

# Thunderclap Headache and Stroke - Georgie Hennah

Georgie Hennah experienced a thunderclap headache and stroke due to an Arteriovenous malformation that ruptured when she was 22 years of age.

Highlights:

02:26 Introduction

03:33 Thunderclap Headache And Stroke

09:01 Possible Symptoms

19:18 Recovery Support

27:09 Independent At 15

34:21 Accepting The New You

43:28 Stroke Closes And Opens Doors

56:06 Improvise, Adapt, And Overcome

1:05:26 You're Not Alone

Transcription:

Georgie Hennah 0:00

On a smaller scale in relation to like my relationship with exercise. So I was, as I mentioned, like super sporty and into my fitness pre-bleed. And I think in the beginning I unfollowed I mean, I came off Instagram for months whilst I was just, you know, focusing on myself, but when I redownloaded it, I muted everyone that posted that they were going to the gym I unfollowed like so many fitness accounts because I was so envious, that I couldn't move my body in the way that "normal" people could.

Intro 0:40

This is the recovery after stroke podcast, with Bill Gasiamis, helping you navigate recovery after stroke.

Bill Gasiamis 0:53

Hello, and welcome to episode 227 of the recovery after stroke podcast. To learn more about my guests, including links to their social media and other pages. And to download a full transcript of the entire interview, please go to

recoveryafterstroke.com. If you would like to support this podcast, the best way to do that is leave a five-star review and a few words about what the show means to you on iTunes, and Spotify.

Bill Gasiamis 1:19

If you're watching on YouTube, comment below the video like this episode and to get notifications of future episodes, subscribe to the show and hit the notifications Bell. Now if you do leave a five-star review that's going to increase the ranking of the show on the search engines. And that's going to make it easier for other stroke survivors to find the show.

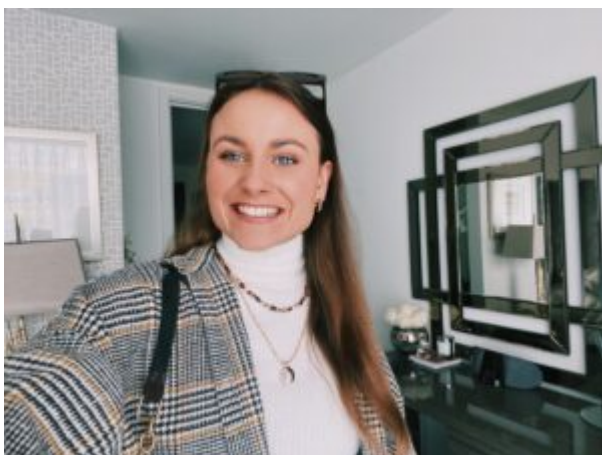
Bill Gasiamis 1:42

And that's going to help them overcome some of the challenges that they're going through, especially if they are earlier on in the recovery compared to where you might be. And if you remember how good it was for you to come across this podcast and find it and the relief that you felt and the ability to get some answers to your questions that it managed to cause for you.

Bill Gasiamis 2:11

Then that's exactly what other people are going to feel and this podcast is about making it easier for other people to recover from stroke, not feel so alone. I would really appreciate it if you did leave me a review, hopefully a five-star review.

## Introduction - Georgie Hennah



Bill Gasiamis 2:26 And also if you share the podcast and let people know about it. Now my guest today is Georgie Hennah, who experienced a thunderclap headache and a stroke due to a ruptured AVM age 22. She has had to learn how

to walk again and has a great approach to living with deficits that you must hear. Georgie Hennah, welcome to the podcast.

Georgie Hennah 2:49

Thank you for having me.

Bill Gasiamis 2:52

My pleasure. Thanks for being here. Tell me a little bit about what happened to you.

Georgie Hennah 2:56

So, for context, I'm 25 years old, I live in London. But in May 2020 when I was 22 I completely out of the blue had a brain hemorrhage which was caused by a ruptured AVM I had no idea that the AVM was there. This all came out, you know, they kind of suspected it but it took about 24 hours to actually realize that it was due to an AVM because the variety of scans I'm sure you know you've done lots of podcasts and I'm not sure what your cause of stroke was.

## Thunderclap Headache And Stroke



Georgie Hennah 3:33

But with the AVMs the bleed shows up on CT scan and things but I've had to have an angiogram which is shot the blood vessels which then showed the AVM so anyway, completely out of the blue. It was my sister's birthday, it was during the height of the pandemic and it was towards the end of the day and I was just going to bed and then out of nowhere just had like this massive what I soon discovered

to be called a thunderclap headache.

Georgie Hennah 3:55

And quickly wanted to rush out of bed to be sick. But then as I went to get out of bed, my left side was gone. This all is like a bit of a blur. Like I was conscious throughout the whole thing, but obviously I had absolutely no idea what was happening. And I had had a few drinks in the daytime I was pretty much sober when I went to bed.

Georgie Hennah 4:29

But I think because I've been drinking in the day I kind of was like, Oh, am I all of a sudden really drunk again? Like it was very, in a way I actually think that was a blessing because I think that kind of softened the whole blow of it. I think I was more like, oh my god, I'm just really drunk all of a sudden.

Georgie Hennah 4:47

Anyway, my boyfriend was with me. He knew that that wasn't the case. And I mean I was being sick everywhere and yeah, like said my left side had gone. I was like a rag doll basically. And my mum came rushing in. And within about 20 minutes the ambulance arrived. And yeah, went off to my local hospital.

Georgie Hennah 5:08

Again, that was all a bit of a blur. I just heard, you know, phrases being like all the medical terms being thrown around. And it was just all like, what is going on and a bit of context as well, I had never really been to hospital before, apart from when I was about, I don't know, like, nine, I'd broken my arm skiing.

Georgie Hennah 5:27

So that was ages and ages ago. And so yeah, it was a complete blur, and then complete shock to everyone. But in the ambulance. That's when I kind of realized, like, Okay, there's something about the nature of paramedics, they're just so calming, and I'm every paramedic I've ever met, has just been so lovely that I felt really safe.

Georgie Hennah 5:56

But equally, you know, the things that they were saying, I was like, oh my God, this is really serious. But they said, like, bleed on the brain. And my nanny had actually had a bleed on the brain. And she's no longer with us. But she had one about I don't know, like 12 years ago, when I was really young.

Georgie Hennah 6:16

And that phrase bleed on the brain, like I'd never really had hemorrhage before, you know, when I was that young and stroke. So when I heard them say bleed on the brain in the ambulance, I instantly felt close to my nanny, and it was really comforting. And I think, you know, she didn't die as a result of the bleed.

Georgie Hennah 6:37

She only died a couple of years ago. But I just kind of felt like her presence with me, which was really comforting in that moment. So yeah, anyway, there's so much going on, but I then 24 hours later got transferred to another hospital, which is really well known for its neurology department.

Georgie Hennah 6:59

And it was there that they discovered that it was an ABM had the angiogram. And then they decided that I didn't need emergency surgery. So they were like toying up between what was the best way of operating, whether it be you know, like Gamma Knife surgery or craniotomy, and they decided craniotomy.

Georgie Hennah 7:21

So two weeks post stroke, and I went into surgery, which was terrifying. But the buildup was, obviously when you're in there, you just get put to sleep, and then you wake up and it's over. I think it was worse for my family and friends because it was like a seven-hour operation or something crazy. And so then I spent five weeks in hospital and then was moved to another hospital, which is known for its neurorehabilitation center.

Georgie Hennah 7:52

And I spent nine weeks there. So I was in hospital for about three months in total. And, I did mention that my left side went but I basically had to relearn to use my left hand or whole left side walk on everything. So that sort of came back very, very slowly up until the operation, I was completely no sensation, no feeling whatsoever. And then I had the operation and then a few days later, that's when the spasticity started to set in. And then yeah, I'll stop there.

Bill Gasiamis 8:32

It's alright, I wanted to let you go because basically, you just described my experience. I had an AVM, I had brain surgery, I had to learn how to walk again, use my left side again.

Georgie Hennah 8:47

I didn't realize you had an AVM I follow you on Instagram and I love all your posts and your questions and everyone interacts with it, but I didn't realize it was an AVM.

## Georgie Hennah's Possible Symptoms

Bill Gasiamis 8:57

I was at 37. So I've got a question for you though. So in hindsight, I think there was some incidences before my AVM rupture the first time it bled. I think there was a few incidences that I know now we're probably caused by the AVM playing up or letting me know it was there other than the thunderclap headache. Do you think now that maybe in the past there was some things that were happening to you that are oh my gosh, that was probably the AVM playing up?

Georgie Hennah 9:35

Well, I have thought about this and the only thing that I have sort of thought like right, that must be it because the kind of headache was similar but like not intense. I started like occasionally wasn't all the time but Only very occasionally, after a really heavy night at uni with friends, I would sometimes wake up with like, I know headache, everyone experiences headaches, but like to the point where I actually couldn't move my head.

Georgie Hennah 10:19

And it wasn't a migraine or anything like that. But like it was in the exact same space where I had the thunderclap headache. And it was just so intense and it felt like if I moved my head, my whole brain was like, getting bashed around. I can't really describe it. And at the time, I just thought, oh my God, I've got a really, really bad headache.

Georgie Hennah 10:39

But after paracetamol and some sleep it went and then you know, I never struggled with headaches, it wasn't one of those because, you know, some people have headaches all the time. They don't really know why. You know, I've never been like that. So I'd say maybe there's like a few times at uni where I had this really, really bad headache after a heavy night.

Bill Gasiamis 11:03

A heavy night on the drink, right?

Georgie Hennah 11:05

Yes. Yeah.

Bill Gasiamis 11:10

Your headache was weird. In that, like it was kind of isolated, there was a very weird, isolated spot that would kind of make you aware of it.

Georgie Hennah 11:22

Yeah, it was different to other headaches. Put it that way, it's easy to say now, it probably was to do with the AVM at the time, I just thought it was really, really bad, really bad dehydration, and sleep with a paracetamol, and then it would be gone. So never thought twice about it, really.

Georgie Hennah 11:46

But I can like, remember significant moments, you know, particularly, like moths, that kind of thing where they'd be your day where it would be really bad. But I've never mentioned it to anyone because apart from like, whoever I was with, might say, look, I've got to bang my head, I've got go back to bed kind of thing. But I was never worried about it.

Georgie Hennah 12:07

Just the day after.

Georgie Hennah 12:11

Exactly. So, yeah, but apart from that, I genuinely, genuinely had no free symptoms, like, I've always been really healthy, never really been to the doctors that much. You know, I've been super sporty, like, you know, not to toot my own horn, but like, I had sports scholarships, and throughout school and college. And, you know, loved the gym a lot of netball and did athletics and things like that. So yeah, it was it was just a complete shock.

Bill Gasiamis 12:44

Fair enough. I've got kids your age my oldest is 26, my youngest is 22. So you're kind of in the middle there somewhere there. And your generation, the millennials have this bad reputation for being, you know, kids that are on social media, you know, they're not in the present time. All these generalizations that hear about kids that are kind of your age.

Bill Gasiamis 13:14

And, a lot of those kids are also described as having a lot of personality issues, a lot of psychological issues and all that type of thing. I don't say that with you, right. But I'm curious about how this thing that happened to you at 22 for this supposedly, snowflake generation. Okay, although there's all the labels that you hear get thrown around.

Bill Gasiamis 13:45

How does it impact your emotional, and your mental health? When one day your quote unquote, normal 22 year old, going to uni, getting smashed with your friends, and doing all the things that everyone does at around that age. And then one day, they're still doing that, and you're doing this completely different thing, which is, like you're kind of fighting for your life, how does that impact you?

Georgie Henna 14:16

Well, a lot, and I feel like there's been different stages, because it's been two and a half years now. And I feel like, you know, recovery it's an ongoing journey will be until, you know, however long I live for. And there's definitely been sections to it all so far.

Georgie Henna 14:39

And I think in the beginning, I think it was a blessing. And it was really hard as well. But overall, I've decided that it was a blessing that it happened during COVID because it meant that, everyone was in lockdown so when I was in hospital, no one was doing anything, so I didn't initially get that kind of I mean, the longer I was in hospital for rules were starting to relax, it was summer, I remember my friends going to the beach and things like that and feeling envious that like I was stuck in hospital and, you know, my world had been thrown upside down.

Georgie Henna 14:39

But then at the same time, when your life is literally put on the line in front of you. I think it put a lot into perspective for me. And it made me I don't know, that was sort of like the last thing on my mind. And I was also in this stage of survival mode the whole time I was in hospital.

Georgie Henna 15:41

And I remember thinking and saying to my family, like, don't get me wrong, there



were times I call my family crying. I just missed them so much because I wasn't allowed visitors. But equally, I was handling it really well. To be honest, everyone was like, Are you Are you okay? Like you are in really good spirits you're handling.

Georgie Hennah 16:01

And so I felt this huge sense of gratitude. Like it really made me realize how many people care about me and like love me like the amount of messages and cards and things like that. So I just felt this overwhelming sense of gratitude. And also like pre-stroke a bit of context of, you know, the kind of person that I was pre stroke, but also still am today.

Georgie Hennah 16:28

Is you know, I love traveling. So I've been I've done a lot of Asia. The summer prior, I'd gone to Bali with my best friend for three weeks, you know, I've been scuba diving, love skiing, like I've done so many adventurous things. And I was always one, being the kind of person that when I started working, I was 15 I'd save up all my money to go away in the summer.

Georgie Hennah 16:51

And so over the years, you know, that kind of built up, and I just had this huge love for travel. And I think that when I was in hospital, it made me realize, you know, okay, I don't know what my future looks like. Because at one point, the neurosurgeon didn't think I'd be able to walk again, let alone like, move my hand and things like that.

Georgie Hennah 17:14

So, you know, at one point, I remember having a conversation with my boyfriend about, like, Oh, my God, what, you know, okay, I might be in a wheelchair forever. And I remember him, like just being so great. And being like, well, we can, we're talking about, you know, going, like, he's got a camper van, he's like, well we can make the camper van, like accessible.

Georgie Hennah 17:32

And we were really like planning for that kind of thing, but being quite positive about it all. And I think when you're in that survival mode, obviously, everyone has different survival modes. But for me, that's what it looked like. And then it was when I came out of hospital. And, you know, the reality of what's happened

moving back home to where I previously was, you know, I was this fully abled person.

Georgie Hennah 17:57

I remember specifically, like, the first time going down the stairs, when I left home, I actually wanted to run down them. Because that's what I wanted to do when you're in hospital, there really aren't that many stairs because it's just so accessible and easy.

Georgie Hennah 18:14

And so, obviously, the good thing about moving home is that it is more challenging. So your brain's being, you know, challenged constantly. And, you know, I found that in hospital, I was distracted by the recovery in the sense that that's where my biggest sort of visible progress was made was in those first nine weeks, because I went from being completely paralyzed.

Georgie Hennah 18:14

To then Oh, my God, it kind of felt like each day, there was something new that I was like, Oh, my God, movement, and even the spasticity, like, I had no idea what that was. And even when they explained it to me, I think I was a bit naive.

Georgie Hennah 18:59

And so when I'd yawn, and I don't know if you had this, but like I'd yawn and my arm would like, move. And I'd be like, movement. And they'd be like, That's just normal. But I'd be like I don't care, like my arms moving. And so any sort of glimmer of movement, I was like, right, like, we can work with this.

## **Recovery Support For Georgie Hennah**



Georgie Hennah 19:18

And in rehab, you know, the team of physios, the staff, like the occupational therapists, everyone, there was just so supportive. You had this like bunch of cheerleaders around you, basically, that really believed in you. And I think when you see experts who work with people, like yourself and I, day in, day out, when you see the hope that they have in you, that makes you believe in yourself.

Georgie Hennah 19:43

And so yeah, it's just like recovery, recovery, recovery. And then you get home. And then it's like, Oh, my God, I'm in this by myself now. And even though I had physio, I think had a few weeks gap. I And then I started physio and although I was doing it once or twice a week, you know, I went from having this timetable in rehab where I was having like, four hours of rehab a day.

Georgie Hennah 20:13

Seeing different people working on different things, you know, using different equipment to then being at home. And I, obviously, I like, didn't have a job at the time, like I work with my work really great. And, and so that pressure was removed, but then I had all these hours in the day. And I felt like when I wasn't doing anything, I felt guilty, I was like, I need to be doing as much as I can to make this recovery better.

Georgie Hennah 20:38

And then there was definitely this whole stage of, and I feel like in the grand scheme of things, I actually accepted what happened pretty quickly. I feel like, and I think that's what's enabled me to kind of get to where I am today mentally,

because I think, accepting what happened enabled me to just kind of let go of a lot of things and focus on what I needed to.

Georgie Hennah 21:05

But we can come to that in a minute, but was gonna say was, there was definitely a period where I was like, I can't be happy until I'm better. And I think it took a bit of time to realize that, you know, first of all, I didn't actually go and look on Instagram, it took me about a year I created it like my journey account when I was in hospital.

Georgie Hennah 21:31

I didn't actively go and seek other stroke survivors for about a year because I personally, I think I just like wanted to make my recovery my own. And, you know, no doctor could tell me, like, what my future was gonna look like. So I was like, right, I'm just gonna write my own future kind of thing. And I know everyone has different ways of coping, and I met some lovely people in hospital that I was in touch with.

Georgie Hennah 21:55

But yeah, at the beginning, and I'm a very motivated person, very disciplined. And I think, you know, that has its pros and cons. That's been my biggest strength throughout this recovery journey. But it's also been, like my biggest. I don't know, yeah, maybe weakness, or I don't like the word enemy. But sometimes it's been my biggest battle is myself. And how hard I can be on myself,.

Bill Gasiamis 22:24

I think there's a really good side to being hard on yourself for the right reasons. If you're being hard on yourself, just because you want to give somebody hard time and it happens to be you well, and there's no real outcome for it. And then that's really hard to overcome. And that's a cycle that people if they get stuck on that it's destructive, right? But if you're hard on yourself from the point of view of, you know, I've been sitting down and watching Netflix for four hours.

Bill Gasiamis 22:54

What am I doing? Get off your ass and go and do something, and then you do something, and then that's something makes you neurologically tired or fatigued or whatever. I think that's good, because what you're doing is you're pushing yourself to get back to neurological fitness, and to achieve overcoming all the

things that you need to overcome, and it takes time, and you have to push the limits.

Bill Gasiamis 23:19

If you don't push the limits, you don't know where they are, and you don't know how far you've come and you can't fine-tune, your recovery. So I think that kind of being tough on yourself is good. I'm not motivated, but I'm gonna get up anyway. That's really good. But other people who hate on themselves by saying you're an idiot, you're stupid, or they hate the fact that they found themselves in the situation, and they blame themselves and all that type of thing. It's really, really destructive. And that's not going to help anybody in any part of the recovery at all. I like your approach to the doctors.

Intro 24:06

If you've had a stroke, and you're in recovery, you'll know what a scary and confusing time it can be, you're likely to have a lot of questions going through your mind. Like how long will it take to recover? Will I actually recover? What things should I avoid? In case I make matters worse, and doctors will explain things but obviously, you've never had a stroke before, you probably don't know what questions to ask.

Intro 24:31

If this is you, you may be missing out on doing things that could help speed up your recovery. If you're finding yourself in that situation. Stop worrying, and head to [recoveryafterstroke.com](http://recoveryafterstroke.com) where you can download a guide that will help you. It's called seven questions to ask your doctor about your stroke.

Intro 24:50

These seven questions are the ones Bill wished he'd asked when he was recovering from a stroke. They'll not only help you better understand your condition. They'll help you take a more active role in your Recovery, head to the website now, [recoveryafterstroke.com](http://recoveryafterstroke.com) and download the guide, it's free.

Bill Gasiamis 25:09

No one's gonna tell me what I am and what I'm not going to do, how far I'm going to go and what I'm going to achieve. I love the fact that you're working at 15, a 15, you're getting schooled by people who really don't give a shit about you, other than they want to make the most money out of you, the 15 year old who they're

paying the least amount of money, you know, they want to make profit off you.

Bill Gasiamis 25:38

So what they're doing is they push you, they train you, they teach you. And they're taking advantage of the fact that you're 15. And they're paying you a small amount of money. And that's forcing you to learn what the world is about. It's forcing you to grow up, it's forcing you to learn the kind of people you want to look up to, it also gives you the opportunity to create boundaries from people that you don't like.

Bill Gasiamis 26:08

And people's ideas that are not aligned to yours. And it seems like a trivial thing to get a kid a job at 15. But it's such a massive way to bring kids at 15 from being an adolescent from being a teenager, to beginning that evolution and the growth and the wisdom that comes with interacting with people a lot. And it makes you less naive.

Georgie Hennah 26:41

For sure, and I remember it was my dad, we live really close to a pub. And, you know, because we live just up the drive from them. We knew the owners quite well. And I remember my dad, as soon as I turned 15 he was like, right, go down there and ask for a job. And I'd obviously being 15 like oh, no, I put it off. I'd call them they wouldn't answer. And then I'd be like, okay, they didn't answer and but like, call them again.

## **Independent At 15 Georgie Hennah**



Georgie Hennah 27:09

And he really pushed me to go and get a job. But you know what, like, it started off as I just worked like four or five hours on a Sunday, serving roast dinners, and

you know, but you just meet so many different people, and it got you out of the house. And I really, you know, learn I really didn't earn that much money. But when you're 15, you know, getting 20 quid on the weekend, you know, that's huge.

Georgie Hennah 27:31

So, you know, I learned the value of money. And obviously, at that age, you're not paying for any bills or anything like that, and not even really spending money on, you know, anything expensive at all. So I would just save most of it for them the summer. And you know, at the time, I had a friend who had a holiday home, so I'd saved to like, you know, for flights to go there and things like that. So yeah. And then it was kind of like, right, that summer was great. I want next summer to be just as good. So that was keep the momentum going. And so I have my dad to thank for getting me out of the house to go and get a job at 15.

Bill Gasiamis 28:08

Yeah, it's kind of like independence, right? It starts building the understanding of what independence is about. And then when you end up being home, well surrounded by family, but alone in your recovery. That's when your skills that you learned a few years ago, start to come into application, and then you go, Okay, I have to be I have to drive myself, I have to be self-motivated. I have to use the skills that I did when I was at the pub because at the pub.

Bill Gasiamis 28:40

If I wasn't self motivated, the last thing you wanted was somebody telling you 15 times a day go to the counter, pick up a meal and serve it. You just needed to know that. That's what you had to do. So it's kind of like an instinctive thing that you have to develop. That's not really instinct, you have to think about it or the first few times and then later, you can apply it to other things in life.

Bill Gasiamis 29:07

I wanted to focus on this part of the conversation because I mean, it's a weird thing. You're an adult at 22. But it's such a young age to have to go through something so life changing. And I remember how dumb I was when I was 15. Although I worked and did all those things are still the you know, the gap between 15 and 22.

Bill Gasiamis 29:33

That's not a lot of time to grow a brain and be able to handle dramatic things. Maybe it's different for girls. I don't know if that actually applies. But I just love the way you're talking about how you went about your recovery and what you were thinking and your mindset seemed to be really solidly grounded in this foundation that I think played a massive role.

Georgie Hennah 30:04

Yeah, and I think, you know, I've never really made the direct correlation between, you know, having a job so early, but I've always been, and I think I'm very similar to my dad, in this sense, you know, I've always been get up and get things done in the morning. You know, I'm a planner I'm organized, you know, get my clothes out the night before, you know, just always been quite routine focus.

Georgie Hennah 30:32

And my friends are always telling me anyway, before all of this, that would always be, you know, the friend that would look on the brighter side, or have that kind of mindset. And I don't think I just magically, you know, had this stroke, and then all these qualities appeared, they were actually a part of who I was, but the stroke has enhanced them and actually put them to really good use, and they were being obviously use well, throughout going to uni, and things like that.

Georgie Hennah 31:02

But I feel like it's really brought out qualities within me that, you know, yeah, have just completely got me to where I am today, which has been a benefit for sure. We'll do that. Yeah. But it's not to say, you know, it's bought out, it bought out those qualities, but then there's obviously the whole topic of, you know, feeling well, the grief that comes with it as well, and losing parts of your identity, as well.

Georgie Hennah 31:36

And, I mean, that's a whole lot. I could speak for hours on that as well. But I feel like that's been a whole journey. And it still is, but equally, I've definitely I moved out again, while I had to move home. When I had the stroke, I was living at home anyway, because the pandemic, I was in London before then moved home had the stroke was there for two years.

Georgie Hennah 31:59

And then I actually had moved back out to London, only about seven weeks ago.



And I feel like, you know, and I went traveling round Borneo in June with my boyfriend, I've basically just been like, you know, stepping out of my comfort zone, and my stroke comfort zone, and have actually come to realize that parts of me that I thought were dead, or thought I no longer had access to have actually been reignited in situations that you don't get when you're just sat at home or, you know, in everyday life.

Georgie Hennah 32:37

And so, you know, obviously I mentioned that I was really into travel. So then when I went abroad, and especially somewhere like Borneo, where it's so stimulating, you know, the culture, the wildlife, the temperature, like there's so much going on and being with Richard, it was just so freeing, and it made me realize that no matter my physical abilities, which you know, I mean, I don't see myself as disabled, because I feel very able with what I can do.

Georgie Hennah 33:06

But my I still have muscle spasticity on my left side, so my arm gets really tense. And I've got a bit of foot drop, so I can't actually lift my foot up and outward. So I use electrical stimulation. And so I have to be steady. And so despite the physical restrictions, you know, I realized that I could still go to Borneo, and I can still experience this new culture and all these amazing things.

Georgie Hennah 33:33

And, ignited feelings that obviously I hadn't felt in a while because of COVID. And because I'm stuck at home. And so I was like, Oh my gosh, there's parts of me that are still there. And so since then I really been just, you know, leaning into stepping out of my comfort zone and it was actually Borneo that made me realize like, Okay, you're way more capable than you realize.

Georgie Hennah 33:56

Let's move out. And so that was what got the ball rolling. And then it was in Yeah, that five weeks before I actually moved out. We found a place. And then since I've moved to London and just been living independently, again, well, for the first time since the stroke. It's just again, it feels right. It feels normal. There's still things I have to think about this still, you know, rehab that I do.

# Accepting The New You



Georgie Hennah 34:21

And it's just adapting. And I feel like there's Yeah, been parts of me that have been reignited. And I'm like, I just feel like I've got this new lease of life again, which is really promising. And I feel like, you know, that's kind of the message I'm trying to put out there on my Instagram and what I help other people with is, you know, whatever. I think there's, you know, we're not the same person that we were pre-stroke.

Georgie Hennah 34:47

We're not. And that's okay. And it's coming to terms with what's happened, but also realizing and I know everyone's situation is very different, and I'm speaking on behalf of my own situation, but I also see it within other people as well. It's coming to accept and then adapting when necessary. But realizing that, you know, there are still parts of the old you that you can access and reignite.

Georgie Hennah 35:17

And the ones that you can't, that's because you've grown out of that. And it's time to like, step into the new you. And so making that connection, and it's been like a, you know, a journey, like it's ongoing, and it still is, and don't get me wrong. You know, I was only a few months ago, where I had a whole period of grieving again, which really took me by surprise.

Georgie Hennah 35:41

So like, I haven't felt like this in ages. But at the moment, I'm feeling really, really

comfortable in my own skin and just kind of feeling really good. And it's sort of it's all been through stepping out of my comfort zone and reigniting parts of me that I thought were long gone.

Bill Gasiamis 35:59

Is the comfort zone surrounded by fear when you're there. It sounds like it's, you know, they say, the comfort zone, it sounds warm and fuzzy and cuddly and all that, but it's not really. It's actually, I feel like if I'm in my comfort zone, I'm overthinking the next step. I'm fearing what's out there. I'm anxious about what's out there. That comfort zone is not comfortable at all, it's so freakin uncomfortable.

Bill Gasiamis 36:28

And the release from all of that anxiety and fear and concern and overthinking happens when I crossed the threshold, you know, and that's kind of like, I look back and go, ah, actually, that wasn't that bad. No, no, no, I ever thought that or why did I take so long? And oh, my gosh, I've learned something new. What you said about identity is people put their identity to rest, like they completely totally put it to rest when they've had a stroke, because they've got a new thing that they have to grapple with.

Bill Gasiamis 37:12

And, and they've got to merge it into their, "old identity", which is not their old identity. It's just still their identity. But they also take a short term view. And they see that pause that's happened right now as being forever, and there's no light at the end of the tunnel. And it's not true, right. So I'll give you a classic example. My dad's been really healthy his entire life.

Bill Gasiamis 37:41

And he's still is he's 80 next month. And he's got some usual health issues in at 80, the standard stuff. And he had a knee surgery probably about six years ago, seven years ago. And he was off his feet because he had to recover and rest his leg just for that three, six month period, because he had a new knee.

Bill Gasiamis 38:10

And he couldn't come to terms with the fact that now it was time for sitting down resting and not doing all the things that he always did. But that drove him nuts. And you could see his mental health really declined rapidly, just simply because of

this time of rest and recuperation so that when his knee is better, he can be back to normal.

Bill Gasiamis 38:36

But trying to bring him out of that kind of funk. And, and out of that headspace was really hard. He used to get really emotional and upset about it. And he thought he'd never walk again, when every other person who's ever had a knee surgery, like his has walked again. And it was really difficult to kind of shift.

Bill Gasiamis 38:58

But he had such a long time of experiencing his body in a certain way that this new thing he couldn't come to terms with and he couldn't say to himself, I'm a granddad, I pick up kids from school. I do these tasks for my wife and for my sons and for whatever. And I rest and recuperate when it's necessary.

Georgie Henna 39:30

No, it's so true. And I think it's so complex. And I think people do it subconsciously without even realizing that they're like, I specifically remember looking at pictures and videos of me pre-bleed, and there would always be this like, pre-bleed post-bleed me.

Georgie Henna 39:56

But now I actually see myself as just this continual like, I'm still the same me, I feel like that separation is actually, there's no separation anymore, I just see it as different stages of my life. And it's so freeing to get to that realization, because before I look at videos and photos of me pre bleed, I would feel so detached from it, that I would look like, I feel like I'm actually looking at a completely different person.

Georgie Henna 40:22

And that was what was really upsetting. Because you just want to like, click your fingers and go back to that time. But then, you know, as time goes on, and again, as much as you have to do your own self work and things like that time does also play a massive part in it, because over time, you experience more things, you're exposed to more things which slowly boat, you know, piece by piece, help you rebuild.

Georgie Henna 40:47

And, like, you know, there's so much to it, but it helps you sort of get to where

you are today. But I feel like as I mentioned that over the last, I'd say even probably this year in particular, because a COVID is not as prominent, you know, society's got more freedom now anyway, you know, I've been abroad again, since which sort of reignited that spark of travel, which, by the way, I was super anxious about beforehand.

Georgie Hennah 41:15

And going back to that comfort zone thing. Yeah, I think when something to do with your health happens to you, you know, there's no one can tell you, like, no one can calm you down when you're feeling anxious about your health, because your health, like, you know, someone say all the chances are so smaller, but given the chances of a 22 year old having a ruptured AVM.

Georgie Hennah 41:38

And it happened to me. So, of course, I'm gonna worry about X Y, Z. But you know, so I just gone off on a complete tangent, I think, why was trying to say was this separation between like pre-stroke, post-stroke I think it takes a lot of a lot of coming to terms with but the more you can put yourself out there, the more you can continually step out of your comfort zone, the more you'll realize you're capable, which will then you know, make you want to keep going and going out your comfort zone.

Georgie Hennah 42:13

And then before you know it, you are doing things and experiencing things that you would have pre-stroke, I think some people right off completely, and they think they will never be able to enjoy anything again, because they're now in this box. And it's like, you know, obviously everyone has different relationship with labels.

Georgie Hennah 42:35

But for me having a stroke is just something that's happened to me. And it's a part of, you know, this big journey. And, yeah, it's a crazy ride. It's scary to let go of, you know, pre bleed, and like that sort of, for me, obviously, I was so young.

Georgie Hennah 42:35

So I hadn't, I had a really smooth upbringing, and, you know, great friends and great relationships and things like that. So I really did have a smooth ride up until I had the stroke. And so I was clinging on to that for for a while, but I think I quite

quickly realized to let go of that, because that was causing me more pain. And that was stopping me from enjoying life for what it was and being present and all those things.

## **Stroke Closes And Opens Doors**

Bill Gasiamis 43:30

Stroke closes doors, 100%. There's no doubt about it. But it also can open doors. And for me, I mean, and I get people who are listening and going well, but your strokes not like mine, or you're not as bad as me or all those things. Well, I've been going through this for 10 years. And I could have had mental health issues.

Bill Gasiamis 43:55

I could have had emotional issues. I could have had all sorts of issues about fear and not overcoming, not facing my fear I could have, but I wouldn't got the help I needed. I went and got emotional support well and got counseling. And I still go to counseling, I still speak to people who support me emotionally properly, not people who don't understand what emotional support really means in his right.

Bill Gasiamis 44:18

I'm talking about people who, who can guide me through my emotional turmoil as well as my mental health turmoil, right? So for me, it's opened the door of this podcast that never ever would have existed if I didn't have a stroke. No, ever, I would not have in a million years thought that what I should do in my life is find a topic and start a podcast about it. I didn't feel like I had experience in anything that I was qualified to talk about.

Bill Gasiamis 44:52

And I never thought I would so I did it. I didn't do it until I now I'm qualified to talk about my experience with something that is really dramatic, that makes a real difference when other people hear me talk about it. And as a result of that, it allows me to then also close a gap that I felt that it existed when I left hospital when I went home, which was why the hell is nobody talking about this?

Bill Gasiamis 45:25

How is it that I don't know other people have had a stroke, and how they're overcoming that and what they've learned from it, and how they've grown and evolved their identity from it. And it's, for me, this is a ridiculous idea that I had

to go through something so dramatic to get to this side. And this side is all pushing through all of those barriers of I'm going to speak about stroke, what are people going to think of what to say? And oh, my gosh, they're going to harshly judge me. And they're going to who knows what.

Bill Gasiamis 46:04

And I paused the podcast for a little while, because I was afraid to record new episodes. I was afraid to get rejected from people who I reached out to to be on the podcast. And it's like, well, how weird is that? Why would I be afraid for somebody to say no to a podcast, it's not a date, I'm not 14 and asking the girl that I am in love with, to come on a date with me.

Bill Gasiamis 46:33

And if she says yes, I'll be heartbreaking for the rest of my life. It's a podcast, it's a conversation, we get to learn. And we get to therefore help each other and then help other people who are listening and learning from us. And that's stroke opened up all those possibilities for me. And I don't know what your problem is, and how bad your stroke is and what it's caused for you.

Bill Gasiamis 46:55

But if you just get curious about what doors can be opened, and you open them, and just peek through them at the beginning, not even go there, just open it a little bit and just have a cheeky look in, you might be amazed at what it can do.

Bill Gasiamis 47:14

And it sounds like for you going and having their first trip after stroke, which was really hard for me too, because my wife and her amazingness decided that our first trip was going to be the other side of the planet Melbourne to New York. And we had to travel for almost a day to get there. And I felt like if I'm traveling a day to be away from my hospital, and my doctors and all that kind of stuff.

Bill Gasiamis 47:42

And I'm in this other country where I don't know anybody. And something happens to me. What the hell like it's going to be terrible. What am I going to do? How am I going to manage that? How are we going to keep me healthy and well and alive. Last thing I want to do is die overseas, you know. But that can happen to a normal person, you can get hit by lightning overseas, anyway.

Georgie Hennah 48:06

Exactly. And that was exactly the thing with me. I mean, when we booked the trip, we were originally going to Sri Lanka, but then literally a week before we were due to fly, see, there's been a huge economic crisis over there, and the government has actually advised not to travel there.

Georgie Hennah 48:21

And we had, you know, booked this for a while, and we really still wanted to do a big trip and go sort of Asia way. And we looked at like, cheapest flights and flights at the moment are just crazy everywhere. But Kuala Lumpur was, you know, our sort of like, next best thing and my boyfriend's got family in in Borneo. So that's why we chose to go there.

Georgie Hennah 48:41

Obviously, that is far from the UK. And I haven't mentioned this yet, but about nine months after surgery, I actually started getting focal seizures. And so I mean, that for me was actually more traumatic than the whole stroke itself. And, and that that is something that I think is caused biggest anxieties around my health because I feel like with the AVM I've seen on scans, it's been physically removed, and I've had that confirmation that it's gone.

Georgie Hennah 49:17

Whereas seizures, obviously, they're unpredictable. And so Touchwood I've only had two and since I've been on tablet like medication, haven't had any, but going to Borneo, which was eight hours time difference. And I'm taking this medication at set times morning and night.

Georgie Hennah 49:35

You know, there was that whole anxiety as well but I can't, you know gotta make sure that I adjust my timings before I go and this, that and the other but I realized that the first time you do anything, especially that big is gonna be scary. And if you don't do it, then you know, your world just stay so small but like you said, You've got to lean into these things because you don't know what's out there.

Georgie Hennah 50:00

When you open one door like more doors open, so for me obviously going to Borneo and then it opened a whole new door of like moving out. And, you know, that's opened a whole chain of doors. But also, I've just lost my train of thought. But yeah, stepping out your comfort zone and, the worries are managing that.



Georgie Henna 50:20

But that's one thing that I kept telling myself was, right, you're not the only person in the world with a health condition, you're definitely not the only person in the world that has to take medication that travels, like the doctors have said, you can travel. So you know, and I just did everything I could to prepare.

Georgie Henna 50:40

So I spoke to like an epilepsy clinic got their advice on, you know, take, like adjusting my timings of medication. You know, they were super chilled about it on the fence. I was like, Okay, this is, you know, not that bad. I printed out every document that I needed to just in case and, you know, it was fine.

Georgie Henna 50:57

I wrote about this on my blog, actually, because I wrote about my travels. But I remember getting on the plane and just as soon as we were in the air, and I realized that my head was gonna explode because that was another just like, catastrophic anxiety is like, Oh, this is my head going to be okay, like going up in the air?

Georgie Henna 51:18

But as soon as we get up in the air, I was so excited. And I felt like I was literally living the metaphor of it's not even about the destination. It's about the journey. And it sounds really cringey. But just the whole I'm on a plane, and also forgot to mention, we just so happened to fly on the two-year anniversary of my stroke.

Georgie Henna 51:47

So that was a coincidence. And yeah, so I was in the air. And I was like, Oh, my God, two years ago, you know, my whole world has flipped upside down. And today, I'm getting on a plane and going across the world, you know, and I was able to go snorkeling and, you know, obviously, take precautions.

Georgie Henna 52:07

And don't get me wrong, maneuvering on the boat and getting on and off the boat was not pretty or elegant. But I was like, I'm gonna make this work. And, you know, I got to experience some amazing things. And I think, yeah, you just got to trust yourself, because you're always more capable than you think.

Bill Gasiamis 52:26

Yeah, I think people notice people who are physically abled notice disability more,

when somebody is not confident, like you said in their own skin. And, and has, you know, trepidation about being exposed on, for example, in your perfect situation, like on a boat, where your physical limitations make it a little more whatsoever, like, you got to take a different approach to getting your gear on and getting in the water and then getting out of the water.

Bill Gasiamis 53:09

It's kind of different. But I think when you're the person that's overthinking that and concerned about that. I think you make disability more visible to other people. And I'm not saying you shouldn't be cautious but I feel like there's a mindset to that as well. I feel like how you hold yourself and express yourself and think about yourself and talk about yourself, even though your body is different than what it was before stroke.

Bill Gasiamis 53:50

Allows the person to make a more awkward for themselves in that situation. And I say that because one of my favorite and I love everyone who I've had on my podcast, okay, so please, nobody take it the wrong way. But one of my favorite episodes was way at the beginning like very, very early. It was episode 47 with Maggie Whittum.

Bill Gasiamis 54:17

And Maggie was an actor, and I think a model and she had an AVM and it bled when she was 33. And it impacted one side of her body really dramatically. And she went through all the hell that we all went through all the emotional or the mental anguish all that stuff.

Bill Gasiamis 54:42

And she has probably pain and suffering from past spasticity and all the stuff that we hear about that's common. But in her identity was is real desire to be an actor to still do the stuff that she always does. And she found near where she lives the most amazing organization, it's called The Phamaly Theater, I think it's in California, somewhere, it might even be in Los Angeles, that put on productions, and all the people, are people who are somehow physically disabled.

Bill Gasiamis 55:32

And she's done a documentary. And she has done all these things that are related to how she experiences the world. And even though, if you listen to the episode,

you know, she'll explain the difficulties and the challenges and all the problems and all the stuff, even then she still goes about participating in life fully.

## **Improvise, Adapt, And Overcome**



Bill Gasiamis 56:06

And that is what I'm kind of saying like, and that makes it so much better when you have to deal with all the physical limitations of what a stroke has done to you. And it's not easy for her to physically participate in those types of things. And in life, to that extent, it probably was easier physically. But within her, there's this innate need to continue to do that.

Bill Gasiamis 56:38

And she's just found a way to do it. And I had the pleasure of viewing her documentary before it was released. And I'm not sure if it's actually released yet, like, properly. And she asked me to review it and tell her what I thought about it. And it was so amazing to see that and it's such an important message that needs to be said, and it can't be said by "abled-bodied person".

Bill Gasiamis 57:11

Before stroke, I could not represent this community, I had no way of doing that. And now we can, so she's doing amazing work, really important work, and she's living life fully. And she has a desire to help other people. And that helping other people has kind of made projects that should be impossible for her possible, and that's doors that open for her. But other ones were closed her career in the able-bodied acting world has ended. But she shifted it.

Georgie Hennah 57:51

Yeah, I feel like, you know, you've just got to be able to get over the idea that, for me, I realized, as soon as I realized that I can still do things, but okay, they might not be how I pre-stroke envisioned, but I'm still able to do them, that my body, you know, there might be different, like limitations in my body and things, but it's letting go of the idea of like doing things perfectly.

Georgie Hennah 58:25

And enjoying them for what they are and with, like, on a smaller scale in relation to like my relationship with exercise. So I was, as I mentioned, like, super sporty and into my fitness pre-bleed. And I think in the beginning, I unfollowed I mean, I came off Instagram for months, whilst I was just, you know, focusing on myself, but when I redownloaded it, I unfollowed I muted everyone that posted that they were going to the gym, I unfollowed like so many fitness accounts, because I was so envious, that I couldn't move my body in the way that, you know, "normal" people could.

Georgie Hennah 59:05

But then I've managed to I kind of had this realization because I decided one day to just put on a hit workout. And, and just kind of give it my all I had to make adaptations. I couldn't do the exercises properly. But you know, the music was going I was just getting my heart rate up. And you know, left, my left arm was trying to get involved in it. And it probably looked hilarious for anyone. No one was watching, thankfully.

Georgie Hennah 59:30

But I then realized that I could get this same physical biological reaction from just moving my body vigorously. Like no matter what it looks like, I can still get the same physical effects that pre-bleed Georgie could have got and I realized that I then shifted my whole focus on you know, obviously I've still got goals and things within my recovery. But when I do exercise, I think about moving to feel good.

Georgie Hennah 1:00:00

Rather than to look good or whatever, you know, because there's a whole societal, you know, I think, bad relationship with exercise and stuff anyway. But I think, yeah, focusing on how it makes you feel, really removes that sort of awkwardness and lack of confidence in how, you know, the way my body moves now. And since I moved to London, I've joined a gym.

Georgie Hennah 1:00:24

And, you know, I think, if I'd have let my fear of how my body moves, well, I wouldn't be at a gym, if I'd have let that fear completely take over and going to the gym as part of my weekly routine. I see people I'm, you know, and so I think again, that's something that breaking through that fear. And also, yes, it's going to be scary going to the gym every day, to be honest, before I'd even had a stroke, right?

Georgie Hennah 1:00:47

Joining a new gym, I'd feel scared because you go there, and you know, you don't know where the equipment is, and things like that. So, yeah, I think, definitely that lady sounds super inspirational and I love I can completely resonate with her mindset and how she's doing things, because I think I've just always thought, you know, there's no one.

Georgie Hennah 1:01:07

And I think this is where denial can come in handy at the beginning. Because I was in a bit of denial at the start is like right, you know, recovery, like Sony and take a few months, then we'll be back to normal. And but I was like, I'm gonna write my own story. And yeah, and it's just opened doors and, and here we are today.

Bill Gasiamis 1:01:27

I love the gym thing, because self doubt at a gym. I mean, that happens to most people. Especially when you've got the, you know, the meathead in the mirror, you know, doing these runs, and you know, looking amazing and whatever. And then you realize, in order for me to be like that, I've got to put in seven hours a day, seven days a week and stuff that I'm not doing that I can't be doing that I'm doing it to gain.

Bill Gasiamis 1:01:52

For me, before I go to the gym, I'm doing it to gain strength. That's it, it's just muscle strength. And everything else that comes with it is a bonus, right? So I don't enjoy going to the gym like I used to either because my left side is weaker. So I don't, I feel uncomfortable, especially when I'm doing dumbbell bench press, bench press or dumbbell presses, right. And it's like, my left side doesn't want to hold the weight there.

Bill Gasiamis 1:02:22

But my right sides going well. Come on, let's go again and the left sides game, stop, stop, you idiot, stop. So it's really understand, I understand, like, there's a lot going on, when you go back to the gym safety is an issue. If you, if you compare yourself to other people, that's going to be an issue.

Bill Gasiamis 1:02:45

But if you change the reason why you go because exercise is really important for a healthy brain and a healthy body and to keep everything flowing and working in your system. If you change the reason, then you stop comparing yourself and stop looking and stop trying to achieve something that's always been unachievable for you because you're not prepared to do the work anyway. And, and you get out of that kind of negative application, I suppose of the gym, and you start doing the gym, for what its purpose is to keep people healthy, and physically strong.

Georgie Hennah 1:03:30

I think I think even, you know, before I had the bleed, I've kind of got bored at the gym. And when I was running a bit more. And I had to remind myself, before you had the bleed, like you weren't even interested in the gym anyway. And I think when the choice is taken away from you, and I've only just started going back to the gym, because the last couple of years, I've been really working on my fine tune movement to make sure that you know, form because obviously, there's no point in going to the gym and trying to build your strength if you're doing it completely wrong.

Georgie Hennah 1:04:06

And so I mean, patience is something that had to really work on as well. But I'm now at a place where I've got a gym program, it's been approved by my physio and stuff. And, you know, again, I've had to kind of like, put my ego to one side and get over the fact that you know, I'm not lifting as heavy, anywhere near as heavy as what I used to. But again, don't for what it makes me feel.

Georgie Hennah 1:04:27

And also when you actually remove like the weights and things like that, at the end of the day. I'm doing what everyone else down to the gym is doing, I'm going with a bit of a program going there to feel good to move my body and I leave it that's what everyone else is there to do doesn't matter. You know, everyone in the gym is focusing on themselves anyway, because everyone there is you know,

regardless of you know, what you look like or how strong you are, everyone is only focused on themselves.

Georgie Henna 1:04:55

And so when you start thinking like that, that can you know work wonders. And like I said the first few times it feels a bit scary and daunting. But you know, I've been going there for a couple months now. And yeah, I just, you know, If anyone looks at me funny or realist, they might not even it's just your interpretation. I think a lot of the time, how you think people think is actually just a projection of how you feel about yourself? Yeah. So yeah, but no, it's been good.

## **You're Not Alone**

Bill Gasiamis 1:05:26

One of the other awesome people I've had on the podcast is Kelly Studebaker, she was on episode 106. And she's a powerlifter, but she has rightside spasticity. And she's very much unable to lift weights with her right side of her body. Her arm is very tense, her fist is clenched, and her walk is affected, right.

Bill Gasiamis 1:06:01

So she can't do the regular stuff. But she's a one sided powerlifter. Her left side is jacked, it's like, huge, and her right side is not. And it's a completely different physique on each side of her body. And she has been recovering from a ruptured AVM from the age of 11. And she's just gone stuff it, I'm going to become a powerlifter. And she also knits scarves.

Georgie Henna 1:06:39

Knitting is really good for the brain.

Bill Gasiamis 1:06:41

Yeah, and hats and stuff like that. So you kind of, there are people out there that are doing this, and you're not alone. It's not, you're not just the only person on the planet that's going through this. And if you search, you will seek them out, you'll find them. And, and they'll teach you there. And I and so many people that have been through what we've been through, want to help, and they'll teach you how they got over it over their issues or how they overcome those challenges.

Bill Gasiamis 1:07:13

But to see, like, I can't imagine powerlifting ever in my life, not before stroke, not

after stroke. And then to see somebody doing it the way that Kelly does, it is so cool. It's impressive, even, like it's just impressive, just full, full stop and forget about all the other stuff. But then when when I think about, you know, my deficits, then it's even more impressive. Like it's super impressive. I love it. And it's one of those things that certain people told to short and be able to do.

Georgie Hennah 1:07:52

Well, and do you know what? That's the biggest? I think a lot of people I've spoken to stroke survivors who have been told by doctors, by health professionals, you know that you'll never be normal again, or whatever phrase that you know, and I think sometimes we forget that they're speaking to, they don't realize how much influence they have on someone's belief, especially in the early stages.

Georgie Hennah 1:08:21

And as I mentioned, I felt fortunate that the physios that I was surrounded by like I they believed in me when I didn't believe in myself, which then fueled you know, the whole thing and my physio since I've been out of hospital. My god, there's she's having me doing things that I genuinely like laughed at her. I laughed in her face when she told me to start running.

Georgie Hennah 1:08:42

I couldn't even walk properly yet. And she was like, right, we're going running today. And I literally was like, Are you joking me? But because she believed in me. I mean, I was terrified. But because she believed in me, I was like, right, okay, I'm so scared.

Georgie Hennah 1:08:55

But like, I'm gonna do this, because, you know, and again, that's just helped my recovery so much, because, you know, I can't necessarily run properly, but it's, you know, gets your I don't know the science behind it, but it gets your neurons and like taps into those more sort of like rhythmic natural patterns which are stored in our central nervous system, I think as opposed to our actual like, cognitive thinking.

Bill Gasiamis 1:09:24

First it increases your dopamine levels, it increases your endorphins, it increases all the positive things that you know and hear about about you know, what makes you happy and what makes you feel alive and what makes all your organs work



and what makes you have a good night's sleep and what gets your digestive system going like impacts us in so many positive ways.

Bill Gasiamis 1:09:49

It's just ridiculous. And there's so much written about it. It's so important for brain health. It's the most important thing. It doesn't matter how fast you are, you could just be somebody that's fresh out of stroke in a wheelchair, you can only move one side on your body. And what you're doing is you're in your wheelchair and you have attached just and you grab the pole with, with your other hand, and you're just pushing and pulling yourself away to and from that pole.

Bill Gasiamis 1:10:17

And whatever way the wheelchair rolls, you're just resisting and pushing and pulling forward and backwards. And that's it, that is supporting lung function, heart function, you know, the kidneys, the liver, everything in your body, as well as your mental health and your emotional health. So, I mean, it's a no brainer, it needs to, it needs to be something that we focus on.

Bill Gasiamis 1:10:47

And, it's so useful and beneficial at small levels, that there is no excuse for anybody. Everybody can do it. And there you go, I've just hopefully opened some doors for people that they thought was impossible, because they don't see pushing and pulling yourself on a pole in your wheelchair, they don't see it as being exercise. But it definitely is.

Georgie Hennah 1:11:12

For sure, and just to kind of like on that point. And there has been a common theme, you know, stepping out your comfort zone and things. But one thing I've come to realize is that the biggest limitations are the ones that I put on myself. Not my physical limitations, and I think it can be easy to blame, you know, are like, you know, my left side can't move anymore.

Georgie Hennah 1:11:40

For me, it's been my left side, my foot can't move and things like that, and spasticity and seizures and all this worrying. I think naturally, you know, we bought kind of strikes, we put ourselves into this box of had a stroke crime, you know, disabled, I'd really don't like that word. Because I do think that, you know, this being in brackets, because it's like, everyone's able to degree and yeah, and I

feel like, it's dropping that that expectation of what it looks like when you're doing something and being open-minded, being curious, like you said.

Georgie Henna 1:12:19

Because where there is a world that is a way and, you know, if you're going to be pedantic about and be like, well, I can't run exactly how I used to then, you know, obviously, that is fact and that is the truth, but equally, that holding on to that is just stopping you from, from enjoying so much. There's so much out there for people to still enjoy, you know, even if, like, I feel like I've gained so much since the AVM rupture.

Georgie Henna 1:12:48

Even though I've ironically lost mobility. You know, and I mean, part of the work I do is helping people to thrive again, after stroking and you know, help with their mindset and things like that, because, and I'm aware that everyone has different upbringings and is exposed to different, you know, things and, you know, some people aren't even aware that there is this alternative way of thinking and yeah, when you're able to be more curious and open minded and stop comparing yourself to others. It's really liberating.

Bill Gasiamis 1:13:26

I 100% completely agree. I love the wisdom in your young years, in your 25 years. It sounds like you're kind of old soul anyway, and quite wise, even though you hadn't gone through the stroke yet. But now, it sounds like you're somebody that, that I think you're setting a great example. And people can learn from your recovery, all people of all ages, right.

Bill Gasiamis 1:13:58

And I really appreciate that. I really appreciate that there are younger people like you who are doing this type of stuff at your age, because there's a lot of other younger people having strokes that might not relate to an older bloke like me.

Bill Gasiamis 1:14:17

And even though I've been through similar things that they've been through, they might be going well who is this old bloke from Melbourne that I don't know, or can relate to, or see themselves relating to so it's really good, and it's really important, and I'm wondering, here's something that I'm gonna throw out there see, weather this little seed germinates, and I wonder when the books gonna be

written.

Georgie Henna 1:14:41

Oh my gosh, so many people have said that to me. I definitely. It is on the agenda. But I feel like I feel I'm like collecting the chapters. You know, I think when I'll know when the time is right, I think yeah, I've got a blog, and I'm not as active on it as I used to be, but I do keep record of things that are going on, you know, so who knows some point in the future hopefully.

Bill Gasiamis 1:15:12

Georgie, thanks so much for being on the podcast. I really appreciate it.

Georgie Henna 1:15:15

Thank you so much for having me. It's been a pleasure to be here.

Bill Gasiamis 1:15:19

Thanks for joining us on today's episode. Sharing the show with family and friends on social media will make it possible for people who may need this type of content to find it easier. And that may make a massive difference to someone that is on the road to recovery after their own experience with stroke.

Bill Gasiamis 1:15:37

If you are a stroke survivor with a story to share about your own experience, come and join me on the show that interviews are not scripted, you do not have to plan for them. All you need to do to qualify is be a stroke survivor, or care for someone who is a stroke survivor, or be one of those fabulous people that helps stroke survivors overcome deficits and get better.

Bill Gasiamis 1:15:58

So basically, you just have to be involved in stroke some way shape or form to get on the show. If you go to [recoveryafterstroke.com/contact](https://recoveryafterstroke.com/contact), you can fill out the form and as soon as I receive it, I will respond with more details on how you can choose a time that works for you and me to meet over zoom. Now thanks again for being here and listening. I really appreciate you and see you on the next episode.

Intro 1:16:26

Importantly, we present many podcasts designed to give you an insight and understanding into the experiences of other individuals. The opinions and treatment protocols discussed during any podcast are the individual's own

experience and we do not necessarily share the same opinion nor do we recommend any treatment protocol discussed.

Intro 1:16:44

All content on this website at any linked blog, podcast or video material control. This website or content is created and produced for informational purposes only and is largely based on the personal experience of Bill Gasiamis, the content is intended to complement your medical treatment and support healing. It is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice and should not be relied on as health advice.

Intro 1:17:06

The information is general and may not be suitable for your personal injuries, circumstances or health objectives. Do not use our content as a standalone resource to diagnose treat, cure or prevent any disease for therapeutic purposes or as a substitute for the advice of a health professional. Never delay seeking advice or disregard the advice of a medical professional, your doctor or your rehabilitation program based on our content.

Intro 1:17:28

If you have any questions or concerns about your health or medical condition, please seek guidance from a doctor or other medical professional if you are experiencing a health emergency or think you might be call 000 if in Australia or your local emergency number immediately for emergency assistance or go to the nearest hospital emergency department medical information changes constantly.

Intro 1:17:48

While we aim to provide current quality information in our content. We did not provide any guarantees and assume no legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, currency or completeness of the content. If you choose to rely on any information within our content, you do so solely at your own risk. We are careful with links we provide however third-party links from our website are followed at your own risk and we are not responsible for any information you find there.