

What Medical Professionals Should Never Say to Stroke Survivors

Discover harmful phrases stroke survivors often hear from medical professionals and learn how encouragement, not limitations, fosters true recovery.

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Bill's Book: The Unexpected Way That A Stroke Became The Best Thing That Happened

Highlights:

01:27 Stroke Recovery Timelines

02:01 Never Say Never

02:40 You Look Great

03:06 Just A Little Stroke

03:38 What Are The Chances

04:11 Too Young For Stroke

04:36 This Is As Good As It Gets

Transcript:

Bill Gasiamis 0:01

Hello, everyone. Some time ago, I asked the stroke survivors who follow me on Instagram, what should a medical professional never say to a stroke survivor. And today, I wanted to share what they had to say. But before I get started, if you're enjoying the podcast and want to support the work that we are doing. Consider joining the recovery after stroke Patreon page.

Bill Gasiamis 0:25

By becoming a Patreon, you'll gain exclusive access to exclusive content and behind-the-scenes updates, all while helping us continue to bring inspiring stories and valuable resources to stroke survivors worldwide. Your support truly goes a long way in making a difference in the stroke recovery community.

Bill Gasiamis 0:46

Visit patreon.com/recoveryafterstroke for more details on how you can get involved. Now let's dive into the topic. If you've ever been through the journey of stroke recovery or supported someone who has, you'll know that one of the most difficult parts of the process is hearing limiting, or discouraging comments from medical professionals.

Bill Gasiamis 1:10

Stroke Survivors have shared their stories, revealing the harmful things medical professionals should never say during such a critical time. Today, I want to highlight some of those comments and explain why they should never be said to a stroke survivor.

Stroke Recovery Timelines

Bill Gasiamis 1:27

One of the most frustrating phrases stroke survivors hear is about timelines. Medical professionals often say things like, you might not improve much after the first six months, which puts unnecessary pressure on the person recovering. Every stroke is different. To suggest that there's a universal timeline for recovery is misleading and can diminish hope. Giving rigid recovery expectations can be damaging, especially when those expectations aren't met within the given time frame.

Never Say Never

Bill Gasiamis 2:01

Another damaging statement that came up repeatedly was that medical professionals kept telling survivors what they would never do again. You'll never be able to do that again, or you'll never walk again were common phrases reported by survivors, these kinds of comments can strip away hope and lead to giving up before they even try. The truth is, that many people defy these expectations. Stroke survivors shouldn't be told what they can't do. They should be encouraged to push their limits with support from those around them.

You Look Great

Bill Gasiamis 2:40

Another harmful comment that came up was the assumption that because

somebody looks fine on the outside, they are fully recovered, “You look great” seems like a compliment, but for a stroke survivor dealing with invisible disabilities, it’s anything but. It’s important for medical professionals to understand that recovery isn’t just about appearances, it’s about what’s happening on the inside too.

Just A Little Stroke

Bill Gasiamis 3:06

Then there’s the issue of medical professionals undermining the severity of a stroke. It was just a little stroke. Is something many stroke survivors hear this trivializes the life-changing effects a stroke can have regardless of its size, stroke survivors face monumental challenges no matter how little their stroke might have been. These kinds of comments can leave survivors and their families feeling abandoned and hopeless at a time when they most need support.

What Are The Chances

Bill Gasiamis 3:38

Perhaps one of the most heartbreaking experiences came from a stroke survivor who was told that they had just a one to 2% chance of regaining function in their left arm and hand after a hemorrhagic stroke, yet they defied the odds and regained some function, even walking again. This highlights how important it is for medical professionals to avoid giving definitive outcomes based solely on statistics. Every stroke survivor is different, and every recovery is often unpredictable.

Too Young For Stroke

Bill Gasiamis 4:11

You’re too young to have a stroke. Is another common phrase. This statement dismisses the reality that strokes can happen at any age. It’s especially frustrating for young survivors, who are already dealing with the shock of having such a life-altering event at a time when society expects them to be in their prime. They need understanding and support, not disbelief.

This Is As Good As It Gets

Bill Gasiamis 4:36

One final damaging comment survivors mentioned was being told that they had plateaued or reached the limit in recovery. This is as good as it gets. It is something many hear, often within the first year of recovery. But recovery doesn't stop after one year, two years, or even five years, stroke survivors continue to improve every day the five. Applying the limitations placed on them by well-meaning but misguided medical professionals.

Bill Gasiamis 5:06

In summary, what stroke survivors need most from medical professionals is support, encouragement, and belief in their potential for recovery, instead of hearing what they will never do again or being given arbitrary timelines, survivors need to be reminded that progress is possible and that recovery is unique to each individual. As many stroke survivors have proven, the only limits are the ones we place on ourselves, and with the right mindset and support, those limits can be shattered.

Bill Gasiamis 5:40

If you're looking for more inspirational and practical advice on stroke recovery, check out my book, *The Unexpected Way That A Stroke Became The Best Thing That Happened*. In it, I share my story and the stories of nine other stroke survivors who discovered post-traumatic growth and found meaning in their recovery journeys.

Bill Gasiamis 5:58

This book will help you understand how to transform a challenging experience like stroke into an opportunity for growth, and it offers valuable insights for stroke survivors, their families, and healthcare professionals. You can find it at recoveryafterstroke.com/book, and I truly believe it will help you discover a deeper sense of purpose and meaning in your own recovery. Thanks for watching and remember your recovery is your journey. No one can define its limits, but you.