

Brain Injury Survivors: Attention and Concentration

By: Deana Adams

Intro by Russell: This month's hero is Deana Adams. We met at the HOPE After Brain Injury support group in Arlington, Texas. She has a great appreciation for helping those who have suffered from a brain injury. Once a month, she moderates an amazing support group of both survivors and caretakers. Right down to her core, her passion is caring for others. I asked her to write an article for all of us. Enjoy!

What grabs your attention lately? You may say, 'What doesn't grab my attention? Seems like I'm very easily distracted. Everything grabs my attention, but I can't concentrate on any one thing for long.' You're not alone. Being easily distracted and having difficulty focusing is a constant struggle for many TBI survivors. Here are a few characteristics that may sound familiar to you:

- Problems with concentration/attention are closely related to tiredness or fatigue
- Easily distracted and cannot ignore trivial movements or noises
- Attention span improves with time but shortens with fatigue
- Lack of awareness—one may see the pot boiling over but may not be aware that it needs immediate attention
- Unable to shift attention or filter information



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So, how do you cope? The natural recovery of brain injury certainly helps but here are a few other suggestions...

- Wear earplugs, sunglasses for sensory overload
- Keep focus *away* from crowds
- When you are with someone, walk directly behind them and focus on person's feet or back
- Eliminate as much environmental noise as possible; i.e., keep the radio and television off when trying to concentrate
- Remove any nonessentials from bathroom or kitchen countertops
- Do what you can to eliminate time pressures
- Give yourself permission to fail
- Read aloud
- Ask others to speak slowly; give small amounts of information at a time; pause occasionally to allow for processing
- Post-It notes!

And last but not least, be kind to yourself...

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HopeAfterBrainInjury.org



Hope after Brain Injury is a non-profit organization devoted to sharing hope with those affected by brain injury by offering counseling, education, and connection to community resources. We are involved with brain injury survivors and their caregivers, along with healthcare professionals, committed to the advancement of brain injury recovery.

We meet the 2nd Tuesday of every month from 1-2:30p. Support group for caregivers and for brain injury survivors. Please join us at 301 S. Center Street, Suite 120 Arlington, TX 76010.



The Power of Purpose

By: Russell Button

What are your passions in life? Not every one can have a career they love every day, but we all have the opportunity to dedicate some aspect of our lives to something we are passionate about. Whether its running, hiking, painting, photography, music, dancing, or just about anything. For some, what they love is also their career. For others, what they love is their hobby.

All of us need to understand the power of purpose. We each have the motivation and power to achieve great things in our respective lives. I'm going to list a series of questions below and after you answer you will have a starting list of your passions or dreams that you need to set out to achieve. The goal of this article is to get you to start thinking about your passion, creating new ones, and finding ways to pursue them.

What activities do you enjoy doing above all else?

What activities have you always wanted to pursue?

What activity makes you happy when you do it?

What activity do you get immersed in and lose track of time?

Write out your answers to these questions. That is your starting point. Then, tackle the important question of what is preventing you from pursuing your passion, even part-time? Will you be happier if you make the time for your passion or is there something else you can pursue at this moment? Identify time spent just lounging around or wasting time. Ask yourself, would I be happier or more fulfilled if I spent that time pursuing my passion?

For those of you that have a passion or life full of passions you pursue, you know the power that comes with this. You understand the power of purpose to do something you love to do. Keep doing what you're doing.

For those of you that have not been pursuing your passions in life, the goal of this article was to encourage you to get back at it. Find something you love to do: carpentry, photography, cooking, or building a car. Then, figure out when you can pursue that passion and how often. Block off the time and stay committed. Make it part of your lifestyle as opposed to a trend. You will see the immediate impact in all aspects of your life once you start pursuing your passions. Good luck and enjoy!



Insurance— The Driving Force Behind Car Wreck Trials

By: Russell Button

Verdict after verdict, I grow increasingly frustrated by the fact that the jurors want to know if insurance is involved on behalf of the Defendant driver, which is the one that caused the wreck. They ask why this wasn't submitted through insurance and settled before it ever got to this point.

The brutal truth is I have never sued an individual without insurance. The mega insurance companies we all see all the time on TV are behind every case I handle. They hire the lawyers to defend their drivers. They hire the experts to say our client wasn't injured in the wreck, our doctors treated too much, or our client is lying. They offer pennies to people for years.

In Texas, we are forced to sue the individual with insurance involved in the wreck, not the insurance company. If the insurance company doesn't settle the case and a lawsuit is filed, the individual is forced to be a Defendant in a lawsuit even though he submitted it to his insurance company. When the case is tried, the jury is not allowed to know that the Defendant driver has insurance.



After the verdict at the end, the insurance is the one that pays the money. It is simply amazing to me that the jury is left without this critical piece of information. The fact that someone being injured in a car wreck has to have the resources to take on global billion-dollar insurance corporations is truly a David vs. Goliath battle.

This is where we come in. To make sure the game is played fairly on both sides. We don't settle disputes between people. We seek to hold people accountable for their choices to deter them from making them in the future. Deterrence and accountability are what keep our roads safe for all of us.

I will be writing more about the truth behind trials and insurance corporations in the coming months. We hope you enjoyed this article. If you have any questions or comments, please reach out to us at: info@buttonlawfirm.com. We'd love to hear from you.



Don't Just Turn a Blind Eye—Say Something

By: Russell Button

I started to write this article a couple of months ago. However, it just never felt like the right time to release it.

At The Button Law Firm, we take on cases where lives have been altered by the choices of another. Drunk drivers, distracted drivers, and trucking corporations that put profits over safety. They all have a common theme: someone turned a blind eye.

Let's start with the drunk driver. Most cases I handle involve a passenger that let the drunk driver drive. Some let the least drunk person in the group drive home. The decision seems innocent, but it is a fatal one. Have a plan to have a designated driver. If you don't have a plan in place or it has an issue that everyone has been drinking, then adjust and call a cab. The cab or Uber fare is much cheaper than the consequences of taking another's life. It seems difficult or embarrassing to be that person, but just do it. A moment of being bold is small in exchange for a lifetime of regret of knowing that you could have prevented the dismantling of the driver's life that your car hit head-on.

How many of us have been in the car with someone who was driving and using their cell phone? We don't feel safe knowing that their eyes are on their phone and not on the road. Several organizations are dedicated to creating public awareness of the dangers of distracted driving. Right now today, we can all do something about it. If you are a passenger, help the driver use their phone. If you are a passenger, don't let them use it while driving. Equally important is not communicating via text with someone you know is driving. Why allow them to take their eyes and mind off the road? Anything can happen in that moment and its usually life altering. Unfortunately, its not just the distracted driver that can be affected, it is others on the roadways. I see the life-changing effects of distracted drivers on my client's lives day in and day out. We need to deter the behavior before we become a statistic. Say something to these distracted drivers.

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Lastly, we all share the road with 18-wheeler truck drivers. I have met many good ones during the course of my life. However, we have all been next to those trucks that come steaming past us on the highway, riding our bumpers, or weaving in and out of traffic. Some are sleep deprived. Others are distracted while driving: using their phones, texting, taking pictures, or watching movies. We all know there are trucking companies that turn a blind eye to what their truck drivers do when behind the wheel. The bottom line is profits over safety.

Why though? It's really simple. They don't want to know what their drivers do most of the time. The trucking companies don't want to take the time to properly train their drivers on what to do. Then, the trucking companies don't want to supervise and enforce the rules and regulations on their own drivers. Takes too much time, costs too much money, and it has the potential to make profitable drivers go to another company.

If we want the statistics to keep piling up, then we don't need to say anything. If we want to start changing this conduct, then we need to say something. The more we start to hold people and companies accountable for their choices, the more we can start to trust these drivers on the roads.

The most important thing is that we all can do something to save another's life, to be a hero. My goal is to reduce the number of permanently damaged people and torn families I see come through my door every day. To me, preventing the main causes of these life-altering crashes is the best place to start. Join The Button Law Firm in our mission to get people to just say something.

