracy is the owner of Tracy's personal training. She ran the Fitness Studio in Huntington Beach, California for 17 years before moving and rebuilding the business in Florence, Oregon, in 2013. She's a college-certified trainer and continues to gain education and holds many certifications, including scientific anatomy of the core and the back biomechanics specialist, Hatha and sports yoga polities, Aqua fitness, and more.

Bill 0:51

Tracy has recently published the book, the stroke of an Artist, the Journey of a fitness trainer and a stroke survivor, a fascinating journey. A stroke survivor who had great success in recovery, the book was written to bring hope, inspiration, and encouragement to those who are in recovery and their families. Now, if you're someone you care about, has had a stroke and has started the recovery, you'll know what is scary and confusing time you can be.

Bill 1:19

There are all these questions going through your mind. How long will it take to recover? Will I actually recover? What things should I avoid in case I make matters worse, my doctors and therapists were always helpful in explaining things, but obviously, because I'd never had a stroke before. I didn't know what questions to ask. And so I worried a lot and missed out on doing things that could have sped up my recovery.

Bill 1:42

So if you're finding yourself in that situation, stop worrying and head to [thetransitloungepodcast.com](http://thetransitloungepodcast.com) where you can download a guide that will help you it's called seven questions to ask your doctor after a stroke. These seven questions are the ones I wish I had asked when I had my stroke because they not helped me better understand my condition they helped me take a more active role in my recovery, rather than just waiting around to be told what to do at my next appointment head to the website now [thetransitloungepodcast.com](http://thetransitloungepodcast.com) and download the guide, it's free.

Bill 2:18

Now, just before we get started, I also wanted to let you know about some changes that are happening to [thetransitloungepodcast.com](http://thetransitloungepodcast.com). We're going from the name [thetransitloungepodcast.com](http://thetransitloungepodcast.com) to [recoveryafterstroke.com](http://recoveryafterstroke.com). And you won't need to do anything. Do whatever it is that you've always done to access the website and to access the podcast because we're going to do all the work in the background to make the transition smooth, and so that you don't notice the difference.

Bill 2:49

Even if you continue to use [thetransitloungepodcast.com](http://thetransitloungepodcast.com) web address, it's still going to redirect to the new website [recoveryafterstroke.com](http://recoveryafterstroke.com). The other thing I wanted to let you know about is that as part of the relaunch of the transatlantic podcast, we are going to go to [recoveryafterstroke.com](http://recoveryafterstroke.com), and we're going to include a membership section on the website.

Bill 3:14

And now this is a place where I would like to encourage everyone who's listening who's either a stroke survivor, or a carer, to come to, so that we can create a community where people can get together share stories, information about what helps for what help you in your recovery, or what has helped somebody else that you know, that's recovering, because I figured that one brain is just me doing what I do. Many brains together will do a better job at sharing information and creating a space where we can all grow together and recover together, share our successes, and also share the difficult times and get some feedback from people that understand us and know what it is that we're going through.

Bill 3:58

They'll be awesome. Small membership fee of around \$149 at the beginning, so I encourage you to come on board. That fee will not increase if you become a member within the first 12 months of the membership going live. And at this membership, or within this membership, I will be sharing some of the tools that I use to help me in my recovery, some courses and training that are put together.

Bill 4:22

And also some research that is being released that we need to be aware of so that we can adjust and make changes as research and technology improves and helps us to have a better stroke recovery. I also wanted to let you know that as part of

the membership, you'll be able to access me one on one in an environment where I can coach you and help you overcome your recovery I've been where you are. I have had six years in my own stroke recovery journey.

Bill 4:51

And I would love to help you and guide you and see you get better results and help you go from where you are to where you'd rather be. So, go ahead now and come across to [thetransitloungepodcast.com](http://thetransitloungepodcast.com) for a little while longer if you're listening in February of 2018, and subscribe to the email list so that when the site goes live, I can let you know. And you can come across it. You can check it out for yourself. Once again, thanks for listening to the transatlantic podcast, and now on with the show.

Bill 5:25

Tracy Good morning from Melbourne. Welcome to the program.

Tracy Markley 5:29

Good morning. Well, good afternoon from my end.

Bill 5:33

We have had some interesting times trying to get together and record this interview so I'm glad we finally got to make it happen.

Tracy Markley 5:42

Me too. I'm excited, I've been excited all day.

Bill 5:48

I've been excited for about a month since we first met and since we exchanged a couple of comments on a post that we're following on the internet on Facebook. Then since we tried to get together last time, and we couldn't get the technology to help us out, and now here we are, we finally made it. And the reason why I'm excited is because it's very rare that I get to speak to somebody who is on the other side of stroke in the caring aspect of stroke. And you're not a carer specifically, but you're somebody who helps people in their recovery. Can you give us a little bit of insight into how you're involved with people recovering from a stroke?

Tracy Markley 6:30

Well, I've been in the fitness industry for over 20 years, and all the different

dynamics that people I've worked with, but I've probably worked with about a couple dozen stroke patients and the last 20 years, all at different levels. And the particular survivor Gary, who was in my book, was such a unique case that it just had to be shared, because I work a lot with like the brain and the neurological parts of things, but not because I meant to it just kind of act it kind of just the work I did and studied kind of fell into that.

Tracy Markley 7:12

And when working with this one gentleman that I did, who's in my book, we got to work together pretty much five days a week almost. And it was a good example of doing something every day to get to give him the pathways a chance to come back for movements. And lots of times and we have therapy, it's, you know, half an hour twice a week or it's not something every day.

Tracy Markley 7:38

And the fact that he was every day doing something, it was such a good example that possibly if people did more than just a therapist say or not or not anyone that's a therapist or had just more that they can do. There's a possibility they may have more recovery than then they think they're able to

Bill 8:00

It does make sense because one of the things that happen when we get out of the hospital is often the doctors have set limitations. They've said things like, this is about what you can expect. They say things like, well, from now on, it's going to be slow and long and tedious and all those types of things. So they create these negative environments that they get people to go home with. And sometimes the mindset can be really difficult.

Bill 8:30

After stroke recovery we really struggle with during stroke recovery, we really struggle with not only all the things that are harder now, energy levels are harder. You know, the brain is not working properly thinking is not working properly. Then we also struggle with what we've been told that we can possibly achieve, and sometimes what the doctors say is negative so it doesn't surprise me.

Tracy Markley 8:53

It's hard to find your place to put your mindset on hope. Like having your hope. It's kind of As I see with people, you don't know where to place your hope and you

don't know, because you have limits in your mind. And possibly some limits are true, but maybe not. You don't know. But when I hear them be told that they, you know, after years as far as your and it gets like, That's not true. Like I was listening to the last interview you just uploaded.

Tracy Markley 9:25

And you mentioned to the gentleman, you're talking about how you get numbness in your leg still. Gary was almost three years post-stroke, and I was with him and he was standing on a Bosu ball and he said, the feeling just came back in my leg, three years post-stroke. And I'm like, Oh my god, I was with him when he got feeling back in his hand. So I saw him limited. Like the comments that people said and I thought, you know, I know there are people out there who probably know what I know.

Tracy Markley 9:57

But being a trainer I know the personal trainer name kind of comes cliché, sometimes there's a vast education that some have and some don't. And I push education a lot. I just don't think I if I live in my education, I would limit my clients. And I so like with working with, for instance, the gentleman who was getting all when he kept getting these feelings and sensations back, I'm like, this is so cool. I want people to know that he wanted to help people.

Tracy Markley 10:35

But I wanted people to know what I've experienced because there are probably people a lot smarter than me out there than my grab something that I found with him that make might make them go, oh, let's do this. That could help them even further than I know. You know, cuz. Does that make sense? Yeah, I just did. Share what I've experienced because that might help somebody else. Click Go Oh, okay. Let's go here.

Bill 10:58

Yeah. Just so that we can create the context. You got a copy of the book there that we're going to talk about a little bit later and pop it up into the middle of the screen. And that's the gentleman. Yep. That's the gentleman Gary that we're talking about, right?

Tracy Markley 11:14

Yes. Okay. And it's a stroke of an artist the journey of a fitness trainer and a

stroke survivor. I met him six months post-stroke in a walker and that's the most fragile ever started with someone that was a stroke survivor I meet him either the stroke didn't affect them as bad or I meet him further down the line. And so he was pretty amazing. And by the end, he was walking across Bosu balls and standing and Bosu balls doing battle ropes, and still getting sensations back.

Tracy Markley 11:45

He still was having issues he couldn't drive yet. But every once while you go, I can feel my finger, and when he I when I was with him when he was able to feel the coldness of a water bottle. I go what because I didn't used to feel The coldness I'm like, oh my god. So I think almost three years post-stroke for what he got sick. He never stopped making games.

Tracy Markley 12:09

And that's I think inspiring and hopeful for people and he started walking up to other people on Walker's or canes and saying you don't give up you can do this. And I want whatever our journey was to help everybody else have hope. And keep pushing through because I'm one of your talks I went and listened to most of your stuff. You were talking about the positive thinking and, and, and you I don't remember the exact story, but you're talking about someone, I think was calling their hand and name calling this.

Tracy Markley 12:44

I had a gentleman who was almost 90 and had a stroke. I met him probably a year and a half after, but his stroke affected him hold differently. You know, everybody's so different when it hits the brain. I think it affects us. The love and how their home is just everything. Everything affects survive the recovery, he would look at his hand and just call it names and he would get mad like not saying nice things to say nice things. And when you were talking about that one of your lectures and like yeah, that's so important. It is because you're, I feel your body hears you. And I find that just like women who want to lose weight. If they keep saying I'm never losing weight, I'm never losing weight. Really? They don't. Yeah, your body hears you

Bill 13:31

What happens is, I witnessed the difference in the change. So the person that you're talking about is Ivan. The person I call Ivan Ivan was in his late 70s, somewhere there and his hand wouldn't move. It wouldn't move the way that he

wanted it to move. So he would call it a bastard. And what happens is that he doesn't realize when he's using negative terms of describing himself, just like when you call somebody else a bastard that makes them feel certain things in a body that does the same thing to him.

Bill 14:03

So he didn't notice that it was changing the way that his body was responding, it was tensing up, it was going into a stress mode. You know, it was doing things that you would expect somebody else will do when you call them such a name. So then what happened was, I just told him, and I didn't tell him to pay attention, but I just told him to call this hand a friend. And when he called this hand, his friend, well, what's happening automatically is just like, your friend experiences, an amazing feeling when you call them your friend.

Bill 14:35

So does your body when you call it your friend and he was able to loosen up his hand without thinking about it. The tension went away, you know, the more fluidity came into the motion, and as a result, he experienced what he couldn't experience before that were just picking up the object and putting it in a different location without knocking it over. And for him, that lesson for him was just that maybe if he is nicer to himself without giving him the whole back in the whole spiel of why he needs to speak better, him just noticing the difference between one and the other was enough to get him going.

Tracy Markley 15:16

And if you think of the body, like your body is like a well, like a whole community, like your body is like a community working together. If you're hating one part of it, it's not going to work together. And so it was like you're hating something you want to work and it doesn't match up like it's not in a whole loving cycle together. And I think it makes a big difference.

Bill 15:36

Yeah, it makes a huge difference this person had in 30 seconds, more results than he has had in, you know, weeks or days. I'm not sure how long he was in the rehabilitation ward with me but he just got massive results just in that 30 seconds and everyone was stunned. So it's really amazing and hopefully, the people around also caught on a little bit the physiotherapist there were the other patients so I hope that that's what happened.



Bill 16:04

So part of this podcast is to get this type of information around and to get people like you who's had the opposite side of that to tell your story because I tell my story and it's great, but people need to hear from very various different methods. So how does somebody come to you to say, I want physical therapy do what is it that you do? How is it that people find you?

Tracy Markley 16:34

Well, normally, you know, because you only get so many physical therapy visits. And I think sometimes physical therapists are also limited in what they can do. As a trainer, we can almost get closer. You know, if we want to spend more time with you we can we can talk more we get a little more personal, I think. Yeah. And being personal is it brings out more like a lot like that. Well, this is allowed by my clients but he's the example in the book.

Tracy Markley 17:04

So communicating with them and knowing like, what's numb in the leg what's going on? Sometimes we might talk for 20 minutes before we can get into things. And when therapy you can't do that, and it's almost like, I become like the second brain when you know, communicating. So we're on the same path. What do you mean you can feel your finger now you couldn't feel it yesterday and I'm like, Okay, let's go do this now. And I kind of take my clients around with the body guiding them. And sometimes I think in therapy, they don't, maybe sometimes their passions are not there or they're limited just because that's how they are limited. There's the combo there.

Bill 17:45

I have specifically how specifically do you feel they're limited? What is it that limits them do you feel?

Tracy Markley 17:50

Well, like for example, I use the bosu ball and the balance disc a lot because when you're on those that helps stimulate the central nervous system, the brain In the spinal column, which I still helped get the pathways that can help connect pathways. And my me to tell you what the guy with a hand with that I wanted to tell you that since last time, so I asked the therapist was, why don't you guys send them home with something like this?

Tracy Markley 18:15

And he is it's a liability issue. So they can't really go here go use balances get home any more liability. I don't have that. So we have a different and like why does his therapist start coming to one of my Saturday morning classes that Gary was in and he goes, Oh, my God, he's doing so good. And I would talk about the brain and neurological system and he came back one day and he goes, I believe everything you're saying it's making sense I see the results because it's not my physical therapy books.

Tracy Markley 18:47

So I think also, now I think it depends on the mindset individually. I mean, there are personal trainers that just do enough to get a test and then they don't do anything more studying. There may be physical therapists. Absent every education, every field, but you have to keep expanding. So if you became a therapist 10 years ago, and you haven't furthered out with the new things on the brain and the neurological system and just the new studies, you may not be able to connect to a client, the way can help them. I've always been passionate about it.

Tracy Markley 19:20

And if there's always more I can learn to help the people I want to know I don't want to I don't want to limit a client because I limited me. Yeah, I don't stare. So I think that's one thing. I don't have the limits. And I get to be with them more personally. You know, when you're in physical therapy, there's usually like six people around you. They're on a schedule.

Tracy Markley 19:43

And I know many times with I work with people even people with back injuries, they come in and show me the piece of paper of exercises for back injuries where they all have the same exercises and they all have different reasons they have their back injuries and like God is just they're not a piece of paper. There's more to the people yeah. Getting to know my client.

Tracy Markley 20:01

And you guys personally I could say, What do you mean last night you ate that as you mentioned on that on the last one that you noticed when you eat processed foods, you have more numbness now I've accepted that the client I haven't thought that so now my brains and start watching people. So I learned from you

so, so everybody has their own personal thing they connect to and then I work off that.

Bill 20:27

Well. I like cookie cutters. Yeah, I agree with you completely. So that's exactly what happened to me and the timeline that we were on. We booked him for an hour. So for the first you know, X amount of time they do this, then they do that and they do that. But I think what it did for me was this situation where I had to go home and most of the time be without physical therapy because you only get three hours a week is what I got after I left.

Bill 20:52

And even while I was in hospital in rehab, only really got about three hours a day. Now. I know that that's actually pretty Quite a lot for somebody who's just recovering from a stroke because it's three hours a day is exhausting because they start, they start off with 10 minutes a day. And then they move up to 20 minutes a day. And then slowly after a month in rehabilitation, you're doing maybe three hours a day.

Bill 21:18

So for me, what was happening was there was a lot of downtime where I felt like I could be doing more, especially when I had energy. And I felt good about myself on that particular day or, you know, things were just going my way. And part of this message again, is I feel like is like, we need to take responsibility for our own healing as well so that when we're not with Tracy, so that we're not in physical therapy, we can, you know, do some things that are specific to us, that help us recover from a specific challenge a specific stroke or injury or whatever it is.

Bill 21:55

So, I know a lot of the people listening and watching on YouTube will have gone through Something similar and one of the constant complaints from people recovering from stroke is that there's just not enough therapy. There's just not enough services. And I didn't really enjoy it because I'm doing stuff that doesn't interest me. And that's what I love about what you do because, you know, people I imagine can tailor a program to their needs.

Tracy Markley 22:22

And it changes because you don't always know which pathways are coming back.

When so and because he's in the book because he was so so connected, he can come in and say, you know, yesterday I did this I'm like you did? Okay, let's go to that. Let's go do this now. So, that's really cool, but not everybody's that connected. So depends on how so you seem very in tune with yourself. So it also depends on the mindset. This is with any goal in life, how in tune you are with your own being.

Tracy Markley 22:55

If you can, you know you know when you're sad because this happened or you You're really tired because you didn't sleep or did you get into a fight with your wife? I mean, there's so many if you know kind of why your body's in the state that it is it helps. I know sometimes that does stroke things you don't know why things do things either. But the more in tune you are, that helps me get in tune so that we were so in tune from the day we met it made it almost like this magical thing.

Tracy Markley 23:22

And it just made us feel like this journey should help somebody somewhere and he always said if this story does help one person that one person is worth it. But I like I was they did a big article on in the big newspaper last weekend and I got a call from a woman who's about an hour and a half away her husband's 90 and had a stroke and she said that he's very energetic and he wants to do things he seems like he has a person I like Gary doesn't want to sit around like like you said he these days he feels like I can do more.

Tracy Markley 23:53

He would get up and do more. He'd go walk or something and what she said and I thought this was kind of interesting. You said, and like, and I'm not putting that on the therapist at all. She said, the therapist just seemed just so humdrum. And they're just there. They're not connecting personally and they're just like, yeah, whatever she was, but you seem like you care and, and, and it was very sweet how she picked. She got that. And that was nice. But I think that's the thing too.

Tracy Markley 24:22

You're not going to like if you go to a counselor or therapist you connect personally with the people you're going to kind of develop more like your friend you open up more with friends you connect to than just a stranger in the street. I think you're healing your body. It's especially at the level after a stroke and you

can barely connect to things and it helps to have someone with you. That connects at that level that you get. Do you get what I'm saying?

Bill 24:49

I get it. in Episode 10 of the podcast, I interviewed a lady called Claire about a stroke and she had a therapist come over who was quite stiff. Let's just say that the way that she spoke to her was not very, you know, not very, not very likely to make you feel comfortable around this person.

Bill 25:13

And she, the therapist told Claire, move your bad hand, etc, etc, and Claire had to interrupt and say, Look, I didn't have a bad hand. I have a hand that's recovering. I have a hand that's getting better, but not a bad hand. So please don't use words and sentences like I have a bad hand because I don't so that therapist was really taken aback and she never came back. She actually asked him not to have Claire as a client anymore.

Tracy Markley 25:46

Yeah, I didn't make her say oh, wow, let me change that. Wow. Because I know a couple of times with Gary I go we would say that go not the bad hand that we would switch because it just sometimes it came out that way but you didn't mean to like, No, no, no, we don't mean that. Um, can I tell you about my guy's hand? I really wanted to tell you that.

Bill 26:04

Before you tell me about your guy's hand, tell me about Gary, because we've spoken about him a lot on his part of your book. So let's talk about Gary, who he was, how you met him, etc. And then how long you work together and some of the changes. Let's see if we can do a five-minute sort of chat about Gary.

Tracy Markley 26:23

So I met Gary in November 2014. He was at six months past stroke, post-stroke, and his sister made the call to me. And then when they came in to meet me, he was in his walker. And I remember when he was approaching me, I thought, okay, that must be Gary. And I remember my first thought was, I've never worked with someone so fragile, and then I got a little nervous at first with it.

Tracy Markley 26:48

No, I can do this and we just connected. So I think because we're both in tune. We

were both connected, plus, we're both here in the city. Small Town Florence, Oregon, but we both came from California and towns next to each other. And he was older than me like 20, almost 20 years old about 17. But we went to the same college, the same surf and beach spots all growing up.

Tracy Markley 27:15

So we had a lot of familiarity that made us connect. When they were approaching me, he was with his sister's brother-in-law and neighbor, and they were laughing. And I remember thinking, How neat he has this support group. I mean, who comes to therapy with this pack of people? I thought that was I thought that seemed like a lot of love around them. And they were they laughed a lot. And I thought that that meant something really good too.

Tracy Markley 27:43

And we just, he trusted me instantly, which was really kind because we were shown some things at the beginning. We're talking and he just said, I go when you're ready, you can do it. And I remember him saying we're talking I'm sitting on a ball and doing some things. He said I don't understand how they will do that yet, but I trust you. And I thought, Oh, that's so neat. So that helped that we had because sometimes you just meet people, you have that connection.

Tracy Markley 28:09

And so it took them, I think least three months to remember my name. He was an artist, he made a living on artistic artworks in Colorado and the art shops here. And in California, artists were his whole life, pretty much known in the art industry for him. And he couldn't read, write or do his artwork anymore. And he had the art to still sign he couldn't even sell until he learned to write again. So he was going through all that. And his wife at home would help him with things as well.

Tracy Markley 28:46

And I think she would have him doing things such as putting pins and bottles and he was he'd never went a day when he was working on stuff. As soon as he could, he would go on a treadmill. Hold on, walk really slow. He said that he felt it didn't make sense to sit around. He's made sense in his head, the more he tried to walk, the more come back. And I saw I read them some studies that like Cleveland Clinic and other study groups, you know, other hospitals and search and research people did about as soon as you can get walking on a treadmill and hold on.

Tracy Markley 29:22

And so he said at home, he would get up every hour and try to walk 20 minutes, or as much as he could. He did this on his own before I even met him. So he's always just doing something which I thought was great. He wasn't a client that came in and I'd say, did you do your work? No. So he worked so well with me because he was on the same page of his recovery as I was sometimes you work with clients, whether it's weight loss or whatever they're recovering from in their body, that I care more than they do.

Tracy Markley 29:57

They don't do their homework which is very important. They don't know you give them k do this every day at home I didn't do my stuff and then you kind of you can only take him so far he did everything. And so he came to me three days a week for an hour a day, an hour each visit and he would on the other days he would still come to the gym and he would try to do some of the stuff he could do and I go check him and talk to him.

Tracy Markley 30:22

And if he kept getting you know as time goes on, he got to do a little more. And a pride that he almost a year he was able to go to my ploidies class but he would sit right next to me in the classes so I can direct him. And he got to the point I taught 10 classes a week of different things so he was training with me during the week in private and took every class I taught except for yoga because I did the keep the folding. I didn't think yoga would be good for him.

Tracy Markley 30:51

But he did the ploidies of the core. He was able to you know walk Bosu balls he was able to lay on the the biggest Swiss balls and walk out his hand and he was able to do things that when I lit he, you know, you know, how does first one can do anything? Yeah, I've never I'm just like dragging his hand dragging his foot. And it got to the point where he can start doing things. It just it was, it was fascinating to watch him.

Tracy Markley 31:16

Just go like that, and, and he was always very positive. And we would laugh a lot, but he's very connected. He wanted to learn. And, but he'd have his time. So he just comes in and says, you know, stroke sucks.

Bill 31:32

That's important to say Actually, yeah.

Tracy Markley 31:35

Yeah. And I remember him saying that so often that one day I go, you know, we should write a book and call it Dear Stroke, You Suck and write your journey because you have a journey that's a little more outstanding than the typical client. And I'm with you five days a week. You know, that's a rare thing for both of us. And will sometimes six days a week, and so we kind of laughed it off, but I thought, No, we have to do this.

Tracy Markley 31:59

So we did it while I did it he couldn't be right but right about a month or two for the book was going to editing he was starting he was he's been doing this artwork again. It wasn't the same. He wasn't really happy with it. And so I asked him, What is it like now? And he said that you know, when he used to do his artwork, he can, you know, I want to paint a long black line and he could now it's a thick, thick short stroke and it drives him crazy. I'm like, oh, a stroke of an artist.

Tracy Markley 32:29

Let's change the name of the book. So that's how we named the book it just kind of had two little things but it made sense. And but throughout the journey, like he came in with the brace on his leg, always forget the name of those. They do that a lot for drop foot. Yeah. And I remember the first couple of weeks, and he showed me his brace and I said, You know, I don't get how the body wherever we build with the leg needs a dude down there with that on there.

Tracy Markley 32:58

So I go Can I see what you Move like without it? And he didn't want that thing he would tell he was totally inhabiting the rest of his life. Well, I think within the first couple of weeks with him is gone. He just stopped wearing it. He would wear it there, take it off. And I was able to help him get his foot drop and everything coming back in. But with that on you can't and that's I'm telling you this should take that off. But because we worked with them from a center, I believe people your body goes to the center. I mean, like Wait, let me rephrase that, working from the inside the body out.

Tracy Markley 33:31



So my studies are, the brain sends a message to the parts of the center of the body to stabilize before movement. So you have that in the book too. You have the multifidus, the transverse muscle, and the pelvic floor, they're on the same neurological loop. The multifidus is muscle all down the spine, the little ones go all the way down. And that's the main stabilizer of the spine, spine and a lot of studies say that Muscles, get the message before anything else to stabilize the body, you're going to move.

Tracy Markley 34:06

So I always start with almost all my clients making sure that system is programming it but in my head, if your body is programmed to send messages places, and it gets to the center of the body, and this isn't programming, it makes sense to me it's going to take longer for new pathways to get to the limbs because it's a system and it's kind of breaking down in the middle.

Tracy Markley 34:30

So and working with him he was such an extreme case and we would see things to get the feeling backness tan that made me really start reaching out to people who are you know, way smarter than me in the industry and ask them questions. Why do you think that they would? So I'm not afraid to ask because if I don't know something I'm not going to pretend I do because that's not fair.

Bill 34:54

Yeah. I was gonna say like, what's interesting is that he was. And if I go back I remember the story about Ivan and about how he was talking about his head. That I wonder, do you feel like you would have had a better result if he just embraced the difference in his art? Because he was still an artist. And perhaps he wasn't able to make fine lines anymore? Or for the time being, do you think he would have had a better outcome or a better result or felt better about himself if he worked on the mindset to embrace the new version of his art?

Tracy Markley 35:31

He was really trying he was really working on that, and his other artwork looked good. It just didn't look like he was used to doing so. He was still trying to make peace with the changes. And then when the idea fitness they're like education of idea journal. They did an article on us for an in-recovery success. And when that article came out, almost just his focus wasn't So much art, all he wanted to do is have a story finished in the book.

Tracy Markley 36:05

So it could help people. And he just wanted to show that his journey just changed. He wanted to do art, but trying to find peace with his new art became not so important to him anymore. It was kind of kind of cool. It was me and some people didn't understand that. But he did I understood it because he knows how hard it is to come back from a stroke and how frustrating it is to try to make your body work like it used to and think and forget when you're talking and all those things that come with it are so frustrating and some people don't get that.

Tracy Markley 36:39

I know a couple of people say well, why does all you do is talk about that, like, well, this whole world got taken away from him? And his goal right now is to recover. And that's his life. It's like it's his new passion now to recover. People talk about their passion and he can't drive anymore. You know, usually, you know, you can just get in a car and take Gotham drive and duty. Oh, that's a big thing to lose. Yeah.

Bill 37:04

You get to drive now I get to drive. Yeah, I wasn't allowed to drive for the first six months of the first bleed and that was six years ago. Actually, February is the six-year anniversary of the first bleed that I experienced. So not driving for six months, then I got the driving back. And after my surgery in November 2014, I didn't drive for three months.

Bill 37:33

So that was quite an interesting time relying on other people to pick you up or, you know, trying to get onto public transport with your balance being an issue and all those types of things. It was scary at times and also I don't look like I've had any neurological problems. So when I get on a train, or in Melbourne, we have trains or buses.

Bill 37:56

It's very difficult for me to say to somebody I really need to sit down in that chair that's been set aside for the disabled passengers because they'll look at you and they'll go, Well, you don't look like there's anything wrong, right? You know. So it's a bit of a lot of people experience the whole invisible disability, where we're challenged by certain things, but you can't tell so you don't show you assume that there's nothing wrong with you, you look just like them anyone else.

Bill 38:27

So it gives it a bit of an insight into mental health challenges that people face. So I'm back driving now and I gotta say that getting the ability back to Dr. Has was probably one of the biggest things you know, just not needing to ring people and rely on people and all that was a big deal for me.

Bill 38:51

You know, so I, I hope that people still not driving after the stroke. I hope that they're finding a way to overcome it, get through it, or be okay with the fact that they can't drive. For me, I didn't get a chance to find new ways to do things. Because I had everyone just coming around and picking me up and dropping me off and taking me places. And in hindsight, the distance the times that the amount of time that I was the last job wasn't that long. It was only six months.

Bill 39:27

And it was at the very, it was at the time when I was very unwell. So I think the independence thing was more related to how unwell I was rather than the ability not to drive so by that I mean that it was related to Am I always going to be this unwell, where I won't be able to drive it was kind of that that was playing on my mind more than I really want to go somewhere today and I can't go because I can't drive it was more I want to go somewhere and I can't Because I don't feel well, I'm not doing well. You know it is a very different thing.

Tracy Markley 40:08

And in your head, you also don't know how long am I not going to fail? Well, you're gonna be there's a lot of dynamics that goes on at the exhausting. Did you experience vision loss?

Bill 40:18

No, I didn't have any vision loss. I didn't have any hearing challenges here like that. I just didn't the distance was a bit of an issue and judging distances I didn't really grasp the concept of how far things were away from me. I didn't know what at the time but what I remember now is that I used to walk through doorways and knock into the door or knock into the door frame, and I didn't understand why that was happening. But it was because of my I wasn't able to really properly judge just distance from me.

Tracy Markley 40:54

You lose your spatial awareness of what's in your space. Yeah, that that's interesting Remember, in the book if I'm interrupting you? I remember well not in the book with Gary. I remember him just out of the blue one day just stopping in the gym and saying, you know, I know there are cars over there driving, I know people are here, but I don't feel them. And I'm like, Oh my god, he just described awareness of spatial awareness and proprioception.

Tracy Markley 41:20

And he didn't even know about this stuff. Like God, the sky is still connected. And then I was with him when the day when he got he was standing on the balance and just doing things in it because I gotta tell you something, he gets off and he goes, it's like my rural juices stop here. And now it's here and I went, Oh my god, he got it back.

Tracy Markley 41:36

Man. It was just it was like magical. But those you have to you have to work on getting that stuff back to it. And sometimes it comes back. Sometimes you have to work it just everybody's different. Some people think just come back. And you will have to work hard on it. But being focused and doing things and I don't think you always know which one you are. You just have to keep trying things if that makes sense. You just don't know. Because stroke is so different.

Bill 42:03

Yeah, you have to be curious. You have to be curious about or what if I try this? And what if I try that and, then you'll discover things that you didn't know before you tried it? So I said, I think that's what got me to where I am curiosity, you know, constantly learning, learning from others researching what I could when I could, and you know, six years down the track. I have a lot of information on I'm about to start sharing that in a membership section of this particular podcast.

Bill 42:32

So the website will change names from the transit lounge podcast to [recoveryafterstroke.com](http://recoveryafterstroke.com). And [recoveryafterstroke.com](http://recoveryafterstroke.com) will be the podcast, which is something that people can just listen to as you did. And then there'll be a membership section where people can come to sign up for a year and run through some courses that I've put together and also get coached one on one by me. What's really important is what you're your client, Gary was saying is that we need to now share this information with other people. There's no point in me

knowing all these things about what helped me and keeping it to myself. What's the point of that?

Tracy Markley 43:12

Yeah. Because there may be one thing that you like when you mentioned earlier in that other in your other interview about how you connected to the fact that you got more numbness, you felt more numb the day after you had processed food. I'm like, wow, that that saying that I'm pretty sure in the next year, I have a client and that's going to help them. That's just how it is. And you learn little things.

Bill 43:35

All little things can help. Yeah, so do me a favor. Can you tell me how the book came to be? So you guys decided that you're going to write a book or put a book out but you actually wrote it, which you know, a lot of people say let's write a book. I'm gonna write a book what made you write it?

Tracy Markley 43:53

Records of his just amazing moments, and sneeze excuse me if I do. Um, and I would just I was just so in awe about the stuff with him. And one of the times as they were talking I was telling him I'm going to write this and I don't know I think he believed I did it because like you said people say things. So I was keeping notes and I actually kept notes in a like a just a construction paper book of colors that would go to this page and write this and when I did some I saw I had like a treadmill page I think I just don't all over it was it was organized in a sense, I guess.

Tracy Markley 44:32

And then one day I just sat down, okay, it's time to put it in writing on the computer and I didn't know what I was doing. How do you write a book? I don't know. So I just kept writing then, as things were coming together, I'd meet someone that's written a book before or one thing that was just everything about this journey was just crazy cool so I wanted to put a chapter and muscles in there I wanted to put a chapter on knowledge, least what I know of knowledge because I know with me if I understand why I'm doing things, it would make more sense to me.

Tracy Markley 45:06

Plus, I hope anyone who's a trainer in the fitness industry who doesn't know a lot

about things has strokes, it might help them help somebody better. Because I don't like what I said earlier, I don't think it's fair to pretend you know something. When you don't, I think it's very proper for a trainer to say, you know what, the trainer over there is more experienced in this, you should see them, they help be more I just think that's so much better. It's kinder, and it's fair than to fake it.

Tracy Markley 45:32

So I wanted to put whatever I knew out there, so it can help whoever too So, um, so I couldn't draw muscles. So one day I'm at the gym and this lady comes in and I'm talking to her and I'm showing her some things and I said, you know, you really understand the muscles. Were you a nurse just oh, no, I did anatomy and illustrations for nursing manuals for 25 years.

Tracy Markley 45:56

Why do you need my services I need to volunteer my time and like what are you kidding me? And then I told her about the book she was all help you. I'm like, seriously? So she did. I told her I wanted she did you know some of the things I wanted and, yeah, and that and then you know Gary being an artist I told the next day and he's like, Oh my god, you know how hard is to find an artist even does that kind of stuff but then she walks into this gym and this small town to you and offers. I know this book is just meant to be. So everything was just saying don't stop this project. And then as we you know, when he got sick.

Bill 46:39

When Gary got sick?

Tracy Markley 46:41

Yeah, he got sick. He was doing really well. In fact, about a week that two weeks before he had to go to the hospital. That's when the numbness was coming back into his leg. He got all the I mean, the feeling came back in his leg. And the interesting thing too, is his balance got a little off again. It's like his brain had to learn how to re-balance with feeling in the leg.

Bill 47:02

Yes, absolutely.

Tracy Markley 47:03

Yeah, it was readjusting and I'm like an every like every unique little detail. I could see it he can feel it. That's what made it so cool. And we want this story

shared because I don't think everybody gets that opportunity. And it helped me know what to do next. Because I remember he was this little out of balance and like I you know, I think it's because your leg is feeling it and you have to balance was feeling it now you couldn't feel it pretty sure right and we would mean he actually got to the point where we'd be doing stuff and he would come in you I'm feeling kind of off today.

Tracy Markley 47:40

I go you know, it really seems like before you have a big game you feel off for a couple of days, and all of sudden you have a change. He goes I think you're right. So it started be the point he come into the gym and ago. I think something else is going to change. I feel a little off and it would I mean that's how in tune he was and then our connection being in tune but that was really cool. So anyway, so the book just kept going.

Tracy Markley 48:04

And he made me promise no matter what to finish it like I am, but it was hard. You know, at one point we thought maybe don't use his name. And so I had called, we changed his name to something different in the book then we change it back. And then you know then when he called me one day and said, You know, I won't make it to class today. You know, I couldn't breathe last night, so I knew that he needed to go for valve replacement.

Tracy Markley 48:29

And so he was in the hospital, maybe six or seven days before he had the surgery. We are talking every day and he was just like, Let's get this over with let's make this the last chapter in the book, my heart surgery and recovery, and we'll move from there and then he had the surgery that went well. They went back in he had a massive heart attack, which sometimes they say that's common, but something happened and it went into more complications in his colon and it just end up being sick after six weeks, he passed and that was just last May and it was very hard.

Tracy Markley 49:03

So we have three people trying to edit the book me and these two other girls as we're trying not to cry because we're editing and grieving and, you know, so I think it turned out pretty good for all this book went through a lot to get out.

Bill 49:18

Yeah, understand like, It's amazing firstly that you connected with a client it's really heartwarming to see a physical therapist who has this type of connection, but then you know, somebody who's a personal trainer who's not really in that state of play, you know, normally it's really heartwarming as well to see that you had this connection with this person. It's great to say that you're able to nail-tell the story about the results that you noticed the difference between the before and the after in your client who became your friend and who became your co-author.

Bill 49:55

And It's really important that these messages get out there because there are a lot of people that are going through tough times and I think the more and more I share the stories and interview people, the more I'm thinking about the carers and you're not necessarily a carrier but the people that you're supporting the most. Who you may not realize you're also supporting is the carer because if you get you know that person back home better than what they were when they started then the carrot gets more relief. They get their life back. They get less place.

Tracy Markley 50:33

Yeah, because if you can go down the street start walking without a cane now your partner Yeah, just it changes the whole dynamics of your whole life.

Bill 50:40

Yeah, so not only get me back on track and me feeling great about myself, you're affecting so many other people in the community in the family in my circle, just like that as well. You're doing more than just recovering the health of one person.

Tracy Markley 50:59

Yeah. Which is kind of neat and I know I know that but hearing you say it's like oh yeah, I forget that part when you do but sometimes you kind of feel in your heart It's like oh, that's kind of cool. Well, you know, but when I was when the book was ready to come out, which was November I was just it just out of the blue it just hit me.

Tracy Markley 51:20

I sat down I start crying and I thought, Oh my God, if I went limited my education I would've limited his result and he would have always thought it was the stroke



and it wouldn't have been the stroke would have been the person the trainer he was with didn't want to learn anymore and thought that was good enough and he would have spent the rest of his life just okay this my life I had a stroke I'll never get that off my leg and I thought wow, that's so profound and it made me so sad and it made me more even more want just to get out and go come on you trainers get more educated or even therapist learn you know, just reach out more because these people are trying so hard to get better.

Tracy Markley 52:05

And if you give them no hope or limit them, they're not even gonna know it's not them. I mean, they're not even gonna know it was that person to help them they're gonna think oh, yeah, I had a stroke. This is all I can do or, whatever recovering from it. They don't know they're limited by outside or outside people.

Bill 52:25

Influences. Yeah, absolutely.

Tracy Markley 52:28

They're gonna think it's just an illness and that's not even the case sometimes maybe sometimes Yes, but not in his case that wouldn't have been

Bill 52:34

Yeah, as a coach as well, somebody who coaches people to overcome, you know, life challenges or whatever it is. And do you get that insight into understanding what it was that perhaps made them feel like, Well, I can't do that? And sometimes it stems back to many, many years prior to you know, the time that I get to spend with them in the coaching environment.

Bill 52:57

And you get to hear them say things like, you know, You're never going to be able to play footy or any of that sort of stuff or soccer or whatever. And when, when you ask them why that is because it maybe it was something that somebody said to them when they were 12 that somehow for some reason stuck in their head, and they just repeated that and play that tape over and over and over again and just convinced themselves that they couldn't do it.

Bill 53:23

You know, and then the challenge with that is say that person becomes a physical therapist and uses their idea of whether or not football can or cannot be played

under these circumstances. If they use their idea and project that idea onto their patient. Yes, then they're causing harm, they are causing harm and they are limiting themselves because not only have they stopped themselves from playing a sport that they may have loved they stopping somebody else from getting to that point.

Bill 53:55

And it's exactly what you're saying. There needs to be a lot of self-awareness in How we speak what we say not only to ourselves, but obviously to our clients, if a physical therapist is not encouraging, and if a physical therapist is drawing on their own personal, inadequate feelings about what's possible, then that they're not going to be supporting somebody, they're just going to be making matters worse.

Tracy Markley 54:21

And I know one time when I first moved here to Oregon, somebody ran, drove into my car and I had to wear a little brace on my hand, and I had to go the physical therapist, and first he was 45 minutes late. And then he taught the night I had an MRI and it said I had a pole ligament and I was working with gymnastics and I like doing handstands still. And he said, Oh, well, you're too old.

Tracy Markley 54:44

You should be doing handstands anyway. You don't have he said, You don't have a torn ligament. Its age. And I went, Oh my God. I saw an orthopedic. It's so I complained about never going back, but just my experience. I knew better but if you get somebody like that and you don't know better and you it's it can change the whole world. So people like that shouldn't be therapists. It's not fair. I don't know why they're there. They're not honoring, or helping people. I don't know why they're there. Yeah, that's to me. I agree. Supposed to care.

Bill 55:19

Yeah, I completely agree. Well, I'm glad that you do. I'm glad that you got to write the book can you as we wrap up, can you let people know where they can get a copy of your book? Can you hold it up to the middle of the screen one more time for the people listening on iTunes? That's perfect. For the people listening. There'll be a copy of the book, and the photo on the website, so you'll be able to go to the website and check it out. Click the link and find where you can get it. But Tracy, where can people find a copy of the book?

Tracy Markley 55:54

You can get it on my website if you want. Once signed, I can send it to and it's [tracyspersonaltraining.com](http://tracyspersonaltraining.com) now, and my name personal Training calm. It's also on Amazon. And it's in paperback and Kindle. But this week it also came out on Audible because I know a lot of stroke survivors can't read. So I got some independent Audible, and it's finished. It's on [audible.com](http://audible.com) as of right now and sometime in the next few days, it's going to be available on Amazon and iTunes.

Tracy Markley 56:27

So it's just in the process. Right? And it was so new to me. Yeah, that's Yeah, people can't Gary couldn't read he wouldn't be able to read the book. And plus also as caregivers, wife's husband, spouses, cousins, whoever is in your pack of people. They're too tired to read. Yeah, they're up with you. They're worried about you. So it's only it's less than an hour and a half to listen to it. It's pretty quick. So I just thought this needs to so we did it was a neat little project but um, yeah Is your eyes and listen and not read.

Bill 57:02

I love it. That's excellent. That's excellent.

Tracy Markley 57:05

People tell me when stroke survivors tell me, I just keep reading the same paragraph over and over. I can't process it. Like, well, how is this going to help them? So yeah, so it's, it's getting, I'm hoping by the end of the week or next week, all it's available to all three things but it takes a process. And yeah, they send an email when it's available.

Bill 57:27

Yeah. And recently, you wrote another book.

Tracy Markley 57:30

I did, and it's called tipping toward balance. And it's about there's a little bit Gary has a little part in there too. But it's about eight different chapters, little short chapters, maybe two pages each have different people that had balance issues, tripping issues, tripping and falling, and different illnesses are elements that brought into that and then I put in the eight exercises I use with people and then use a lot of them but these basic eight I always use people bounce issues so those are at the end.

Tracy Markley 58:06

And it's because I've had several people here in town tell me that now when they go hiking and our beautiful forest we can hike and they start they trip over the roots are there for some reason they had the foot drop so they've lost the awareness and space where they step over items. So these things I've done with people, all these people in the book, they've gotten it back and when was 90 he doesn't fall down anymore. I worked with ladies hundred and five so I have these little pieces of people in there and hopefully will help them. Other trainers learn how to help clients better with things.

Bill 58:41

Definitely going to help. It is definitely definitely going to help everything that you've said just to me, is all the things that I wish that I could have learned and done early on. without all the research and all the trying to find all the different solutions and answers and trying to find all the different people. I think what's great about it is that I take my book now. And I need a physical therapist, I take that book, my copy of it.

Bill 59:05

And I just hand it to her and say, Look, read this, this is what I need. If you can help me out, you know, in these areas, that will be great. I need you to take this particular approach. It's another amazing tool in the toolbox of stroke recovery. Thank you very much for thinking of doing it. I thank you very much for doing it and putting the effort in and making it available in the audiobook, that's even better.

Bill 59:28

That is just the most amazing thing because it's exactly what you said when I was trying to get my ability to read back. I would just go over one paragraph Forever, forever. And just over and over. And it's not that I didn't. It wasn't a complicated book. It was just that I couldn't process in my head what that paragraph was saying, I couldn't remember what I started, you know, 10 lines back so I had to go back and keep reading it.

Tracy Markley 59:54

And I've heard so many people tell me that.

Bill 59:56

Yeah, and it's part of the learning process, but it's also challenging, especially when you just want to get good. Get through a good read or, you know, a good book.

Tracy Markley 1:00:05

Frustrating. And then you're in you're also I know, in people's heads when that stuff's going on, like, is this ever going to come back? And you know, it's not like you're being negative, but is it you do think was this how it's always going to be? Is it gonna come back even though people may call that negative thinking, it's really not it's kind of natural wonder to so I think that happens to I think we get into the negative thinking when it's not negative thinking and it mixes people up in their own process of thoughts, natural to have.

Tracy Markley 1:00:34

And I think that limits people too, because they're battling with not being negative, and they're really being positive and the whole negative positive thing I think, messes with people's heads. Because sometimes you're gonna have a doubt because it is natural. You know, what, how long is this going to last? Well, I feel like that next year, I have another stroke. I mean, I think those things are normal to have and we're in it is just another stress to put on you to judge thought you know what I mean?

Bill 1:01:00

Absolutely, it goes lovely to get to know you for about an hour, I look forward to keeping in touch and learning about the successes that you have. Please feel free to drop me a line anytime. I'd love to know what it is that you're up to. And there anything I can do to help out, please?

Tracy Markley 1:01:17

And I know several people I know are gonna start watching your YouTube too, because I've been telling people I'm hearing you. So thank you. I loved hearing you on your videos, but I went and looked you up like, Oh, these are great. I can be part of it exciting.

Bill 1:01:32

Yeah, well, let's thank you so much for saying that it does. It is what I can do to give back and to start sharing what I know and what other people know. What's the point of us holding on to that and not telling anyone about it?

Tracy Markley 1:01:45

And you were funny too, like and he's funny too.

Bill 1:01:49

I try and be sometimes I say dad jokes to my kids they don't think I'm funny.

Tracy Markley 1:01:56

They will someday.

Bill 1:01:59

Well, thanks again. Tracy will talk soon.

Tracy Markley 1:02:01

Okay, thank you have a good day.

Intro 1:02:04

This has been a production of [recoveryafterstroke.com](http://recoveryafterstroke.com). Subscribe to the show on iTunes and check us out on Twitter. The presenters and special guests of this podcast intend to provide accurate and helpful information to their listeners.

Intro 1:02:29

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