



## You Share We Care: Compliments, Complaints, Observations & Inspirations

Dear Jan . . .

Dear Jan, A lovely lady who is awaiting your letters filled with questions, suggestions, advice, compliments, and quotes about brain injury. Anything goes, and you just might see your letter spotlighted here in our newsletter!

Send a Message to Jan Email: [info@hbia.ca](mailto:info@hbia.ca) or drop it off at our clubhouse in the suggestion box  
All messages will remain anonymous unless otherwise stated

### Hello friends.

I hope you are having a fabulous summer. I have been enjoying spending time with my family and just chillin'. I had to take it easy after a fall, so my summer has been one of leisure this year. I apparently did not sustain any more injuries, but I have been in pain, which as most of you know, does not make for a lot of fun when you want to do summer activities. However, my Niece Chrissy has been staying with me which has been a real pleasure. She is moving to Australia in a couple of weeks so it's been amazing having her and her boyfriend Nick here. Anyway, enough about me, let's get on with the letters.

Jan

Dear Jan,

*I love coming to the groups. I try to make it out at least once a week. The problem is, is that sometimes when I am at group, there are so many people talking at once. It makes me feel crazy inside. I know it's a group, it's going to happen. But, I will ask about something and I will get 4 people answering all at once. Don't get me wrong, I think everyone is great and I appreciate the support. Is this a brain injury thing or is it me?*

Signed,  
Groupie



Dear Groupie,

It is most definitely a brain injury thing. Trust me I know, I can feel that way too. I can almost guarantee if you were to ask most of the people in the groups (although they may all answer at once haha) they would say they too feel like that.

The thing is you have to look at it from both sides. You are going to feel overwhelmed, excited and even emotional who are going through the same thing as you (sometimes worse). You feel like, "Yes! Finally someone who is going to understand exactly what I am going through." So you start forming questions that you have wanted answers to for a long time.

On the flip side, those who have been attending group for a long time get very excited and emotional when they get to meet a new survivor. To them it is bittersweet. Yes, they want a new participant but they also want to help and don't like to see people suffer the way that they did. They did suffer like you and they do know the answers to your questions. Everyone gets excited to share their experience with newer participants because they know how you feel and how amazing it is to finally connect with someone who gets it.

I have learned a lot from the groups, the right doctors to connect with, how medications might affect you, where to apply for this and that.....

Things that may help you feel less overwhelmed in group when it gets too loud: if the facilitator hasn't had the chance to rein in the group or it keeps happening, you can always take a step out of the group and find a quiet spot to re-group, you can express to the group to slow down and offer information one at a time, or you can ask people to write things down for you to look at later. We are all survivors, we understand.

If you find it hard to speak up in group, approach Adria after and she can help express your feelings to the group for you. You should never feel overwhelmed or uncomfortable in group. We want you to enjoy yourself and make this a great experience. Support Groups are awesome and so very helpful!

Sincerely,  
Jan



## You Share We Care: Compliments, Complaints, Observations & Inspirations Dear Jan . . .



Dear Jan,

*Why are the group leaders always talking about the clubs? Some of them seem pretty lame and not something really for adults.*

Signed,  
Anti-Clubs



Dear Anti-Clubs,

The clubs are fantastic for many different reasons:

1. It is an opportunity for your peers to share their interest and talents as they are all survivor organized and run.
2. The clubs are another form of socializing with your friends. It is different from support group as it is general chat and more fun to just hang out and have some laughs
3. It is another way to connect with fellow survivors as you can get on the topic of additional limitations all us brain injury survivors work through every day.
4. It is a way to develop friendships as the clubs you are interested in help you to meet others who have similar interests.
5. The clubs can also help in recovery. It can help bring about memories, emotional connections, strengthen remembering, help with motor skills, and help with practicing cognitive skills ALL while having fun. For example, in Glee Club (which you do not have to sing) everyone gets a chance to pick a song they want to listen to, the lyrics are put up on a big screen while the song plays, everyone talks about the artist, the song itself, what memories or feelings that come about from hearing the song, and some of the other participants find singing helps them with their speech, their memory and their cognition.

I highly recommend you try out some of the clubs. They are for adults, since adults are running them, and you might be surprised that you get a lot more out of it, other than just the activity at hand. Maybe then you wouldn't be so Anti-Clubs.

Sincerely,  
Jan