

"Life may not be the party we'd hoped for... but while we're here
>>> > we might as well dance!"

What was my life about, at the time of my near-death life-changing/saving experience?
Ummph ☺.

how different I am since that life-saving night back in 1996...

It feels like life-times ago, well metaphysically it was.

I was still a teenager – 1yr out of school – 19 years old, a high flyer with my new
acclaimed independence – Miss Cool-'out of school – finished my course at college, got a
'real' job- earning good money, -playing big-people games for real, well, so I ignorantly
believed. Driving, drinking, dancing, staying up late/early depending on how you see it-
completely in my head –

if my feet every touched the ground it was only to bounce
so that I may spring higher.

Far, far, far and away and NO BODY could talk any common sense into me –

I knew it all, well how beautifully the universe showed me that, that was not the truth.

It's amazing what a couple of turns in a rolling car, bumps to your head, multiple broken
bones, paralysis to parts of your body – bruises, cuts, and indescribable pain - can do to
ones perspective of life.

Stop, catch a wake up, something is calling you-

Listen to the noise beyond the silence.

My immediate reaction was pure delight –

I was floating in reverse within a void of eternity ☺-

no body, no mind, no-one to bother me, nag, complain or pester me.

Of course this was my personal experience of being in a coma, I didn't even have to
breath on my own, that too was done for me by a machine.

But there I could be alone with my pain as my companion, really experience it, observe
it, and try to make friends with it.

I was in excruciating agony.

I would hear faint whispers of voices, –

but I frequently slipped into a state of 'Far, far away land' –
where I wanted to be left alone.

For me, my belief is, -
sometimes the most comforting thing one could have,
it is our own solo subjective experience of our life's moments

People try to help, or offer condolences -
but truthfully I think they do it for themselves and their guilt.
That is natural-and it's okay.
But essentially the main healing has to come from the 'injured' ourselves.

Make friends with the individual parts that are causing you such pain.
And LOVE them, and LOVE you and LOVE some more...
That knowledge became apparent, thankfully, from the start.

I believe God gave me a talking too for 28Days, waving his magic finger at me, which
showered me with his love, strength & compassion. ☺

At the time of the accident there were three of us in the car.
My best friends' boyfriend was driving - learner driver - my boyfriend in the back, and
me in the passenger side. We were going too fast
we were late for a movie & still needed to collect my then best friend
Too fast, car swerved, over corrected -
hit the curb and rolled plus minus 3-5 times -
SMASH straight into the traffic light.
Wrapped neatly all the way around.
"Jaws of life" had to cut us out -
Thank God that a patient in Vincent Palotte Hospital had witnessed it and alerted the
hospital. Ironically my parents drove past the scene only minutes after it had happened.
They hadn't recognised the car because it was now a ball of crumpled metal.
The 3rd passenger was thrown out of the back window once we started to roll.
The driver & I remained, unconscious-
strapped in with our seat belts until someone could cut us out.

I had fallen straight into a comatose state
due to the sever head injury I sustained,
so my 'first' sight is rather hazy, scattered puzzled, non-sense-ical -
approximately 6 weeks later.
There had been an urgency for me to 'wake-up & spring up' in time for my dads 40th
birthday party on the 2 July 1996. I feel that I didn't want to,
floating in never never land was more appealing. ☺

I recall my first coming back to 'life' in stops and starts, flashes of memories join up to form movie snippets of my life for the next two years.

But my first real world recollection, I vaguely remember was of the sun

And it was very bright for my eyes, and warm to my skin, the breeze was chilly but fresh.

Cool fresh air rushed in my nostrils, as I was being wheeled in a chair.

And noise – cars, voices all seemed dreadfully loud.

There were people rushing around me, who and why didn't concern me...

I felt numb with pain, almost life-less.

My body had this constant drone of indescribable pain – shooting poisonous agony arrows,

to every possible inch of my physical body,

it worsened as the masks of the pain (painkillers) wore off.

There was not one part of my body that was pain free.

I had no conscious knowledge as to what had happened to me,

where I was,

or why I was. ☹️

I was unaware, stupid, ignorant–

clueless as to what, exactly the implications of my past choices had had on my life, and all I knew was that it didn't feel good.

Next, I was looking up through the car window at the sky.

This is how I witnessed the world for the next 4-5mths.

I had shattered my Pelvis in 32 places and had a stroke on the my left side of my body – so when I travelled in the car – gratefully my parents had a minibus–

I lay down, it was easier to handle.

And less painful for me.

I definitely believe that if my body had not been so strong and healthy

my recovery would have been much slower

and perhaps not as fortunate.

I really prefer to concentrate on the present gifts, and not on the 'could haves', 'should haves' and 'would haves'.

I was super super fit I had been playing woman's league basketball, since I was 13, In my final year of high school, I was the fastest sprinter out of all the other schools we competed against.

1996 was the first season I decided I didn't want to play – the training interfered with my partying. ☺

my parent's physical support truly helped me in the recovery process.

Who else would have put me into the bath, shaved my legs, and answered my ringing bell at 4am –

that was my favourite time to awaken and to wake everyone else up.

The twisted games of the crippled ☺ I understand why now, it's the time our pituitary gland is activated by the light – perfect timing really!

So I am eternally grateful to them for believing in me, and of what I am capable of, and not to have given up hope

NOT listening to the Doctors reservations about my survival.

They fought the doctors to keep the life – support machine on right from the first moment, all the Doctors wanted was my liver or some other part of my anatomy for a transplant!

But as you can imagine I must have looked quiet the sight.

My mom says I had swollen up 5+ times my normal self, bloody hair – Bruised black and blue, yellow and mauve-beautiful palette for any artist I'm sure ☺

Another very important fact is that I had been exposed to some, dare I call it, 'spiritual' notions and ideas

I had started the Course of Miracles '95 – it somehow rung so true in my being that I didn't feel the need to question the fact that 'we are all one' or that 'we are all mirrors of one another 'or that 'I am not this body;

but that we are an Essence of the Devine's Light'. and that the only thing that matters is Love.

Non-judgemental, unconditional Love.

By '96 – Buddhist teachings and mantras entered my life ` Love, peace, compassion, understanding, harmony, truth, beauty, egoless ness, selflessness , sincerity, had all become the words I repeated continuously in my mind and still to this day repeat them, like a song – stuck record.

So when I was healing, I started a game from the mantra – how many words could I remember?

write them down?

& repeat – for days that was what I did.

It was my entertainment.

Try repeating healing words

“Every day in every way I am getting better and better” Louise Hay –

that’s a long one – and took me a long time to memorise it –

try

I am getting better X 500 a day for 3mths – then you can go down to 300 X a day for EVER.

IT WORKS... soon your daily producing cells will actually begin to believe it...

It’s called ‘self-brainwashing’ it’s fantastic.

You must be thinking that I’m cooked – way too many bumps to your head girl....!

NO !!!!! think what you want, stop for a moment and really think

I know what I know because it worked, works and will always work for me

POSITIVITY POSITIVITY POSITIVITY POSITIVITY POSITIVITY POSITIVITY

I truly can not find a specific date or precise time that reality struck.

I believe the reality of my situation only really ‘struck-home’ after I arrived at my parent’s house, around only 2.5 months after my accident because only then was I able to recall moment to moment happenings.

Everything before is still to this day, like a myriad of strobes, images flashing in and out of my psyche, and I’m cool with that.

Your memory is a wonderful tool – it blocks out memories that are too painful to recall.

Reality was when I realised I was incapable of doing anything.

I felt I had lost everything,

the movements of all my limbs,

I weighed 42kgs, so I was incredibly weak and frail.

My ability to construct decent understandable sentences was impossible as time and space made no sense to me, – so the T.V became my baby sitter

I was left to sit in front of it all day, depending if I had therapy that day or not,

that was my outing – but mostly I just sat staring at the T.V. I only wanted to watch The Lion King – a child’s movie – but every now-and-again I would alternate it with Aladdin – another kids film. Light hearted and fun, they used to make me laugh, and I could learn the words from the dialogue. I could sing along with Simba ☺

At night my Dad would play Back-gammon with me – a

and I believe that I might have even won a couple of games.

Friends didn't come around, well only two really special ones did, Bethan Maclean and David McCarthy. So my days were basically spent staring aimlessly at the TV, outside or into space, wondering what I was doing here and why couldn't I do what had always done before.

I think the reality of the situation struck me mostly when I had to call, or ring for someone to take me to the toilet –
or to bring the commode because I was about to burst. I will forever remember the time that my mother was away, and my sister, 10 years younger than me, was left to 'baby-sit' me. And she refused to get the commode (I think she was scared-I forgive her), I was able to basically shuffle myself on to the 'loo' at that stage, but I failed in convincing her of the fact –
and so I sat there with only my tears as comfort
as I soiled myself like a helpless child.

I had felt as if I would be able to conquer any obstacle that I faced
was I rudely reminded of my limitations when I was completely unable to move my left side of my body...

I use to feel so sorry for myself – poor me – I'm only half a person.

Who in this world will love only a 'half' a person –

I use to torment myself with that nonsense.

Although as time moved along the limitation made me more determined to improve myself and heal.

As I have done.

Both my parents didn't give up hope at any stage,
although they must of pretty close. You see when one is in a comatose state there are levels.

I will explain in my naïve simplistic way.

- 5 – you are more likely to snap out of it soon
- 4 – bad – could take longer to return to consciousness
- 3 - worse – deeper unconsciousness
- 2 - worse still, much deeper in an unconsciousness state
- 1 - Very near dead

Now I lay in level 2, for the entire duration

so something snapped me back, like an on off switch you could say ☺

Now they believed in me all the time.

And once I was discharged they decided for me to rather recover at home with the family than be put into a 'home' – Thank God for that decision, as I think I would be suicidal by now. My parents (Terry Keightley and my step-dad Brian Keightley) did their best and did whatever they could to ensure that I had the best therapist, best neurosurgeon, orthopedic etc.

I mean picture it – here in front of my folks,
is but a remembrance of what was once their energetic, bright, funny, noisy loving teenager –

and now all they had was ...was....Was...something that looked like her –
but was completely different to her.

With head injury, Past becomes present, future becomes past and present becomes a creation of what you believe is to be going on. Muttered incoherent sentences that combined past present and imaginary future events.

For example: during the day I had to practice my mini finger exercises while I watched T.V or stretch my left arm out – that was difficult and is still and will always be very sore, because, it was explained to me – the nerve that runs from the brain - down to my fingers had been severed...no worries - I am pleased...

I have my arm.

although I had the most in-depth conversations then, because I had stage fright so,
I rambled –

always helped pass the time! thank you for everyone's patience :)

I relied on others for everything.

I was sad. Nothing made any sense to me. I ached physically emotionally and mentally. I blamed myself for my inabilities – I think that's why my recovery was so fast. I wanted so badly to be 'normal' again, whatever that meant, whatever that state may be. Well today I have realised that I could be the normal one and it's everyone else that's lost-the-plot 😊

I believe that with the love and attention I received from my family –
definitely made a significant difference to my recovery, I know not all of you have family and close friends – but know you are loved, know you are supported – by all of us! Right now!

We are with you in the ether that is these experiences.....

we know how to find you there and we know the way back 😊

I completed the limited therapy we all receive in October 1996 (less than 6mths after the accident). They couldn't do much more for me and I didn't want to go anymore. How could they put me with a bunch of old people (other stroke survivors)

I was embarrassed. How silly it seems now...

By that time I could move my left side– relatively well, could balance and shuffle pretty damn fast and was relatively normal again, well I thought myself to be.

And there was the time I was put into bed – and the safety sides put up – like a jail (the noise of the clack clack was dreadful). Hospital beds.

And the time all I wanted was to sit outside in the sun and I was warned I might get sick. I didn't care

I wanted the sense of freedom, with the sun warm on my skin, the breeze blowing in my hair. To watch the birds soaring high in the blue sky is all I dreamed for.

Everything was in such a blend of events

All I can say in honesty , was that one day I could walk and was relatively 'normal' and the next day I found myself in a Wheel-chair, what had happened from point A to Point Z had appeared to have gotten lost in my memory banks.

I think it's because the pain, physical, psychological, mental, spiritual was too severe – My spirit dwelled out of my body for some time after I believe.

My attitude initially was disbelief – how could this happen to me, why is God punishing me. What have done to deserve this? You know.....usual stuff.

Sitting, sitting, and sitting....

.almost like I was trapped in a constant void of nothingness, but the intense pain was so real....doing nothing physically (except practising finger touches-an exercise given to me by physiotherapists). I did mini stretches with my outstretched arms but nothing major....I wished to be anywhere but where I was....then....

I could walk again,

Truthfully, at first I believe I picked up a lot of garbage from people,

'oh shame she is grieving her old self' –

hell no

and I was pleased that 'she' was no longer – I had an innate understanding that I had manifested the entire accident – and that the healing process was also just part of my journey towards wholeness.

I am not saying that I am a saint or anything – no ways, I suffered, I yelled, I denied, I cried, I flew into rages of unstoppable fury (the brain injury left me in fits of anger as

the neurons rewired themselves). But somehow my little voice of reason, calmness of peace stayed with me reminding me to laugh and be grateful for what I had.

I definitely remained positive throughout.

I had a lot of skins to shed –‘last season’s fashions’

I’ve termed it.

Buddhism helped a great deal here – it Re-awakened my soul, to truth that had been lying dormant for so long. Positivism heals all. Make a choice.

Do you want to heal?

Or do you want to remain playing a victim role.

See the Light in everything.

You have a choice.

If you can’t, then just pretend – fool yourself,

because one day without even realising it – you are doing it.

Persevere.

We are all drops of Pure Light sent from the Devine Cloud of Purity to earth to re-awaken to His Truth, we are all his children and all we need to do is Love and ‘do to others, as you wish them to do to you’ It’s really that simple.

I definitely believe that a person can sustain great amounts of physical, mental pain and grief and their recovery depends on their strength of faith in our Creator, and also has a great deal to do with their Soul Karmic journey.

My belief –however is, it is not carved in stone as we are lead to believe –

that’s fear based, but really based on what you give out NOW, comes back to you...

thoughts and actions alike, and depending on your evolution

repercussions could be immediate, months years, or even life times.

You can change.

So really

‘Do Good Be Good’- Gurudev Sivananda

Dr Molly, and her beautiful staff, my physiotherapist that believed in me and gave me their unconditional love and support for the time I was there. One of the other therapists could see something in me and would teach me the art of tai-chi, me and my wobbly legs gaining balance, confidence and re-connecting to my Devine. ☺

I attended 5-6months, I didn't want to go anymore because of the cost – and I felt strong enough. My entire duration of being in hospital and then physiotherapy was in total 5-6mnths. And it took 2 years to completely recover from the roller coaster rides of my brain injury.

My outlook is this,

bad things happen to everyone,

and often to 'good' people

the choice is initially yours make or break –I am a stubborn survivor,

if I say I can do it, people must just calm down and observe,

because eventually I do, do it ☺

If a person finds themselves in a situation where they are absolutely powerless through paralysis, broken bones, grieving the loss of a loved one etc.

My advice is this;

observe yourself,

pretend you are watching a movie of your life and you are the onlooker,

like watching traffic pass you by –

you are not going to jump in and get squashed rather you patiently watch,

and when and if the time arises

intervene.

It helps douse the pain because you are not giving strength to it by paying attention to it. You are in control – of what you can be

Of requires your attention.

I'm not suggesting to deny the pain, but to make friends with the experience, it makes it far more pleasant. I also suggest while lying there in your discomfort to replace your mundane thoughts, which are normally self-pitying, with positive Light filled affirmations.

I am healing. I am filled with Gods light and strength. And try as hard as you can to see the beauty in all that is around you. The fragrance of the flowers. The baby buds that are about to open. The sincere smile of the Nurse.

The concern from others.

Trick yourself in loving your gown that has a constant draft wafting up your back side – see the humour in impossible scenarios ☺

Your mind is your POWER , and you are in control of it – nobody else.

Forgive yourself. Laugh, accept and love love love.

What for me is/was the most difficult thing or part of this experience to deal with is
The fact that I did it, I survived, with hardly any physical trace of such a trauma.

It makes me very different from others –incredibly strong and very free-spirited.

I am not attached to anything because its all impermanent, I don't gossip, lie or steal –
because I would hate for that to be done to me.

(Karma – what you give out, will in time be given back to you)

I know I have a higher purpose to me having survived such an ordeal and the question
plagues my mind as to what that specifically is –

I stick by 'Do good, Be good'.

I have an abundance of untiring energy that I am now learning to reign (like wild
horses☺) and focusing on using it to the benefit of the whole. Selfless duty, making
others feel worthy (doing community work, giving homeless people food, time and love),
connecting to the Devine through meditation and through duty all feed my soul with
unexplainable happiness.

My chosen path is not an easy way out (oh just surrender to God & he will take care of
everything) –no, you have to remain consistent in your behaviour, thoughts and actions
and face the obstructions-over come the obstacles and remember to smile and laugh, be
happy – sincerely happy. If you have to trick yourself then that is also fine because one
day you will not even have to think about it, it will come naturally. You are after all the
creator of your reality.

My problems all stemmed from my severe head injury.

Okay let me try and explain in words as apposed to visuals.

Nuts that are in a shell...when shaken vigorously slam against the walls of the shell.... as
did my brain against the skull.

If one goes through such a trauma it takes the brain 2 years to fully recover.

Until that time neurons backfire, do flip flops, emotions go roller coaster, it is almost like
watching a movie in fast forward but it seems to be playing visually in reverse –
it sounds hectic, and believe me it was.

It was bad for 1year, then became less obvious.

My Earth parents (Terry and Brian Keightley), and their belief in my strength.

They presented me with infinite amount of Love attention, understanding and strength.

My father/mother/sister/brother/plants/sun/moon/stars and clouds... God....I can do
nothing without his unconditional Love – for in my belief and faith in the unseen –

I survived. The creator of all beings is indescribably forgiving loving kind and smacks you
sometimes when you are not listening to your own "soul's" voice –

You, living on some level in far, far, far away land
decided to come back

– you are special –

God shines in all of us, all you need do is ask her/him and allow him/she too work.
Believe Trust Believe Trust Believe Trust Believe Trust Believe Trust

Tanya

I'm now '21 years old alive', walking talking skipping running hiking, skiing,
skateboarding, surfing, jumping, stretching, helping others heal. I am tireless
I AM ALIVE.

I walk fearlessly egolessly and live in a constant state of gratitude.

I am a Mother of 2 beautiful children, born naturally despite my injuries,

I am wife, mother, friend, brave yogini and inspiration

