



June 2015

HEADSTRONG

Hamilton Brain Injury Association
www.hbia.ca

Vol. 3 Issue 1

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Written by BI
Survivors

BI
NEWSLETTER

5K by the Bay

10th Anniversary
Celebration

June 20th, 2015



NEWS!!

Calendar of Activities Full calendars attached



As a result of a joint initiative between the Hamilton Brain Injury Association (HBIA) and Brain Injury Services, several activities sponsored by each organization are now open to the members and clients of both organizations. HBIA calendars can be found to your left. Activities highlighted in purple are hosted by Brain Injury Services at its location. All other activities are hosted by HBIA at the Clubhouse.

For more information on other activities provided by BIS please visit their website at
www.braininjuryservices.com

Support Groups

SURVIVOR SUPPORT GROUP

When: Monday or Thursday
Time: 1030am – 12pm
Where: HBIA Clubhouse

When: Wednesday
Time: 4pm – 530pm
Where: HBIA Clubhouse

CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

When: 1st Tuesday of the month
Time: 7-9pm
Where: HBIA Clubhouse

SPOUSE SUPPORT GROUP

When: 2nd Thursday of the month
Time: 7-9pm
Where: Bay Garden - Rymal Road (East of Upper Gage)

For more information or to register for any of our groups please contact us:

905 538 5251

info@hbia.ca

or visit our website

www.hbia.ca

Hamilton Brain Injury Association
822 Main St E
Hamilton ON L8M 1L6
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Follow us on Twitter: @TheHbia



CANDLELIGHT VIGIL

June 1st, 2015

5pm – 8pm

HBLA Clubhouse

822 Main St East,
Hamilton, ON L8M 1L6



CANDLELIGHT VIGIL

THE HAMILTON BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION

Please join us in remembering those who have survived their injuries, those who have found peace, and those who continue to be an inspiration to us all.

June 1st, 2015

5pm – 8pm



5pm Arrivals

5:30pm Dinner

6pm

**Speaker & Moment
of Silence**

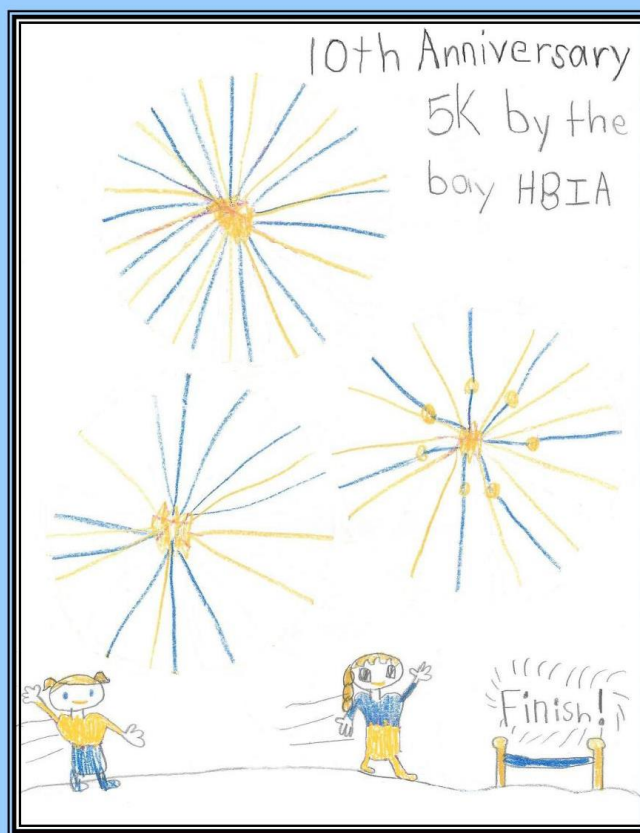
7pm - 8pm

A little bit of Fun

10th Annual Hamilton Brain Injury Association

5K by the Bay

Volunteers Needed!
Contact us if you
would like to help!



**For details,
to register,
sponsor or
donate . . .
please visit
www.hbia.ca
or contact us
905 538 5251
info@hbia.ca**

**Blake Heys Memorial 1km Kids Run
1km Walk
5km Classic Race
Platinum Sponsor Tug-of-War**

Saturday June 20th, 2015



The Hamilton Brain Injury Association
is in need of volunteers for our 10th annual

5K By The Bay

June 20th, 2015

3pm – 8pm

If you are interested in helping to make
this event a success please contact us!

905 538 5251

info@hbia.ca



The Hamilton Brain Injury Association Bikes, Blades & Boards

Injury Prevention Program from April – June 2015

HEADSTRONG
Head Injury Prevention Project

Helmet Checks

Bikes, Blades & Boards
Helmet Checklist

CHECKING

Y/N: Has a CSA, ASTM, CPSC or SNELL label inside.

Y/N: No cracks, dents or damage.

Y/N: No paint or stickers.

FITTING

Y/N: Pads touch head of front, back, sides and top.

Y/N: Not too big or too loose.

Y/N: Not too small or too tight.

WEARING

Y/N: Helmet sits level.

Y/N: Chin strap is buckled.

Y/N: No cords or straps in the way.

Y/N: No crystals in the way.

Y/N: CSA, ASTM, CPSC or SNELL certified.

Y/N: Free of cracks, dents or damage.

Y/N: Free of paint and stickers.

Y/N: Pads touch front of head, back, sides and top.

Y/N: Not too big or too loose.

Y/N: Not too small or too tight.

Y/N: Not too small or too tight.

Bikes, Blades & Boards is an in-school injury prevention & helmet safety presentation for grade 2 students run each year between April and June. The curriculum includes:

- Interactive discussion regarding parts of the brain, their function, and difficulties when damaged.
- Demonstrations regarding safe helmet use.
- A short video on bicycle safety, helmet features, and proper use.
- A thorough helmet inspection, adjustment and education session.
- Stickers, pamphlets and various other colorful and informative handouts.
- A take home individualized "report card" providing information to parents on their children's helmet wearing habits

For more information or to get an application to have a presentation, please contact us:
905 538 5251
info@hbia.ca
or visit our website:
www.hbia.ca



Survivor Input Stories of Perseverance & Success

If you are a survivor, or you know of one, that would like to contribute, please contact HBIA (info@hbia.ca) to get more information or send us your personal journey, articles, stories, poetry, strategies, or anything related to brain injury!!

Survivor Classified Section

If you are a survivor and would like to place an ad in the Headstrong Classified section please contact HBIA to provide us with the details. You can place ads to let other survivors know of things you are giving away, things you are in need of, announcements, and more.



CASS'S CORNER

APPRECIATE THE GIFT

March 31, 1985

The beautiful, jaw-dropping mountain scenery evident in Durango, Colorado, 6,512 feet above sea-level, around 2170 metres, to 'put it into Canadian' for all of you . . .

Bob and I had left the school dance, gotten a ride downtown. Friday the 13th Part V was showing. You can check the date; yes, that film was released in 1985.

Upon conclusion of the film, Bob and I left the actual 'theatre part' of the Gaslight Theater and moved into the lobby. We had to find a ride home for Bob; he lived in Hermosa, a quaint settlement around eleven miles north of Durango.

Bob walked out, to find a ride; as far as I can recall, I remained inside, chit-chatting with fellow students, a typical 15-year-old is wont to do.

"Cass, come on! Cory said he'll give us a ride."

Excellent, I thought. We'll drive Bob home, then we'll turn around and head back into town. Cory will drop me off at home.

Unfortunately, we did not make it so far . . .

I gave birth to my brother's baby

As any parent of a toddler knows, there is such a thing as having too many choices.

But when you're a 39-year-old woman, newly married to another woman, and desperately seeking the perfect sperm donor, the dizzying array of choices forces you to consider – and sometimes reconsider – why you're even trying to build a family.

"Golly, it sounds like shopping at Amazon," my somewhat-estranged biological mother said once, in the middle of our agonizing sperm hunt. Her tiny brown eyes crinkled in their corners as she scanned the computer screen in front of her, skimming through dozens of threadbare profiles of men willing to father the child my wife and I hoped to raise together.

"So you can just design your own baby by clicking on blue eyes, blonde hair, 6-feet-tall and Ph.D. only? Hmm. And your child will never even meet this guy?" she asked pointedly.

It was an ironic – though well-taken – point coming from her, a woman I had met only a handful of times before my 19th birthday. My earliest memory of her was a quick lunch in downtown San Antonio when I was maybe 3; she had flown into town for a court appearance to oppose my stepmother's petition to adopt me.

With each passing year, my brown eyes, full lips and raspy voice take on even more of the shape and sound of this woman I barely knew as a child and still struggle to forgive for removing herself and my only sibling, an older brother, out of my childhood.

Most of my memories of my brother are fabricated from the furtive letters and pictures my mother sent me over the years. I keep those musty, warped snapshots of him in a wooden cigar box. There's a shot of him as a baby, a wide smile lighting his face despite an awkward leg brace urging his mildly clubbed feet to point themselves outward.

There's one of him, me and two cousins I barely know, piled into sleeping bags on the balcony of our grandmother's Arizona cabin. (She was mostly a stranger to me, too.) My arm is outstretched, trying to get as close to my brother as possible during this brief, rare visit.

And there's one of him at 15, all legs and shaggy blonde bangs, leaning casually against a fallen pine that must have been near his house in Colorado. A lopsided grin plays across his mouth; he's wearing a shirt from his last Junior Olympics swim meet.

Just a few months after that shot was taken, the mythical big brother I knew from the pictures was lost forever. A drunk in a beat-up pickup slammed into my brother's car, a crash that shattered his limbs and tore blood vessels in his brain as his frontal lobe careened across the ridges of his skull. He lay in a coma for 37 days as his brain toiled to rewire itself. I was never allowed to visit him in the hospital – another perceived slight I never forgot – but when I saw him nearly two years later, he walked with a limp, had a hard time discerning right from wrong, and would forever after struggle to understand and complete the more complex tasks of adulthood.

Welcome to Cass's Corner the place where you will hear about news, research, articles and much more that pertains to brain injury.



The ambitious blonde teenager who once thought of becoming a journalist or doctor (like his adopted father) would eventually work as a part-time crossing guard and full-time volunteer at a head-injury support group, occasionally resorting to illicit drugs to fill the time and feel fully alive again.

But as an adult, shortly after I told him I was a lesbian, he pulled me aside one Christmas and offered me the most extraordinary and thoughtful gift I could imagine. “I was thinking,” he said in a loud whisper, “I know you can’t exactly have your own kid with another woman. And I probably won’t ever have kids. So maybe I could ... you know ... help you guys out someday. If you want.”

His offer forced me to spend several years answering the most existential of questions. At that point in my life, I wasn’t even sure I wanted to have children, lest I perpetuate my family’s cycle of abandonment. Like me, my mother’s mother had left her and raised her only sibling separately. And my father ultimately left me and his second set of children after he and my stepmother divorced.

If I skipped having kids altogether, I would never have to face my own shortcomings as a parent and I could forever stand in judgment of mine. Or my wife and I could pick an anonymous donor – enabling each of us to carry a child – thereby avoiding any sense of obligation to my family of origin (and maybe even building a taller, more paper-perfect baby in the process).

Or I could accept his gift – and provide two in return.

Two years after starting the hunt for the “perfect” sperm donor, my wife delivered our first child, a boy with my brother’s flaxen hair and my wife’s family’s crystal blue eyes and tight, thin eyebrows.

My brother’s wife texted me throughout the 18-hour labor, seeking updates and pictures, and providing sisterly words of encouragement.

Today, our firstborn loves to stand on his little 2-year-old tippy-toes and pull that cigar box down onto the floor where he can rifle through the old pictures. He squeals with delight each time he recognizes his “special uncle.” Often, he mistakes my brother for himself.

Almost immediately after she gave birth, my wife pushed me to choose an anonymous sperm donor for myself before it was too late. But it seemed reckless and unjust to deliberately create one sibling who would never know more than a picture or two of his own father.

Instead, I asked for her eggs, so I could give our son the full sibling I had always missed.

Last December, four years after the great sperm search began, I gave birth to a child who is biologically my nephew, but whose love and lopsided smile fulfill everything I could ever want for in life.

As it happens, he came into this world bearing a much more severe version of my brother’s clubbed feet, and his 30-hour delivery left me partially paralyzed for several weeks.

Would I have chosen that scenario from a tidy catalog? Probably not. But the past four years have taught me that it’s our shared imperfections, mistakes and challenges that make us fully human. That’s our true pedigree, and that’s what binds us together as family in this world.

You recall, I hope, from the beginning of my speech, when I talked about the scenery in this Rocky Mountain setting. The silver San Juans . . . covered with a white snow for much of the year.

Pine trees and aspens, with their leaves quaking in the soft mountain breeze. Azure skies above, of a colour not often seen in our everyday lives.

The lovely Animas River, bubbling through town, having flowed from its headwaters, in the mountains above Silverton, Colorado, at an elevation above 11,000 feet.

You can imagine the wildlife that abounds in that area. Herds of deer, of elk, their larger animal cousins. Trout, so many of these fish, make their home in the river and the numerous alpine streams that feed it.

I think back on the scenery, the diorama-like setting that I was fortunate enough to call my home.

Disappointingly, I seemed not to recognize or acknowledge the incredible majesty of Durango’s mountain setting, upon my release from hospital.

I beg you all to observe, to appreciate, all that comprises your life. Grasp that gift and be sure to treasure all you have been given and allowed.

Please celebrate this beauty; it is there for all of us. I would hate to see it taken from you, even temporarily, as it was, from me . . .



CASS'S CORNER

"Our (Club) House"

I awoke before 4 this morning. This is not by choice or my decision, as it were. I have a flippin' article to write, for our upcoming newsletter!

For any of you 'Constant Readers' (to borrow a term coined, if I recall correctly, by best-selling author Stephen King. . .), you know that this is the way I operate. As well, though, I "am aware of what I need to complete, to accomplish." And I know that Margarita tends to pass by on the sidewalk in front of my house, at a little before 5, each morning.

I thought this group's helper, or the helper of one of our members, would be a good person to ask. How do I spread out, into enough words, precisely what it is that I am trying to say? How do I emphasize, or 'underline' the importance to each of our group members, that our clubhouse serves?

It was still dark outside before 5 this morning, but I knew that dear Margarita would have thoughts and ideas to contribute: "The clubhouse is a place where any of you can go. **There is no judgment. Everyone is equal.**"

So I have a few lines now, perhaps most of a (short) paragraph. Maybe I can scratch out some more words on my own. What does our gathering place on Main Street mean, to me. . .?

My wife and I own a house on the Mountain, and we are quite comfortable there. We are happy enough that we don't know if and when we will ever leave our residence (or when our 20+-year-old daughter will. . .!).

It is lovely to own a house, to have a place we call home, on Upper Ottawa Street. There is generally somebody in the house all the time and that is nice security.

None of us can spend all of our time in the house, though; I think everybody can appreciate that. We, who are involved with the Hamilton Brain Injury Association DO have a place to go, however, and that is a place we call 'our clubhouse.'

Again, I am scratching for words. Perhaps, I thought, if I go inside and sign into Facebook on the computer, my regular friends will be there. It is no clubhouse but, like the clubhouse, 'it is always there.'

So I did it. I signed onto Facebook and, what do you know, Jeff was there! I suppose if I bounce my concern or desired direction off of enough people, I can get enough information to gather, enough ideas, to comprise a piece for the newsletter, of sufficient length . . .

I got lucky: "hey bud the clubhouse is awesome before the clubhouse I would only leave my place for food and appointments that I could not miss.

Other than that I was a shut-in. My world was online no human interaction it's a place I feel comfortable and I have garnered new friendships, or as I say met my brothers and sisters, as that's how I see you all. We're all related through, one, our brain injuries and no one understands us better than each other. I know that when I say 'You know what I mean' that others here do but in the real world others have no clue'

It would be difficult to utter more sincere or truer sentiments. The clubhouse IS a place where any of us can go, Monday through Friday, to feel or enjoy a shelter that we cannot always appreciate, elsewhere. More than just mere shelter, though, the clubhouse is more than a mere 'shelter from the storm' or a place to meet. The shelter is comprised of members of our group, along with each of their personalities, and seemingly unlimited abilities.



We have such a variety of abilities that I suppose the best way to proceed is alphabetically, by name. Remember, though . . . I am presenting examples of only six people's accomplishments and contributions; there are so many more of us involved and participating in group.

Barry is our group photographer. When I peruse The Spectator each morning, I see photographs included in the daily newspaper. No, Barry has not contributed these, but that is, likely, because he is out, taking ever more photographs, of infinite quality. We appreciate his efforts and abilities, too, because he does not 'keep it to himself.' We have had group outings, at places ranging from Gage Park to Royal Botanical Gardens. No object is safe from Barry's lens. After the instruction he shares with interested group members, no object is safe from their aim, either!

Jeff and Mark are both experienced, behind a different kind of camera. The camera of which I speak is a movie camera. Jeff has former experience with filming projects. Watch out in your chimneys this Christmas, too; Mark is working on a Christmas-based film that likely will not allow ANY of you to get a full night's sleep . . .!

Marj, what can I say about her? Do I talk about the ideal mother she is to her children? Do i talk about how much we miss her when she is unable to attend and share her voice and face at our Glee club practices (one more activity the clubhouse hosts)? Shall i thank her for her never-ending good humour, her appreciation for all we enjoy in life? Or do I simply remain anxious? She is also the one who cans my pears, when I provide bags of them from our backyard tree!

As far as verse goes, we are lucky to have Moss as a group member. He is an unlimited 'spring' of poems. Each meeting we are lucky enough to have him in attendance, he generally shares at least two or three of his latest poetic efforts with us.

If any of you climb the Mountain steps, you may have been lucky enough to come across V. This fellow never stops moving, climbing the Mountain steps numerous times each day . . . I recall last summer, when I was doing movie work, downtown, V crossed my path more than once. It is always good to see him strolling about and certainly a piece of good luck to be able to slow him down and speak with him for a bit.

Not perfect alphabetical order, but I mustn't forget to include Tim. Tim, for one, serves as our garden co-ordinator. He has built our garden structure and is ensuring that it is ready for the 'crops' we intend to plant, in coming seasons. Too, Tim is the one primarily responsible for the grounds of our sanctuary. He built the shed out back as well as later taking it down. Why do I mention that? I imagine he removed the shed, in order to provide additional land for gardening!

Tim receives my never-ending gratitude, too: He was here at my house, yesterday, having delivered a load of dirt from clubhouse grounds, to my backyard. The pool is going up soon, and we needed to get some dirt, to help level off the yard.

We have such an array of efforts and abilities available, from members of our group. If we did not have our gathering place, our aforementioned clubhouse, on downtown's Main Street? We would be like a . . . well, to borrow from Tim's efforts: We would be like plants without a garden to burrow our roots into.





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 or drop it off at our clubhouse in the suggestion box
All messages will remain anonymous unless otherwise stated

Hello friends.

I hope you all got through the winter months without too much anxiety and can now enjoy the wonderful weather.

I have to say this time I got some rather challenging questions. I really had to put my thinking cap on. I relied on research, as I always want to give you the best possible suggestions.

Having said that, I would like to remind everyone, I am your friend. I am not a doctor, or a therapist. I am someone you can ask questions too or sound off too, who will do her best to come up with the best possible answer I can.

Jan

Dear Jan,

How long will my headaches last? Will they ever go away?

*Signed,
Painful*



Dear Painful,

I feel so bad for you. Headaches can be one of the worst possible pains imaginable. No one except those of us who suffer from bad headaches can truly understand just how restricting, life altering and challenging they can be. My heart really goes out to you.

From my own personal experience with headaches, particularly migraines, I asked my doctor to go to a Pain Specialist. I felt I needed someone other than a regular family Doctor to deal with this type of pain. In my case I was right. A Pain Doctor has more specific knowledge to offer great suggestions and help to reduce the pain. Instead of giving me an all-around pain medication he gave me a medication that deals only with Migraines and nothing else. The medication is called Rizatriptan. It is very expensive although I am sure it must be covered under some plans. The important thing is it works! I take it and my migraine is gone within 10-20 minutes.

It was also recommended that I change my diet, eat less sugar, cut back on caffeine and if you are a smoker, try to quit. I was a smoker and I will tell you since I have quit, I get 90% less headaches.

Now this is just my experience with headaches and for me, it was the best solution. Some people and articles on the internet may tell you to try meditation, cut out meat, etc. etc. There are many, many suggestions. Personally, I think the best answer is to go to a specialist, someone who has the expertise.

I wish you all the best and I hope to someday soon answer your question that, yes, your headaches will eventually go away.

Sincerely,
Jan

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



Dear Jan,

How can I help my family understand that I have a brain injury? They don't see any difference on the outside but on the inside I do have challenge! I feel like they put a lot of expectations on me and don't understand.

*Signed,
Invisible*



Dear Invisible,

This is what I would do. I would remind them in a gentle loving way. I would either bring it up to them all together or do it individually. Here is a sample of what I would say:

"However long ago, something happened to me, I acquired a brain Injury. Because of this, my brain no longer works the same. It would be the same as if I had a leg amputated, I could no longer walk or run like you. Please take a minute to fully comprehend that. Now, because of my invisible injury, I may have some challenges that make me see, hear, process and understand things a little differently. All I am asking is that you please be patient and wait for me to "get it" just like you would wait for me to catch up if I had only one leg. There are some things I just cannot do now that I could do before because I have an ABI, so please accept that. But remember I can still do a lot, and there are some things about me that are better now, so accept that too"

I found when I said this to my family and friends, they seemed to understand my ABI a lot better. I really hope this helps, if not there is always the other option of them coming out to one of your support groups or caregiver support groups, the dates and times are on the calendar.

I hope this helps good luck!

Sincerely,
Jan



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

Dear Jan,

I can't work anymore but would still like to "giveback". Is there a good place to volunteer or help?

*Signed
Wanting to Help*



Dear Wanting to Help,

Tons of places! Volunteers are always needed. And it is so rewarding. The best thing to do is to first ask yourself what type of volunteering you would like to do.

Do you like working with young people or the elderly? Do you like a hospital atmosphere or are you more into administrative?

Next question: Do you have access to a computer? If yes, go to the website and type in "volunteering in Hamilton" or the specific place you would like to volunteer. A database will come up with an application giving you options of what areas of volunteering you would like and what areas of town. If you do not have a computer, come to the clubhouse and anyone like me or Adria will be more than happy to help you research, just ask.

There is also a number to call 905-523-4444. The address is 27 John St. N. Hamilton. L8R 1H1 If you want to visit or talk to someone about volunteering in Hamilton.

Or if you want, if you are really mobile, you can just go to places like to come see us at The Hamilton Brain Injury Association. Yes, we need volunteers! Especially at race time,

Good luck in your search.

Sincerely,
Jan



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

Dear Jan . . .

Dear Jan,

I use to love going out with friends all the time, before my injury. Most of my friends have lost touch. Is there anywhere to meet new friends?

Signed,
Lonely



Dear Lonely,

Yes, there is! If you want to try to meet new people, I hear a great way is to join a group called "Meetup". It is a online based group, with different groups in different cities. If you have access to a computer just type in "Hamilton Meetup." If you don't you may use the one available at the clubhouse, during clubhouse hours. Just ask Me or Adria to help you, we would love to help and will respect your privacy.

These groups are not a set-up for dates. They are places for people who are wanting to meet others both male and female in the same age bracket (don't worry there are a lot of groups with different criteria), they get together to go to movies, dinner, bowling all sorts of things. It's a great way to meet friends.

I don't know if you have a computer but if you do, Facebook is also a good way to connect with old friends. Since I have joined Facebook, I have reconnected with friends from public school, my old neighbourhood, high school, old co-workers, it's fun. It's not for everyone though.

Remember though to always practice caution when meeting up with any one or new people, now a days you can't be too careful.

Good luck with making new friends.

Sincerely,

Jan



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

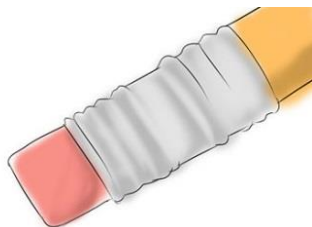
Dear Jan . . .

Dear Jan,

*Why When I have done something
hundreds of times successfully, then one
day, I will wake up to have no idea how
that this is done.*

Example: calling voicemail.

*Signed,
Confused*



Memory

Dear Confused,

Join the club! No seriously, you sound more severe than me, sorry. I know with me I suffer short term memory loss. Which sounds like the difficulty you are facing. I don't honestly know if there is a cure, but I do know you it can help if you exercise the brain to be stronger.

If I were you, I would definitely talk to my Doctor, case manager, OT or Rehab Therapist and describe to them what you are experiencing. They can rule out any other possible reasons for the challenge and offer you suggestions as to how to improve or strengthen your brain

You can also research memory strengthening articles on the internet. Try doing these memory exercises and adding them to your routine. Keep your brain active. There is even a game on Facebook about solving crimes, where you have to find things. Anything like that is so good for the brain and memory work. I have come to love these games, they challenge me and they are fun.

I also make lists. This helps me with my memory and keeps me from getting frustrated. I will make a list and then check off the task when I am done.

I will start a new list starting with the items I did not finish. Or you can find help from your support team, family, friends, or even here at the clubhouse to write out how to do certain tasks so you can review the process. This can help with memory too. Sometimes all you need is to repeat the task several times before your brain will remember.

Best Wishes

Sincerely,

Jan

Reminder to all Readers and Members: if you don't have a computer, there is one available at the clubhouse to use, during Clubhouse hours. Myself, or Adria, are available to help you with anything you need on the computer.

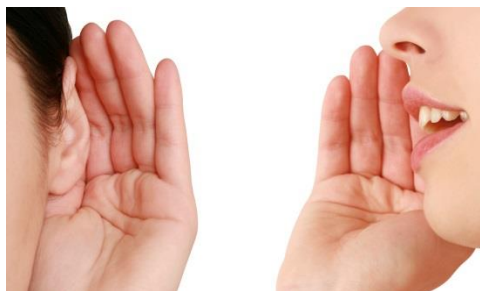
See you at the Race!

**Enjoy your Summer Everyone!
Jan**



Thoughts and Strategies From Maryann Communication

We all make sounds in the delivery room when we come into this world. Our parents soothe us with their voices. We continue to hear sounds and soon imitate what our family is saying. After many times of trying to form words and sentences we learn how to express our thoughts and feelings. This is the beginning of how you and I communicate.



Webster's defines communication as, "a process whereby information is enclosed in a package and is channelled and imparted by a sender to a receiver via some medium. The receiver then decodes the message and gives the sender a feedback." This broad definition of communication highlights a very important fact; communication depends on the medium. Today the medium has drastically changed from face to face intimate conversations, to mechanical tools conveying our deepest thoughts and feelings. Is society prepared for these changes? How are these mediums affecting us? Is this good for our youths and families? What will the future look like?

Today we are living in a time that communication is being revolutionized. We have changed how the information is being sent. The electronic age has allowed us to send the same message to so many people at once. At the same time we are still using our interpersonal skills by listening, observing, questioning, analyzing and evaluating, but is it truly the same as a face-to-face meeting? Let's take the simple example of texting. If I send you a text noting, "I'm angry" . . . how would you interpret this? A text offers very little. If I were standing in front of you, arms crossed and teeth clenched, screaming that "I'm angry", you can read my subtle communications, and you are aware of my emotional state.

The newest, fastest and quickest way of sending messages is texting. The latest toy for this method of communication is the iPhone, offering many things that the computer does such as email, internet, chat rooms, twitter, Facebook, calendars, pictures, the whole gambit. The package of information, the sender and receiver are still the same, but the medium has changed.



Is society ready for this change? From a business standpoint, I believe businesses enjoy being able to process digital information at a faster speed. It has allowed North American companies to put more pressure on our already fast paced life. This is creating numerous health problems, which I think will increase our spending of health dollars. The amount of stress related medical conditions are being traced back to the way we live. Cell phones have offered many freedoms, but at a price. We are now tethered to the office and always available which is not healthy! The brain and body needs to relax. The industry has in essence created a new psychological disorder, "disconnection from phone phobia."

I heard of a lady in the States having an operation on the ligament of her thumbs which was caused by too much texting. We use Facebook and Twitter now as a teenager, when in the past they would have written in their diaries. How long will this information be in cyber space? What if people use this tool as a way to say terrible messages about a person? This was just played out in an afternoon soap opera. It basically said there is another way to gossip to the masses, which can hurt the persons' reputation.



Thoughts and Strategies From Maryann

The digital communication mediums are changing at a fast speed, the policies and laws are not able to change as quickly. Our government is starting to look at the communication privacy laws and other concerns in this area. It seems they get one thing done and two others are created, which needs their attention. The circle continues.

We all have a choice of being the receiver for communication. When I read what people have written in public areas, I am amazed what graffiti there is and how much. Graffiti is usually pictures, angry word, a strange or obscene message, but we have a choice to ignore these images. We have choice to listen to people like Howard Stern on the radio. What about the internet? People are able to write messages on the Internet and our choice is limited because it is mixed in with the games or other information that we want. The filters and boundaries we use in other written material is not being used to the same degree. We are even bombarded on our personal phones! Our government attempts to protect us from communication misuse, creating laws for graffiti but what about the internet and our cell phones?



The uses of personal communication tools have drastically changed our lives. I heard of a prominent doctor in the states texting while driving, and the poor man died. People are actually texting while they are sitting next to each other. Teenagers and college students text to each other while in class. Family members at family celebrations use their phones to text people. While I was growing up we were not allowed to use a phone during meals. Our families have little social time, as we do not sit at the table and now at big celebrations the outside world is invading our time and privacy. How would Emily Post perceive this situation? What would Mrs. Posts' say about the etiquette of cell phones? Is texting in a classroom the same thing as talking in a classroom? I'm sure that Emily would see them as being the same, which means cell phones do not have a place in the classroom.

The future may see smaller phones such as hearing aid phones. Will they be able to transfer our thoughts onto the other person? Does Star Trek and other science fiction shows of have the correct idea where the new generation can talk with a visor or mind communication? Will that be our next medium? I'm sure I cannot picture what it will be like in a hundred or so years.

Today we have laws to protect us privately and publicly from the land phone. The communication mediums we are using do not have such protection from the government. Our laws have to advance to give us better safety with the tools we use and how they are used. There are many discussions about family life past and present. Terms like latch door key kid, nuclear family, and loss of family values. These terms express how much we have moved away from the "proper way of doing things." The digital world has contributed to all of these changes. The society is full of changes it does not mean all are for the best of society. Let us be the people who decide.

Marjorie's Tech Spotlight

Tip of the Quarter

I think one of the best tips I have for using my iPhone is to have a picture of what my screens look like.

I find that for some reason the icons on my screen will move around. This happens when I download a new app or it can happen just randomly.

Once the icons move around (even if I move them around on purpose) I find that it is almost impossible to locate or remember what I need.

So a simple screen shot is all that is needed to move the icons back to the correct position. On my iPhone a screen shot is taken by simultaneously holding down the button that turns your phone on and off and the home button (the home button is found at the bottom middle on your iPhone.) If you are not able to take a photo of your own screen get a friend to take the photo and then send it to you.

Here is a picture of my first screen on my phone. I know that it is busy but I find that as long as I don't move the icons around I can find exactly what I am looking for!



Marjorie's Tech Spotlight



HELP. . . . I Have A New Brain

An interesting phenomenon to note with my new brain.... Unless I do the same thing over and over each and every day I forget.

When I say I forget I mean that I cannot access the information no matter how hard I try.

For example: Just after I had my brain injury, I bought a new scanner/printer. I loved my new scanner and I used it every single day hundreds of times a day to scan in all of my paper and photos. It was so great. I scanned and scanned feeling wonderful as my mountain of paper work went digital! Then I got busy with my children and summer vacation.

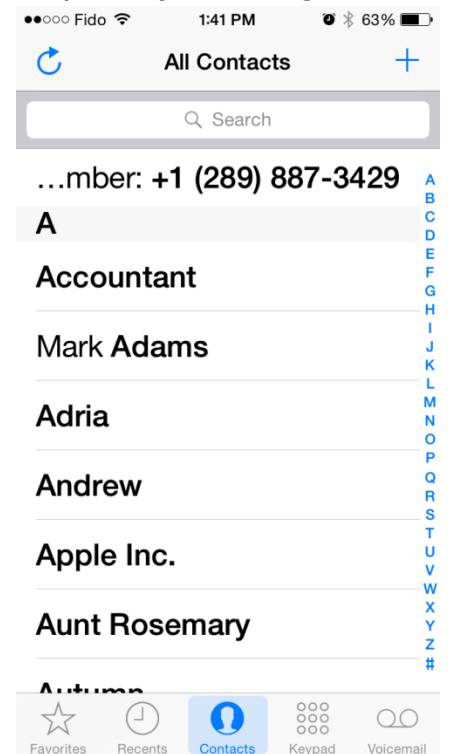
When my children went back to school I had time again to start filing/scanning more things into my computer. I walked over to my scanner and tried to turn it on. Although over the summer I noticed that my scanner sat on my table I had not once done anything with it. I struggled to try and remember how to turn it on. I knew that I could look up my printer online and it would tell me what to do. I looked it up. The instructions did not make sense. No matter what I did I could not remember how to scan something. I tried and tried. Finally I gave away my printer/scanner as I didn't want the constant reminder that I was unable to scan anything with it.

Another example of my memory is that if you don't see me every day, I may forget that I know you. I will hopefully one day see something that reminds me of you and then hopefully I will remember to call, text or e-mail. This part of my brain injury is embarrassing. I tell people that it isn't because I don't care or that I don't love them but rather it is just that I forget. It is almost as though my life and past is erased. This is embarrassing for me as I really do care about the people in my life I just can't get those memories. Interesting enough sometimes memories will pop up unexpectedly. In these moments I try to remember to say hello to friends and family before that memory disappears from my grasp once again.

A final example is that I recently changed cell phone companies I went from WIND to Fido. I guess because I changed companies I expected things like voicemail to be done differently. The initial set up was a little bit different but the way to get to voice mail was exactly the same. But, because I didn't do it for a few days, I forgot how to access voicemail. As you can see from my screen shot, voicemail is still in the bottom right hand corner.

I finally asked a close friend who is with Fido how to find voicemail as I had 18 voicemails to listen to.

Having a new brain isn't all horrible it is just new and something new always takes adjustments and time. I hope that you will be patient with me as I learn how to use this new brain of mine.





Walking Club

Are you tired of walking alone? Are you wanting a fun way to be active?
Are you wanting to increase your overall health?
Do you want to catch up with friends or meet new ones?

Join us for the **HBIA Walking Club**

Come out for a gentle stroll
Thursday mornings at 9am.
We start the walking adventure at the
HBIA clubhouse:
822 Main St E.



All You need is a comfortable pair of runners and a bottle of water

- Meet new people
- Regular exercise reduces and helps maintain body weight
 - Exercise reduces levels of depression and anxiety
 - Walking regularly will increase endurance and strength
 - Physical activity will improve sleep
 - Walking is a great social activity
- Explore Hamilton Neighbourhoods, window shop and find new parks





ART CLUB

HBIA AND BIS MEETINGS

*Please let us know if you are attending
so we can make sure there are
enough supplies*



June 17th Lighthouses
(12:30pm)



July 22nd Driftwood Projects
(12:30pm)



Aug 26th Beading and Ribbon
(12:30pm)



WORD SEARCH

Spring Time Fun

J	T	N	U	A	U	S	F	U	G	N	B	J	U	A	M	E	A	B	U
F	Y	W	P	N	F	R	P	R	G	W	L	E	M	N	A	Z	P	U	U
S	T	E	M	L	E	H	T	O	C	E	W	X	N	J	F	B	P	G	I
Y	Q	L	J	E	L	B	W	L	R	A	M	G	U	G	C	O	L	U	X
D	O	O	D	I	M	W	E	M	B	T	T	N	A	Q	I	G	E	Q	J
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K	O	M	M	P	B	O	R	O	S	L	U	Y	H	C	H	L	D	L	A
Y	T	I	R	I	P	S	O	O	P	A	R	A	O	S	E	F	Z	S	N
F	N	D	H	Z	K	L	T	Q	R	B	G	G	T	K	A	D	Y	U	B
R	D	E	P	Z	L	R	O	Z	I	K	E	Y	D	Y	R	U	U	P	Z
K	L	C	H	A	W	J	M	W	N	J	R	M	O	X	L	J	L	Y	U
D	Q	G	B	T	B	F	B	T	G	K	R	E	G	I	T	B	E	W	X

APPLE
BALLOONS
ENGINES
HAMBURGER
KEYBOARD
MOTORCYCLE
PLAY
RIVER
SPORTS
TEAM

AUNT
BIKE
FLOWERS
HELMETS
LEMONADE
MUSICAL
RACE
SKY
SPRING
TOMATO

BAKERY
EARL
FREEDOM
HOTDOG
LOOSE
PIZZA
RAIN
SPIRIT
SURPRISE
WEATHER



Newsletter Sponsorship

Do you want to sponsor one of our
4 issues of the newsletter in 2015?

You will get a full page AD of your own design plus a Q&A article in the issue you sponsored, written by one of our newsletter committee members about what you offer to the brain injury community.

Direct distribution is over 800 with subsequent distribution estimated at over 2000. All newsletters for the year are available on the HBLA website and previous years issues are archived. Exposure is extensive.

Cost is \$1500...so start thinking which of the Spring, Summer, Fall or Winter issues next year might best suit you.

Contact Adria
905-538-5251 or info@hbia.ca
for more information

Our Board Of Directors

Headstrong would like to recognize their dedicated, compassionate, and ambitious board members:



Jane Grech



Francesca
Rollo



Diana
Velikonja



Dave Gaylor



Kathy
Gaudun



Ben
VanBerkel



Danielle
Perkin



Ted
Newbigging



Brenda
Power-
Ahmad



David
Grebenc

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR TIME AND
HARD WORK!!!



Don't forget to follow us on Twitter!
[@TheHBIA](https://twitter.com/TheHBIA)



510E NOV

**Hamilton Brain
Injury Association**
822 Main St E
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www.hbja.ca

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
31	1 Support Group 1030 - 12  5pm-8pm	2 Strategies 9 - 1030 Glee Club 1030 - 12 Family Resource Group 7 - 9pm	3 HBIA Meetings 8-12 Art Club 1230 - 2 Support Group 4 - 530	4 Walking Club 9-10 Support Group 1030 - 12 Gentlemen's Club 1230 - 2	5 Glee Club 1030 - 12	6
7	8 Support Group 1030 - 12	9 Strategies 9 - 1030 Glee Club 1030 - 12	10 HBIA Meetings 8-12 Hen's Club 11 - 1230 Art Club 1230 - 2 Support Group 4 - 530	11 Walking Club 9-10 Support Group 1030 - 12 Garden Club 12 - 2 Spouse Support Group 7 - 9pm (Bay Garden Location)	12 Glee Club 1030 - 12	13
14	15 Support Group 1030 - 12 BIS - Women2Women 1-230	16 Strategies 9 - 1030 Glee Club 1030 - 12	17 HBIA Meetings 8-12 Art Club 1230 - 2 (Welcome BIS !!) Support Group 4 - 530	18 Walking Club 9-10 Support Group 1030 - 12 Gentlemen's Club 1230 - 2	19 Glee Club 1030 - 12 4pm-7pm 5K By The Bay Pre- Registration	20 
21	22 Support Group 1030 - 12	23 Strategies 9 - 1030 Glee Club 1030 - 12	24 HBIA Meetings 8-12 Hen's Club 11 - 1230 Art Club 1230 - 2 Support Group 4 - 530	25 Walking Club 9-10 Support Group 1030 - 12 Garden Club 12 - 2	26 Glee Club 1030 - 12	27
28	29 Support Group 1030 - 12 BIS - Women2Women 1-230	30 Strategies 9 - 1030 Tech Workshop 10am-12pm (registration needed held at Lear Communication)	1 Art Club 1230 - 2 Support Group 4 - 530	2 Support Group 1030 - 12	3 Glee Club 1030 - 12	4

***Please note that times and dates of all programs are subject to change. Please
check our online calendar for updates or contact us for information***



JULY 2015

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SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
28	29 Support Group 1030 - 12 BIS - Women2Women 1-230	30 Strategies 9 - 1030 Glee Club 1030 - 12	1 CANADA DAY Clubhouse Closed No Groups/Programs	2 Walking Club 9-10 Support Group 1030 - 12 Gentlemen's Club 1230 - 2	3 Glee Club 1030 - 12	4
5	6 Support Group 1030 - 12	7 Strategies 9 - 1030 Glee Club 1030 - 12 Family Resource Group 7 - 9pm	8 HBIA Meetings 8-11 Hen's Club 11 - 1230 Art Club 1230 - 2 Support Group 4 - 530	9 Walking Club 9-10 Support Group 1030 - 12 Garden Club 12 - 2 Spouse Support Group 7 - 9pm (Bay Garden Location)	10 Glee Club 1030 - 12	11
12	13 Support Group 1030 - 12 BIS - Women2Women 1-230	14 Strategies 9 - 1030 Glee Club 1030 - 12	15 HBIA Meetings 8-11 Art Club 1230 - 2 Support Group 4 - 530	16 Walking Club 9-10 Support Group 1030 - 12 Gentlemen's Club 1230 - 2	17 Glee Club 1030 - 12	18
19	20 Support Group 1030 - 12	21 Strategies 9 - 1030 Glee Club 1030 - 12	22 HBIA Meetings 8-11 Hen's Club 11 - 1230 Art Club 1230 - 2 (welcome BIS !!) Support Group 4 - 530	23 Walking Club 9-10 Support Group 1030 - 12 Garden Club 12 - 2	24 Glee Club 1030 - 12	25
26	27 Support Group 1030 - 12 BIS - Women2Women 1-230	28 Strategies 9 - 1030 Glee Club 1030 - 12	29 HBIA Meetings 8-11 Art Club 1230 - 2 Support Group 4 - 530	30 Walking Club 9-10 Support Group 1030 - 12 Gentlemen's Club 1230 - 2	31 Glee Club 1030 - 12	1

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