

A Shelter in Place Learning Pack: 15 Podcasts about Brain Injury, Disability, and Harm Reduction

By Arin Jayes

In this week's COVID-19 "Learning Pack," we are highlighting 15 podcasts on topics including brain injury recovery, harm reduction, and disability justice. Many of these podcasts were created by people with lived experience of brain injury, caregiving, or addiction. While much of the country continues to shelter in place, we can utilize this time to spark conversation, heal our communities, and foster resilience and mutual aid.

[Faces of TBI](#)

Amy Zellmer's mission is to be a voice for TBI survivors, raise awareness, and educate people about TBI. Zellmer sustained a TBI in 2014 after falling on a patch of ice and landing full-force on the back of her skull. Zellmer's lived experience with brain injury is compelling and provides an unfiltered look into what it is like to live with a disability. Her firsthand experience also provides a relateable story to survivors and caregivers who may feel alone in their challenges. Guests on her podcast include survivors, caregivers, medical professionals and researchers.

[Caregiver Dave](#)

"Caregiver Dave" is Dave Nassaney, who has been a 23-year caregiver for his wife, Charlene, who suffered a massive stroke in 1996. With co-host Adrienne Gruberg, Nassaney guides caregivers through coping with stress and burnout – one of the most common challenges of caregiving. He wants caregivers to not just survive, but thrive. The podcast features interviews with medical experts, personalities, authors and other caregivers – all of who are working toward a balanced and quality life for themselves and for their loved ones.

[Power Not Pity](#)

This podcast explores the lives of people of color with disabilities through storytelling, commentary and analysis. It aims to amplify their lives, experiences, and perspectives. The hosts and guests break down race, class, gender, and disability justice, dismantling ableism with every episode. Each episode gleams with this one question: "What's your disabled power?" Topics range from disability in education to representations of disability in pop culture.

[Crackdown](#)

Crackdown is a monthly podcast about drugs, drug policy, and the drug war led by drug user activists and supported by research. Host and executive producer Garth Mullins tells the story of a community fighting to save lives, find solutions, and find justice for lives lost. Mullins has been an opioid user for years, injecting heroin daily all the way through the last overdose crisis, and is now on methadone. As a person with lived-experience, Mullins makes a compelling case for urgent systemic change and a call for action from government leaders. Episodes address oxygen loss during overdose and anoxic brain injury.

[Adventures in Brain Injury](#)

After Cavin Balaster survived a two-story fall and was diagnosed with a diffuse axonal injury, he started a blog and podcast to process his brain injury symptoms and build a community for brain injury survivors. His podcast expanded to include guest speakers such as medical experts and

other brain injury survivors and their families. His mission is to, “help families and survivors of all kinds by sharing the important information I learned throughout and after my recovery from my TBI, and providing consultations to survivors and loved ones of those with brain injury/disease as well as other who are serious about improving their brain function.”

[The Accessible Stall](#)

The Accessible Stall is a disability podcast hosted by Kyle Khachaturian and Emily Ladau that keeps it real about issues with the disability community. Because they each have different disabilities and mobility levels, they approach everything they talk about with two unique viewpoints, offering listeners a fresh insight into how differences in disability can color your experiences and perspectives. They never shy away from offering their honest opinion.

[The Curbsiders](#)

The Curbsiders Podcast team is made up of a national network of students, residents and clinician educators from across the country representing 15 different institutions. The hosts “curbside” the experts to deconstruct various topics in the world of medicine to provide listeners with clinical pearls, practice changing knowledge and bad puns. In [Episode 58](#), the hosts discuss recognizing concussion and how to counsel patients and families on safe return to play.

[The Slow Road to Better](#)

Members of The Stroke Comeback Center in Northern Virginia produced this podcast to share honest, humorous, and uplifting stories about how they have adapted to life after stroke and brain trauma. The group talks and laughs together as they discuss the “slow road to better” and the challenges faced along the way. The first episode includes introductions and backstories for everyone in the group, and they are currently on episode 77! Recent topics include coping with quarantine as a survivor, communicating with aphasia, exercise, generational differences among survivors, dating, participating in research studies, and the concept of a recovery plateau.

[Irresistible](#)

Since 2017, the Irresistible podcast has shared conversations and accompanying practices with over a million downloads worldwide. It is a podcast about making joyful, lifelong commitments to social justice work – through v stories, strategies, and practices that fortify our movements for change. In [Episode 61](#), Organizing in a Pandemic: Disability Justice Wisdom, they share stories and insights from disability justice organizers that all of us can learn from and apply to organizing in our current conditions.

[Narcotica](#)

This podcast provides an unfiltered story of drugs and the people that use them, asking questions that most journalists are afraid to ask. Hosts Christopher Moraff, Zachary Seigel, and Troy Farah aim to shift the dialogue on substance use into one based more on fact than fiction. At a time when the War on Drugs has turned into a dysfunctional relationship, informed by racism misinformation, Narcotica encourages viewers to rethink the way they view people who use drugs. Episodes explore how anoxic brain injury in IV drug culture and the overdose crisis.

[Concussion Talk](#)

This podcast is about how community and helping others can be such a big and important part of living with a brain injury. For guest Chloe Lockett, yoga and LoveYourBrain became an extremely important part of not only her recovery, but of her entire life. Chloe talks about how, with Brain Injury Nova Scotia, she hopes to impart the benefits of yoga, and community, to others, and how it can help with the sense of isolation that many people feel after a brain injury.

[The TBI Family Podcast for Caregivers](#)

Launched in November 2016, this podcast series is for caregivers of service members and veterans with TBI. Each episode offers information, resources, and tips for caregivers and shares caregiver stories.

[Headway](#)

As part of our A New Me campaign, brain injury survivor and ex-journalist Will Perringwood toured the country with his wife Amy, interviewing other brain injury survivors and their family members about how their condition affects them, and the meaning of the phrase “a new me.”

[Aphasia Access Conversations](#)

Aphasia Access Conversations is produced by Aphasia Access, a nonprofit dedicated to increasing awareness and treatment options for people living with aphasia. This podcast delivers the latest aphasia resources and tips from Life Participation professionals. The hosts deliver way more than stroke and aphasia facts: topics include best practices in aphasia care, aphasia group treatment ideas, communication access strategies, how to run an aphasia choir, and the future of aphasia care. The podcast also includes interviews with well-known brain injury clinicians.

[The Disability Visibility Project](#)

The Disability Visibility Project is an online community dedicated to creating, sharing, and amplifying disability media and culture. Their focus is on publishing media by people with disabilities from collected oral histories in the form of tweets, podcast episodes, audio clips, blog posts, etc. Their podcast covers countless topics about disability, with recent episodes discussing mental health advocacy, black deaf filmmakers, and disability in young adult literature.