



Things I Learned From a Brain Tumor



By Shelley Carpenter, PT, RYT, RM

In April of 2013, it was discovered that I had a benign brain tumor which was affecting my vision, and if left alone, would continue to grow, affecting other brain function as well. I had surgery that June to remove the safely operable portion. I was given time to recover, then received the news that I would have to undergo 28 radiation treatments in September and October of that year to inactivate the remaining tumor.

In the early days of recovery after surgery, all light was too bright, sounds were too loud. I couldn't focus my vision to read, and could only watch TV through one eye, slightly open. I was extremely exhausted, and the pain medication to control the intense headaches was causing very uncomfortable constipation. My amazing parents stayed with our family, as I needed help with everything, including bathing myself.

During that hard time, I wasn't sure there would be better days. I wondered if I would ever be able to see, to drive a car, to be the wife and mother that I had been, to do the

work that I loved so much. I had defined myself by what I did. I felt good when I could serve and help other people. I loved helping others heal themselves. What if I could no longer do that? I felt so helpless. I asked God: "What is my purpose? I loved what I was doing. What if I can't do that? What if this is all I can ever do?"

When I became too tired to ask questions, an answer came back to me: *LOVE*. I heard it and felt it in my bones. A sense of total peace filled my being. I was no longer afraid. I was able to let go. No matter what happened to me, I could still love. I could pray for people. I could listen to people. I could smile and let God's love and light flow through me. I could gratefully accept others' love and care for me. That's all that mattered.

Letting go of the feeling that we are (or need to be) independent and in control is very freeing. It is already okay, just Being. If we live our lives in the moment, even if things aren't "perfect" or how we think they should be; if we choose to let go and be still, we can find a space filled with peace, connection, and clarity.

I am grateful that I am doing very well 9 years later, but I hope I never forget the many lessons from that experience. Even though part of my brain was removed, I came out much wiser. We are currently going through a very challenging time together and yet apart. It's good to remember that we are never truly alone. My Christian faith, the teachings of all of the healing traditions (yoga, Reiki, Shamanic healing) I have studied, and my own experiences have taught me that we are all connected by love. I am so grateful for that.

I am grateful for our connection.

Blessings, love and light,

Shelley

©February2022 Shelley Carpenter, Physical Therapist, Registered Yoga Teacher, Reiki Master Teacher is a practitioner at Ommani who offers group (Tuesday and Wednesdays) and individual therapeutic yoga sessions, physical therapy, and Reiki care. During the COVID stay-at-home period she is offering online yoga classes (<https://www.pureenergyyoga.com/monthly->

[subscription-channel](#)) and in-person or remote Reiki and in-person physical therapy for persons who are symptom free. Call our office at 262.695.5311 to schedule an appointment.