



## “Cass’s Corner”:



No, it is true that an individual who suffers from an acquired brain injury (ABI) never fully recovers to the person they once may have been, prior to said trauma.

Any variety of brain injury can be a puzzle and may be a terrifying affront to one's previous life and manner of thinking. It might be you or it could be a loved one who has undergone an injury of this variety, but I feel, through my own life experience . . . that there are ways to cope. It is important to know the difficulties, the trials and tribulations one may face, during recovery from an injury to the frontal lobe of the brain.

Our brains are divided into several, or numerous lobes. These include the frontal lobe, which I shall be focusing on, primarily, the parietal lobe, the occipital lobe and limbic lobes.

Each lobe is responsible for different bodily functions, and they surround the brain's insular cortex. Many different functions are controlled by the frontal lobe. These actions include coordination of movement, intelligence and the resulting ability of an individual to reason, one's personality, language and the ability to have one's day-to-day emotions regulated.

Our entire brain is absolutely key to our existence, which all but goes without saying; our innate intellect plays an incredible and necessary role in furthering our existence and, really, our survival, at least as we have grown to know and accept it.

For much of this, we must be grateful to the actions of our brain's frontal lobe.

The frontal lobe of the brain plays an enormous part in the higher functions of your brain that truly make you, you! It does not, of course, achieve all of this on its own. The frontal lobe interconnects with other lobes of the brain, most notably the limbic node.

My injury occurred nearly thirty-five years ago when I was fifteen years old and was in my sophomore year (Grade 10) of high school.

I was fortunate that I had an elevated I.Q., I was athletically gifted, and participated in a wide range of sports. Top academic marks came to me easily; I was a straight A student through my

freshman year (Grade 9). My personality was easy-going, I kept a circle of friends without any difficulty and life was easy for me. It simply 'flowed.'

Then, well . . . then the car accident happened.

B and I were best buddies. We hung out together, as we had for several years. Rebelliously, perhaps, we drank together, a bit.

One evening there was a school dance. B and I left the dance, feeling as 'cool' and 'above the rest' as we did, and made our way downtown. We watched 'Friday the 13th Part V' at the Gaslight Theatre, in Durango, Colorado.

Following the film, B needed to find a ride home. Luckily, as he stepped outside of the lobby, he was able to secure a ride, with C.

We drove B home, dropped him off, and then turned around and began the return our drive back to town.

I am speeding this story up and limiting the detail (funny how a thirty-seven-day coma can do that!) but I understand the Audi we were in was driving behind a pickup truck.

Mr. G. was driving north, his car swerved into our lane, brushing the truck in front of us, before hitting us, head-on.

I was injured more severely than either of the other two in the collision (broken left tibia, left humerus, numerous flesh wounds and resulting scars), as well as being knocked into a comatose state for thirty-seven days.

Just a couple of days ago, I was moved to tears (Side note: I was unable to cry, for a number of years, following my ABI; I am relieved that this ability has returned). This happened while I was chatting with my mother on Facebook.

You remember, earlier in this piece, my mention of C, driving B and I home, from the movie.

I find myself typing more slowly, now. . . more thoughtfully, perhaps . . .

C, I learned, I would say, some twenty or twenty-five years back, went to medical school and has become a physician, since our accident. Was I envious of this? I am not certain, but, as per Mom's reply:

"I'm not sure that your emotions had recovered enough that you felt as much pain and depression from the changes due to the accident . . . this was a blessing at the time! I believe that you look in retrospect with a re-covered emotional capability differently now . . . Now you realize that some of those lost friendships could have been painful and "unfair" ...Hard to explain. Everyone had adjustments

to make. The newly injured person in a TBI is not "the same person" as pre-accident. Even if the fully recovered person is very nearly the same, that may be 5-10 years later. I was there when C first came to visit you in hospital. He turned gray and almost passed out...I do believe that it's possible he went to medical school because of that".

Wiser and more greatly appreciated words have never been spoken to me . . .