



Interview with TBI Survivor Kellee

Quick recap

The meeting featured an interview with Kellee about her TBI experience and discussed her recovery journey, including challenges with memory, organization, and driving, while also touching on her career as a special education teacher.

Summary

Types of Brain Injuries Discussed

Susan led a discussion on brain injuries, distinguishing between traumatic and non-traumatic brain injuries. She presented statistics on the causes and prevalence of each type, noting that strokes account for 14% of non-traumatic brain injuries. The group discussed whether to focus on traumatic brain injury survivors or all brain injury survivors for their upcoming project.

Kellee's TBI Experience Discussion

The meeting focused on discussing Kellee's traumatic brain injury (TBI) caused by a car accident in 2013. Kellee shared details about the accident, including being hit head-on by a drunk driver, and the severe physical injuries she sustained, such as broken bones and a brain bleed.

Car Breakdown and Rescue Incident

Kellee described an incident where her car was in a major accident. See photos on Slack. After some women found her phone in the car, they were able to contact her sister and a friend, who helped coordinate with the police and



emergency services. A police officer who arrived at the scene suspected Kellee might be drunk, but she insisted she was not and had just been at the movies.

Overcoming Injuries to Return to Teaching

Kellee described her experience of being in a severe accident, which resulted in multiple injuries including a brain injury, severe injuries, and a completely turned over right foot and ankle. She spent 18 months in physical therapy and rehab, during which she regained the use of her arm and shoulder, and learned to walk again. Despite the challenges, Kellee returned to teaching in January 2015, though she continued to face ongoing issues with her left knee that require additional surgery.

Post-Event Memory and Adaptation

Kellee discussed her experience of feeling disoriented and forgetful after the TBI, which made daily tasks challenging. Despite these difficulties, she was able to move back into her own place, though she continued to struggle with memory and organization, requiring post-it notes to remind her of daily tasks. Kellee also mentioned that she eventually returned to work.

Special Education Teacher's TBI Impact

Kellee discussed her experience as a special education teacher managing 25-35 students with individual education plans, both before and after suffering a TBI. She described how her organization skills were affected, leading her to use post-it notes and color-coded systems to manage paperwork and avoid losing important documents.

Kellee's Driving and Health Journey



Kellee discussed her driving history, revealing that she drove after her TBI but stopped after her stroke. She is currently not driving but hopes to resume once she improves her memory and attention through further evaluation and possibly completes a driver rehabilitation class. Kellee also shared that she experienced migraines for about 6-8 months before her stroke, which were relieved by Maxalt.

TBI and Stroke Recovery Journey

Kellee shared her experience of surviving a TBI in 2013 and several strokes, with the last major stroke occurring in 2020. She discussed her recovery process and the challenges she faced, including temporary memory and speech issues after the TBI. The group discussed the differences between her experiences post-TBI and post-stroke, with Kellee noting that the stroke had a more significant impact on her ability to return to work as a special education teacher.

Follow-Up

There will be a follow-up on Slack for those who don't feel comfortable speaking at the meeting.