

Beginnings Recording Of My Brain Aneurysm

October 2007 – March 2008

Chapters 1-36

Chapter 37-58

Chapters 1-36 were for the most part recorded on my computer as type written daily journals. The journals were assigned by Paula so that I would continue to practice writing and therefore hopefully improve my communication skills. Most of these chapters were about how I felt and what I could remember or learn based upon how I felt. What happened was I began to see the writing journal assignments as a book I could be writing despite my inability and limitations to do that.

Chapters 37-58 are actually repetitive and not very interesting. We have selected quotes from these chapters that are of some interest. The balance of the words on each of these chapters was me trying to explain my handwritten journals from April 2007 to August 2007 on dates of October 2007 – March 2008. This was despite the fact that I was still not fully recovered from the previous year before. Trying to recover took until the fall of 2008, 18 months and beyond from when the brain aneurysm began in February, 2007. It is essential that a patient continue trying to write and explain what is happening. If the patients do not do this the patients will not recover and be able to return to who they were as themselves prior to the brain aneurysm.

Chapter 1

October 22, 2007

Watching Movies in the Hospital

I woke up when Susan was standing by the bed. She asked how I was feeling today and if I would like to watch a movie. I was noticing around the room that it looked flat with no color, pictures, nothing to draw my attention. It was the kind of flatness and still in the room that I wanted to leave it. Kids get to tell what they want...that is what I want ...to get what I wanted. I moved to get up to walk in the room and I looked down at my wrists. They were tied down.

It was a tie white colored straight rope. Where the ends of the rope meet there is a round connector. It looks almost kind but the harder you pull on the rope the tighter it gets on your body. It seemed that Susan was a nice, friendly person. She has brought movies to watch. Another friend of mine who seemed nice, did not come tonight. I wanted the rope unhooked and asked Susan if she could do that. Susan said, "I have to talk to the official nurse hear who has the right to do this." I slept a little, and when I came out of the sleepiness, it was time for the movie.

I told Sharon that I could stay with her. I told her that I wanted to stay at her house and not be in this room. I didn't like the room. Another person was on the other side of the floor to

ceiling divider. That person had people walking to the side of the plain solid sheets. I watched the man, the woman, and the nurse go past the bed I was tied to to the other's bed. I don't talk to that person. The sheet separates us all day and I am trying to find out what I am doing here.

I paid close attention to the movie that Susan brought. I tried to think of good questions to ask about it. Why did the blond go into an area you can't drive? Why is she not with her boyfriend? Why are Susan and I watching this movie in the hospital? Why am I in a hospital and tied to a bed? I am trying to be nice to Susan while she is nice to me to bring me a movie I don't understand. I asked here if I could go to her house and she said no. "You have to be here tonight so you are ready to attend the classes you have to attend according to doctors. If you don't take these classes and go to the classes with the master teachers here then you cannot go home. You might end up going to a place that had for people who cannot take the classes."

I looked at the white posting paper posted to the wall. It had classes and be what I would be expected to do. I look at Susan as she puts her coat on. She is going to leave me here and if there is some magic trick to get out of her and go to a house, I need to find it.

Susan said she would come back again tonight and we would watch another movie. It is like the movie last night with full of questions. Susan tells me a father and his sons leave the mother and get poorer and poorer. I don't know why or why what we would do but that what is scheduled for tonight. Today I have to take classes. When I wake up I cannot get to the bathroom in my room. I am in a room by myself but I am still tied down by the nurses. The bathroom is right their in the room by the bed but I can't get it. I have to push the button on the bed to call the nurse. This is not like the other room that had a ceiling to floor separator, this one is very quiet. The nurse in this room is makes the bathroom available because she turns off the warning noise on the sleeping uniform. She waits in the room until I go into the bathroom and pee, wash my hands and come back. She said I had to be tied up as long as I was by myself so if I am in by myself I will need to contact a helper nurse if I need to go to the bathroom.

I was trying very hard to do well in the school classes they were providing. I knew I wanted to leave. I had to stay at the place for the classes and because Susan brought movies. People would go to the sink with you to make sure I was brushing my teeth. I was having a hard time walking to the sink. I looked at my head and my hair was gone. My face was very big. Susan told me the doctors did things to save me and to help me. I knew I was going to class so I can home but I remember another place that I was. I didn't like it.

I had a nurse come into my room. She was there during the day time and she worked hard to tell me that I need to make sure I had done what needed. This was a very scary time before I started taking the classes here. I had broken my arm. I was a wild and fast in skiing during those years. I only sprained one thumb in eight years of going skiing every weekend. Here though, they were keeping me tied down, and that I need to protect the protection on your hand. Something was wrong with them. I was tied down and I could tell that the nurses were working together to do something to me that I didn't understand. I knew it would keep me from getting away from these nurses. I could hear them partially coming from the hospital. I had a new work room nurse who was to help patients. Then there were two nurses that are there every weekend. One of them had come from Hawaii originally. She is supposed to make sure that things aren't told but it was out to me from her. They were trying to play a game on patients that they used to entertain themselves. I was trying to tell them that I could be counted on from playing games accurately.

Chapter 2
10/23/07
Talking about Nurses

That's how the place I was last time. I think they were liars there trying to get me in trouble. I don't know why. There are people that are there during the day and different people that are there a night. I was tied down and they could tell me when I could go to the bathroom. I tried to keep a swatch that hooked to the TV in my room. I couldn't find it.

It made me think they were doing to make me sick. My friends left the room at night so they didn't stay there to protect me from the night time nurses. They visited the room at night to see how I was doing. I would puncture the tablet and push it. No one would come and the picture on the TV wouldn't come on. I started to think that the nurse from the night shift lead who was from somewhere else was very mean. They had me tied down so I couldn't move to get up. They wouldn't come when I pushed the little buster. They told me that I had to stay in the white ropes that held me trapped to a specific bed.

I started working on the ropes. I didn't understand why I had to be roped up and not allowed to move off of the bed. The nurse from far away kept up and told me to follow her rules or I will get in trouble. She had a younger girl from some Asian place. I asked her to get me a thatch to the TV that would work. She had checked it from me and took it with her so I couldn't watch anything. They aren't coming when I call. I start to get the idea that they are not honest. I like my nurse town day person. They are nice. I like my friends that come to see how I am doing. I didn't like it that my friends got to me after 9:00am. They let you go to the bathroom and then put you back in your bed. They told us that food is on in awhile. I was hungry every day...almost sick. I asked if I could have food earlier. The answer is not until it is scheduled.

The breakfast had scrambled eggs, toast, orange juice, and toast. Sometimes it had a shallow piece French toast. Sometimes they had two pieces of bacon or one piece of ham. It came down the hallway and it had been on the large cart. It was never ever hot. It was always lukeloam but it was better that other things to face eating the rest of the day. The people who bring the food were very nice. They would say, "Here is breakfast, or here is lunch." Every day there were people and come in and measuring something. They would wrap it around my arm. It would tell my energy score.

I hated the night nurse from somewhere else. She found out that I was tattling tale how she was doing things to us. One night she said she would come and see me if I meet the requirement. She said I didn't make the requirement so I was in trouble. I was left in the room, not allowed to the bathroom if I have to pee. I kept holding my urine in and hoping someone would help me. She had said that if I behaved I would get a special practice item that keeps me accomplishing. I tell them I have to be released to go to the bathroom and I need to check with my family. They left me go into the bathroom. When I cam out the mean nurse said I had to go back to bed. I couldn't get the magic surprise item which meands other people will be regarded as better. I asked her is she knew people didn't like how she treated us, how she marked different numbers on the pins, codes to keep me from use things. I want to leave. I want to get away from this woman who is there at night. I needed someone help me get away.

I think Paula looked into having me put in a better place. The most important thing is that I not have to work with the mean nurse.

Chapter 3

10/24/07

Night on my table with the male guy

I am very tired and sleeping very hard. I don't feel good but I am sleeping and they don't let me sleep very often. The guy who works in my room came in with a big boat like bed and comes up beside my bed. He tells me I have to roll over and get on the bed he has. I don't know why and I tell him I want to be in my bed. I don't think he doesn't care and he keeps telling me I have to move over on his bed.

I move over and I feel like my arms hurt. He tells me it is ok and he undoes the white rope that was on me on the bed and then hooks up the new bed rope. I could feel them and moved my arms but they were tight. I asked her were are going and she said we had to take a place. He got behind me and started to guide the bed. He said we are going to the lab on a different place as he pushed us into a place that went back with two slides.

When the slides stopped he pulled us out of the room. He pushed us down a hallway. All of a sudden one woman came to him and grabbed the bedroom boat. I asked her who she was is. She said she worked for the hospital at night. She turned left and went into the room. Another girl with blond hair and blue eyes took over the bed. She told me she needed to do some tests on me. She drew me into a direction she said would do what they needed. I looked over the room. There were no directions on the wall. The room was black and white. She pushed me onto the machines she wants me to go under. I didn't want to do that. I felt sick but there was nothing to get away.

She had a big patch and that was where she was writing. I asked her to tell me what she was writing. She said she was talking stuff off of the machines. I asked her what they said and what she knew. She said she couldn't tell me but she would give this to the doctor and they would be able to see what it meant. I tried hard to be interesting so she would help and tell me what I needed. I tried to ask her about how much money she makes and what her job is. She looked at me when I asked the questions but she wouldn't ask them. She said they are trying what is wrong with me and they can take pictures to get it.

I was awake and feeling very crummy. She said it was time to take you back to where you were. The girl that came back to the square spaces that were next to me. The white ropes were attached to me so I couldn't get out. I told her I have to go to the bathroom but she said I could go back when I am in my room. I tried to ask her about what happened and how I am sick. She said she was going to give the information to the doctor. Her job is taking me back to my room.

She took me onto the square room that you can be taken for different spots. They say numbers like 3 or 4 or 5 or others so she has to take us to one. I told her I didn't feel well and what was supposed to happen. She said they would check on what I had left. She said hi to the boy that took me up. He said, "It is ok and we are back now." I didn't like him to start with. He is sort of handsome but he keeps things to himself so he doesn't say much. He talks to me about what I have to do but only about lying still or swelling on my body. He takes me into the bigger room. He moves the moving bed next to the one I was in. He tells me to move into it. I told him about going to the bathroom so he asked me to sit up on the bed. Then he told me to leave on the shelter on my head. He walks me to the bathroom and steps outside. He told me to go to the bathroom. I sad down and the toilet was holding me up. I tried to pee out and after a traded time

I could here the urine run out of it. When I got done I stood up and held onto the metal stuff on the wall. I wondered out with him opening the door.

This is the second time to put me back in on my bed. He guided me back and helped me get on the bed. He put the ropes on. I told him he could leave them off but he said that is the rule. I took a glass of water and asked for something to eat. He told me that it was only 4:00am and they wouldn't give me food until it came at 7:00. I asked him he would know what they found out from the machines. He told me my doctor would. Doctors would come in several at a time. I think there are about six to nine people looking at me. I don't like them looking at me so I be very quiet except to the main person. I told him if he had the results could I leave. He said not yet. In the room on the other side of the towel with someone else. I haven't seen that person yet but I have heard the people.

Chapter 4

10/25/07

The Person on the Other Side

I don't know why I can't meet the person. The people who bring food to eat bring one dosage of food for her and one for me, two patients in the room. I know she is a woman because that's how they put them in the room. They don't put a woman and a man in the room. The guy who took me tied down in the rope the other day said that when he never knows whether I will be at the same room. They figure out how people are here and need to be in which rooms. I didn't like him talking because I wasn't able to have him hear what I think.

It isn't at all like going on a trip. If you are doing that you call and you pick. You call who is in charge the business where you want to go. You pick the kind of room you would like to be in. Like in Seattle there are very nice rooms but they are very close to the freeway. The rooms have art work and pretty bedrooms blankets. They have glass mirrors so you can see how you look each day. You only stay there if that doesn't bother you or you stay at another place away from the freeway once they tell you what it is like.

I don't like the guy that takes care of me at night. It is like he doesn't have to answer my questions or tell me what is going on. We can't move if we want to or go to another place to stay. We are tied down all the time. I don't like it.

Maybe him not liking me is why I am getting moved out of the room I was into another one. I don't know.

Lately they have been talking to me about leaving. They say I have to show them that I can do certain things if I want to leave. The guy told me certain things. I need to write out what they are doing.

I started to understand a little while ago that I can't just walk out the door. This place is right off the water. It looks pretty at the far end of the place where visitors stop to look at one another. I am trying to play out the hallway to make sure they don't get lose and grab me.

I feel like the cut rose drips can lead to things and help me out of here. I have tried to get Paula needs to get me out of here and go home with her. I think she can make sure I can get to the house. She has said she will help me. Today she told me that I have to pack everything so I can get ready. She is a friend of mine Paula, is a very good one. I know she can get us out of here. That doesn't seem too hard. I talked the nurses and told them I wanted to get out. I told

them I was willing to go home and then I would be willing to come back the next day. They would listen but I don't think they wanted to let me go.

Chapter 5
October 26, 2007
Pains in my hands

I have a lot of pains that are on me. My hand has a cast on it and it hurts a lot. I tried to get information from my sister. She was here yesterday and I asked her about why I had the cast. She told me that I need to do the best I can while I am in head so that we get the values when you come out of the cast.

There are a lot of people who make me go through meetings. They tell me what you have to be able to do. They give me different times each day. If I'm not good enough then I can't leave the hospital. I am at a place now that surprises me. I have to go to classes. I might be able to get home wherever it is. These classes will be taken just prior to going home. I have to be able to make sure that I can do them so that nice friends can get me home.

I think it is very thoughtful of how the people who work in the hospital feel. I don't know if it would be ok for them about breaking my hand and having other people trying to take bones from your office. When my sister and I were at the cafeteria they looked over at me. As we were getting to leave they said we will see you later.

One of the other group said that it would like it to get that off so your air equipment in the dirt is clear not leaving the wrong direction. They, the doctors, did come to me that night. They were coming to take my decision on my arm off of their. They looked it over and said we cannot save the other bugs in your arm. In fact, they don't believe there so we need to get rid of them. If the rest of you hand is ok we will have made sure to get things out of the way that that isn't good. We can move on now.

It feels bad to me that my bones in my hand are broken. They need to be looked at by a professional and determine what they need to finish carefully and accurately. I haven't been able to write sentences or even short notes in August. The difference now is amazing. I can write sentences about things people have done or are doing. I understand it better and can ask people what their thoughts are. There are so many of them working overtime to make sure that coverage for my status be taken care of slowly and deliberately.

Chapter 6
October 29, 2007
Night Staff

I don't know this woman. She has longish dirty blond hair. She told me she had my room. She needed to make sure I stayed there. I tried to be funny and use a joke so she couldn't tie me up. She said the only way it isn't tied is if people stay here. Most leave by 9:00pm and you are on the rules. I thought I should not have to be tied to the bed.

I felt OK as long as my sister or friends are there with me. I don't want them to go because the boy and girl nurse people make sure that we are tied up. I thought I saw natural

people outside the window. The natural people were other people in the hospital and I don't think they had to be tied down.

I asked the long dirty blond hair why she was insisting on putting the rope on me. She said that was what she was supposed to do that. It is her job. When she came over she clicked the ropes on quickly and pulled them up tight. If I wanted to go to the bathroom I had to call and get one of them for attendance. I would go to the bathroom that was in my room.

I was being taken by my friends. All of the night people were going to be there. They smile and use friendly words towards my friend. I remember when Susan was with me. Paula was going to Whidbey Island with other people and Susan was staying with me to watch movies for two nights. I asked her if I could go over to house at night and then come back to the hospital in the morning. She told me that I had to stay there. I started to get very sad.

I tried to tell her why it was important for me to go to her house. I had been at her house before. I do that when I am down here for work. I slept in your house and you could let me slip there instead of at the hospital. I tried to make her understand that she and I had been friends for a long time and that if we went to her beds we would have even better friends. She listened to me but she said I had to stay with what the doctors had said.

I thought about how Susan doesn't understand. She doesn't understand getting tied up by the people that are supposed to take care of you called them nurses. I would try to tell her that I needed to be out of there and she would listen to me but say it doesn't work. You have to do what is required. Even if I shouldn't, I held being bitter that Susan was not really going to care for me. I told her I didn't like being tied down and left alone by friends. She had a funny look...like she had a secret.

I could not talk people into letting me not be tied with white cord. Some of them would not be as strict as others but they all used the rope. They bother me. I have never seen anyone pushed around with ropes in a hospital. One night I had ropes on that I laid on the bed and tried to get it off. I tried very hard to get them off but covered them so people will leave me alone. I had to be careful. I would trip the rope on one hand and then the one on the another. It takes a long time to get it to separate because I had to make the rope separate. It took almost two hours when I did that one and the night nurser answered that she was angry. I said I am a good person who does not like being tied up. All this about is getting rid of this off of me. It is hard to do nothing. I find if I work it has movement. I can't stand it. I think it was horrible. It was the dirty blond tying me up. Hospitals need better ways.

Chapter 7

11/2/ 2007

Time to Go Home

I know that are things I have to do in order to go home. It has to be very hard because every night they leave me tied up in a bed. Now they have added a bunch of things to do. I cannot understand that it is April and that we are in a placement of the teachers. The schedule they have set up and Paula says I have to pass all the classes or I won't be able to go home.

Paula told me that I had to work hard and be a good student or I wouldn't be allowed to leave the hospital. I started to wonder where I would go because one of the people had said that you had to do get better here or you go to places that the rests go to. Some go there and then home and some never go home again.

It seems like a lot. They told me I had to go to class and learn and prove that I could do that. When I look at people it looks the same to me as when I looked into adults and kids in the schools but it doesn't turn out the same way. The people who work here filled out a schedule that became very busy. I had a picture of what the first one would be but I was wrong. I had to get ready for the day which meant washing my face, brushing my teeth and get on clothes. That was the first class. The woman with blond hair said that this was what I needed every day.

I didn't like that I was supposed to do this every day. If I didn't pass I might not be able to go home. I was talking to people about the things I am supposed to do. I looked at them and I try to be brave and interested in what they are doing. I feel like I am pretending so that I will fool them and they will let me go home. I have friends who are here but I don't know how they would feel about not being nice about the teachers. I don't know if she knows what I think about this.

The class they are doing are speech therapy and occupational therapy in the morning and then speech, physical and occupational in the afternoon. Classes start at the lounge in my room to get my face washed. I look into the face of my. It doesn't look like me at all. I have a bladed head where the nurses and doctors have cut me. I can walk now better so I get dressed .

The first class was helping me know what I need to work on getting better. I remember liking him and thinking he was very nice. He was like there to help me get better. I kept thinking about him and that things would be easy. We sat down in a room with ceilings. He had brought lessons for me to work upon. He had things to show me and then I had to answer back directly. He would say things and encourage me to respond.

He would read the name with the picture and point out one that is the picture. He would also point out the picture and then I would have to read the name that matched with it. We had Cougar, Wood Splitter, Wood Pile, Paula and Steph in Hawaii, Eliot, Ruby, and Cougar. I did this with him every morning. He gave me a business card that I could use. I never have. I didn't want to say that card to everyone. I think the hard part is that I am not as good as I know I need to be and when I am with the teacher I listen and try to look very interested. I try to answer the questions are fun and I especially like getting my pictures of my animals to get my words.

Chapter 8

11/05/2007

Couldn't remember things.

Every day lots of different people are checking things in my room. There were two people in the room and different people came to visit the room. I don't know who would come to see me. I just know that two different people came in for two different patients. There were other people that came in with massages that they use to mark on each of us and take reports. They have to do with speed of blood. If it isn't write it could be pushing too hard and fast on you. It also could be slow down so you wouldn't get enough.

This was when there were lots of people in the Neurological Surgical Unit on the the 3rd floor. They came in every day to make sure you are doing what you need. They brought test elements and checked to make sure we are tied to our beds.

Someone told me not too long that I had been in this room for 6 weeks. I have been told that lots of people visited me. They read talents, they talked with me, they talked about how they

were doing when they aren't here. That's what I have been told but I don't remember them in the room, talking to me, or working with them.

When I think about it I realize that I couldn't remember anything. I couldn't remember any people talking to me. I started to remember when I was rehabilitation, when it was time to do what I can and so that after 13 days getting to go home. I knew I wanted to do that.

Maybe they will move me sooner.

Chapter 9
11/6/2007
Physical Practice

This is the fourth floor. It seems like there are lots of people here. I can see if I walk on the hallway other people doing things. In the mini gym place they have all kinds of teachers there with the theory that we need to keep working in order to match the skill. It really is a straight kind of gym guards. People helping you is one on one. They are trying each candidate to go through a sequence of events. The guy who was the position of exercise told me each day how we are planning and trying each new steps. When I think about it I don't see it making much of a difference but I want to go home.

They put up a list of people at the hospital with assignments. Peter Esselman and Zachary Bohort are signed up as doctors. Physical Therapy is done by Mike and Heather. Occupational therapy is blond. Ross Chaitee, speech, does a big group. Psychology is done by Kati and Lori, Social Work by Susan Scully. One of my friends say that I was in the Rehabilitation area for 13 days. They told me about the kind of work I had to do .

Chapter 10
November 7, 2007
Therapy

This is the fourth floor. It seems like there are lots of people here. I can see if I walk on the hallway other people doing things. In the mini gym place they have all kinds of teachers there with the theory that we need to keep working in order to match the skill. It really is a straight kind of gym guards. People helping you is one on one. They are trying each candidate to go through a sequence of events. The guy who was the position of exercise told me each day how we are planning and trying each new steps. When I think about it I don't see it making much of a difference but I want to go home.

The blond girl (I'll call her blondie) who looked very young. She looked like someone who is junior high school but she is supposed to help me learn things so I can go home. She must have been studying in college in order to help people who She takes me any a room with no windows. She has characters and she needs to show what they can do. Each one of the pieces has a same toy. The job is to figure out to put the two genuines together. There are a pile of bunches that I think are two cows, two flowers, two goats and about ten different toys. I don't see that as plays but I think it is viewed as someone bringing play things which will help me go home. I think she tries very hard but I also think that the things she is trying to do is not very helpful to

me. I am trying very hard to be friendly to people particularly blonde. She was covering a lot of aspects. She made sure that I ate breakfast at 8:00. Then I was supposed to handle brushing like teeth and to wash my face. She was called Jessica and she was very young. She did Occupational Therapy that she wanted to do. I think she stayed thinking that was important because she has things for me to look and do. There is the one of characters that had two of the same.

I don't know how it feels others who are watching me. There are questions that I think are dumb but I am very nervous that I might not to be able to get them right so I can get out. I try lots of regular ways in order to get out. I did a paved approach with my friend. I will chew gum so that I don't try to

Jessica asked me little questions on the drill. I thought it was just a few days but some said it was long. I think the thing that makes it hard is for me is that it is on the days but not on the weekend. Someone said that patients had to get through the classes successfully before they look in the direction of their homes. I thought the questions were boring but I tried to look at like I cared about it and was watching them. They have a picture of the item and then you have three statements. You have to get the right one.

They showed in the first one that it was hard to figure out. It is a television subject and when you look at it has a dark frame in the back with what look like starts. You have to tell what you think is the right answer on this. The choices are "*The Television set is off.* , *The telephone is on.*, *The television is on.*" I had a real problem with this because I don't know what the TV looks like. I worried about not being wrong choices here and have them not let me go home. Some questions are ok, "There are crackers in my soup., There is a spoon in my cup., There are crackers on the shelf." I could look at the picture and see that there were crackers in it and the spoon was on the side." They talked about the crackers in the shelf but we can't see it on the shelf." The next one had a bout some one. It has to look for what the boy does with miniature problems. Like they say something about boys on the chair but the guy is not shown on a chair. I did think though it could be a less kind of chair that someone made creativity...like the bed that looks from a distance like a chair. If our stuff is totally argue then we can't go home. I need to figure the adds of this. There are more.

Chapter 11
November 8, 2007
Terry Bergeson

She is an amazing woman who leads all of us to do what is right. She has been the one who is charge of all teachers and administrators. She came to see me and said she was in the mood of cheering me up. I think that is how I felt. A few weeks ago I had a thought about getting well, they all tell me I need to keep working on improving, and I work on improving every day. I thought about going back to work helping teachers and principals. I thought I could get better and when I was truly back to the person I was then I could help people in the schools. When I did that before I went to conferences and the Super was at those meetings and telling us things we needed to do to help students, teachers, and administrators. She believes and understands what needs to happen in every school in order for things to go well for kids. What is funny about all the schools doing different things? We all know that certain students don't graduate so then why don't we all do the same thing providing for kids to improve on those areas? Why do some

people go to California and other people go to New York and other people go to Georgia to get to those things that make a difference for them? Do those people know what we are doing here? Why is their some feelings that you have to go some place else when you don't really know what we do here. It's been that way every year since I started...I guess I can't expect it to be different here.

Chapter 12
November 9, 2007
Taking Classes - Jessica

I want to go to my house. I want to sleep at night. I want it to be quiet. Not a whole bunch of people. Paula had told me that if I passed all of the tests I could go home. She has been telling me that I have been here since February 8th. I keep telling her that I don't remember this. I would ask her what they had to do and how. I could not really listen.

When she would tell me about when I was sick I had to be in the hospital. Now, every time I look around at the hospital I just want to leave. I wanted to know who they are because I want to have them for getting out. I need to get in the air outside and then pass across the street and get on a bus. I don't know when they come by or how much the cost or where the front of bus slows down and stops. I feel like I'm thinking positive thoughts inside my head.

I am going through the classes. It seems funny that there is only one person in the class. There is no one else in my class to talk through because there is no one else there. I have to look at the teacher and have the teacher tell me how she feels. She came back every day with the match challenge. She would put all the things in a small place on the carpet. Then she would test how well I knew things because she would ask that I had to match up two places. There were 15 different services in the puzzle. I thought it was OK but I don't think it helped that we are following the farm rules on their place.

She is someone who is nice but she is very determined to spell out what is expected. She started to talk with me about making a list of what is on concern. She wanted to make sure I could go to the store and buy things to eat. It was a great trip. She took us in a van to a large grocery store. She had told me I had to find food to buy because part of the job was to prove that I could buy things and meet them. It was great when I got there with Jessica and a couple of my friends. I had to wear my protecting hat. I remember that his was a very nice floor. They had rows. You could look for something and then walk down the row. Jessica asked me to say what I wanted. I told her I wanted eggs, toast, eggs, and juice. If I bought all of those items that they are sold in this store I would go over the \$10.00 that Jessica supported this with.

That meant I had to buy something else to prove I could do this assignment. Jessica indicated she was helping me because I didn't have to buy eggs. I also agreed that I didn't spend money on bacon or buying a half gallon of orange juice. By not buying those I ended up with eggs and toast. All that had been bought was bread and jam.

When we got back to the hospital we had to go a room where we could make up the things for breakfast. I thought it tasted terrible but I didn't tell her. I know if I can make something and eat it then I will have passed part of the program. I met with her every day and she did different classes. It was my job to listen to her on what I am supposed to do. She came in my room before the long day of classes and stepped in to make sure I was brushing my teeth

and washing my hands. She had pretty eyes and looked at me and said good job when I finished those jobs.

I have a trouble being clear on where I am, how old I am, and what I've done. I am starting to get little clues that have popped up as I have worked through to the classes. I know that we have said I had a job. I don't know what they know about that. I think having not good eggs any time soon would be a bad idea.

Chapter 13 & 14
11/9/2007
Back Home – Finally

Paula had told me that I would need to prove that I could pass all the classes. I thought some of the stuff was confusing and hard to do because it seems not aligned. The following is in the memo about going home.

Tuesday, April 03, 2007

We had our final meeting with the doctors today – we WILL be leaving on Thursday morning, heading back to the island! We had a crew from Oak Harbor come over for a “work party” on Monday – boy, did they work! We have the house cleaned up, yard planted and weeded, power washed...all ready for Steph to come home and enjoy the view from the deck. We will continue to update the journal from home to let everyone know how she is doing – feel free to call and visit if you get a chance. Thank you for all our love and support – without it, she wouldn't be where she is today.

Chapter 15
11/10/07
Being Driven Home

I was riding in the front seat of my car on the right side. That means that I don't move the car, my friend does but it is my car. It is April 5, 2007. I am very tired. Paula, my friend, gives me suggestions I think. It is funny that nothing makes too much fun except for leaving the hospital. Many of them were very nice but someone were not and I will find a way to let them know that.

Before I could be on this trip they told me the second time I had to meet the needs on the doctor's. That one was very bad because I didn't want to be there for it. It's funny how I think I know what I do but I can't figure out the things specifically. I would think very hard to figure out why things are happening the way they are but I know and can't remember to the specific event what it is. I know that I will have to come back to this hospital in a couple of months from now to put my bone back on my head. That isn't now though.

I was glad to be on the way home even if I am not driving my own car. I am trying to be nice to all the people who tried to help me. If I made complaints about what was going then I might scare them from helping me. I have to be aware of that. I started keeping a journal so I can

remember things from the time I went home. It makes me scared that I don't remember so many things. I don't know my friend's name who lives in the house. She is really nice but it doesn't seem nice not to know her name easily.

The journal has lots of clues as to how I have been thinking. It is very clear that when I talk I make more sense as I practice. I don't like that I have to practice. At one point I told someone that I don't plan on practicing. Why should I have to do that? It wasn't long after I was around here when I realized I have to improve on the words I have or nothing makes sense. I realize that I struggle hard to make my writing make sense.

Every day I work to understand where and what the words are. I have to do a plan that helps me get through each day. I have to take a shower and wash my face. I need help because I am still using a hair board cap. That isn't quite the formal name but close. I have to wear the cap except when I am in my bed. Following the rules on this makes sense.

It is so amazing that I get up every day and try to understand things I believe I already understand. I am scared underneath because the people that help me could decide that I can't stay. I know that because I was trapped in the hospital. I didn't want to stay in there and didn't want to eat there. I figured out that I had to be careful so that the people who were supporting me would continue with it.

How was I was first time at my home. This memo sent to all our friends and family were sent...

Saturday, April 07, 2007

Stephanie is home and seems to be loving it. She has slept a lot the past two days and is enjoying some good home cooking and beautiful views and from the deck. That alone should speed up her recovery.

She remembers the animals and their behaviors...while in the hospital, she never could quite figure out how to push the red button to get the nurses, but she is a champ at running the TiVo remote – go figure. Priorities I guess.

I started my own journal so I could uncover what I found. I started recording things on April 10th. I don't thinking and writing is working very well. Dori called and talked about base expenses. She talked about John in the summer on Friday for the weekend.

It's important to know what other people do.

Chapter 16

11/12/07

Words

Paula had me work on improving my words. That feels funny to me. I don't believe that I need to work on words. Paula had cut out several pictures of things and then she had put the name on the back. I would be able to look at the picture and then say what was on the back. When I did this practice I had mixed up feelings. I knew that there was a word for it, I knew that I knew what or who it is, but saying the thing and the name doesn't go.

When I was in the hospital I convinced people that they needed to listen to me about what I was learning. I was trying to learn something so that I am ok. I know that I had learned or understood. People who help me have to talk to me about words they understand. I don't understand what they are saying but I feel like I am understanding their meaning.

I tried to tell her that they would make it harder for those of us who had been through this. I don't know the words that what she is saying and it seems like she is the winner. She was being very patient. She went through my process of trying to figure out the answers. She said that I was finding and figuring out things in a different way. The problem is that if they check off an individual answer it will never be any way other than those who wrote it. They don't see how I see it because it wasn't how they did. It is how I did. The teacher listened to me and tried to follow through what was going and what I said. I told her that if teachers like this could understand how injured people are adjusting and adapting to get the meaning that it would help.

I started to think about this issue and I think many folks would think about it. The hard part for relatives and friends to understand is about the word or noun that is the right one. They try but it isn't happening to them. How does that work? Well, if you are a regular person then you are going to use regular forms to speak. So, you would say that the person cut the lawn. You don't have those memory connections because of the damage that has happened to your brain. It means if you don't have those specific words that can be spoken out loud. You can think and you are hearing something inside but when you try and talk you don't have the right items. Then it is not just one separate example. It is every sentence, written or spoken, minute by minute, hour by hour, and day by day.

It is funny to me because when I first attempted to take care and follow the rules I thought it was very important. I can't do it very well. I can have an idea of what something is about but I can't find the words that go in it. My friends are nice to me even though things I am saying make no sense. I felt very good for awhile. I thought I could decide what I wanted to learn again. What I saw and continue to see is that we don't really have much care about that. We have to use lots of words and things that help us communicate about subjects and ideas. We can't eliminate items that we have to be able to talk about because it is important like the car, the gasoline, the grocery store, bread, and the weather.

I realized that choosing wasn't going to work. I have to try to do anything and every thing that comes my way. When I can't have the right words in my sentences then they don't make.

Chapter 17
November 13, 2007
Journal Comparison Thoughts

I went for a walk today to clean off all our stuff and to do a library to compare. Words come out of my head when I am looking and trying to decide. I am thinking it quietly so no one hears me exactly. That is safer so that I can look at things and think about it and no one can tell me that I am wrong.

At first I thought on the walk about the kids that choose to go to Cleveland but I heard myself thinking about how people here are going to Oak Harbor. Oak Harbor right now in football is doing a great job and none of those kids went there here. Across the way from this island is Pt. Townsend not as small as we have here.

Sometimes when I look back over my journal notes I can't figure out exactly what I was thinking. I don't know if that means I didn't know that or just that I can not write what I am thinking yet. I know I was going to set and invitation to that all the people to stay in touch. It took me two hours for two small paragraphs below.

When I realized that it took two hours to write this letter that made sense I also realized how much I don't make it realize much of the time. It's like the various parts are not there or available. I got back home the first week in April. I worked every day through April and May so that sending the letter up above was sent.

On April 30, some of the drugs that I have been reduced. I am taking 3 in the morning and 3 in the evening. They were at 4 in the morning and 4 in the evening. I want to make sure that I can go down if it helps. I watch the monitor group and try to understand why we are doing each one. I know that in some ways I can't figure it out.

On my journal I said, "They were a part of me yesterday. I had stepped up I thought and then my sister helped me feel better that these parts won't necessarily come back.

Chapter 18

11/21/07

Things That Work

It's my 14th and I have been trying to work every day. My writing is getting better but I still have a long way. I tried to make sure the bills were sent to them so that the work that I did was covered. People who are helping me are very nice but I don't know if they can see things like I do. I can see what is in my head but I can't move it often to be the same outside my head. I feel very silly when I can't get what is in my head out of mouth. I still send something so I don't look like I am not hearing what was said from others.

Being home feels so much better than did the hospital. I can go to my couch and my bed and look out the window and see the mountain and the water. I feel like I am in a wonderful place. It isn't like when I was in the hospital. It is odd to me about the hospital because I don't remember it at all from February and March. My first memory starts right at the end of March and April. While I am starting to remember things it is hard.

I don't understand things that are happening even though things that are done and talked about I am hearing. When people talk of things that have happened I can see it, and remember it as a thing, but I still can't remember it.

Chapter 19

11/21/07

Growing At Home

It makes me feel like I am growing. I know that I had been gone a long time and I don't remember what happened during months from the end of January to the start of April. They are starting to tell me things they think I would want and need to know because I couldn't take what happened daily. The story about going to Seattle is hard to hear but I think that it is important. My housemate told me that she would clean up the kitchen. It was about 8:00pm and I told her

I was going to bed. I don't have a memory nor do I memorize my hand being broken which had occurred the week before.

Paula found me against the stairway unconscious. She called 911 who rushed me in an emergency car to Whidbey hospital. They looked me over and checked my eyes. One of my eyes was not looking at all. The doctor said we have little time and she may not make it. The doctor did what he could do to get me to stay alive.

I thought about that and wondered if it to be in a job where the people can be in such bad shape that they will die shortly. I am not a person who had any illness or major problems, yet in this situation it was going to happen quickly. A helicopter from the island took be to Seattle Harbor hospital. The Whidbey had told Paula that tubes needed to be in an operating in ninety seconds or she won't make it. He did that and I was still alive when I was being flown to Seattle.

I think about that and how strange it was. How many of any one I know do we imagine ourselves in this sort of situation. I never felt something like that and I don't know anyone who did. I was a total unconscious person. I wasn't in a situation where I could make any choices. They got to tie me up.

They did keep me alive. They did all kinds of tests on me all night long and then started surgery in the morning. The surgery took ten hours. They found a second the original valve that had burst and then a second one that had not broken but needed to be removed. Initially the doctors said they couldn't fix the second one. That would mean I would live with something that could put me at life. They stayed with it and decided they could go ahead to get rid of both valves that needed to be removed. They were successful. If they were not able to do that then I most likely wouldn't have lived. The statistics about these people who fall into a group is that of 1% -2% who survive and are able to return to their homes.

I'm at my home and I am starting to be successful doing things around the house serves as an indicator that I am improving and that my brain is still gaining growth. Dori sent the things they were going to talk on March 13, 2007 with the doctors. It was amazing to read because I have no memory of two and a half months. When I first started to be able to memorize remember things that happened they most likely are different than my family and friends. They were there during the day. I can remember spots from then on but Paula and Dori. One of the difficult ones, although there were many, was when they were going to check things in a specific room. They waited until they took me in at 7:00pm and left. It was up to people in the room that they took me back. I had not had any food and I became very afraid. I was sitting up and I tried to go home. I was walking and in the hall way. I lost my balance and put a hole in the wall with my head. I was lucky I didn't do any serious bad to my head. They caught me trying to go home and got a bunch of people to help me back to the hospital room. The first thing they did was tie me down. That was hard and I wanted to talk to my friends. I couldn't figure out how phones worked so on those nights day after day I could never talk to people that made me feel better during the night.

On the meeting of the 13th of March they listed through issues:

Issues

- Stephanie has chewed through her IV
- Pulled out multiple IV
- Pulled out Pick Line
- Successfully exited her bed multiple times
- She demonstrates strong ambulation skills

She verbalizes wanting to leave continually
Demonstrates anxiety mostly in the evening when the family and friends
Leave for night
Status of helmet to cover missing skull

Concerns

Safety – primary-survived the aneurism and surgery but continually safety
a concern
She needs to be restrained, body and hands, when family leave
Communication between staff (all members of staff assigned that time
Slot) shifts so her safety is continually monitored.
Anxiety meds at night
Postings in room and on her chart regarding as visual reminders of safety
precautions necessary for her.

Chapter 20

November 22, 2007

Speech Therapist

Learning About the Past, Present, and Future

What is happening now is that I am trying to write about where I am. I have to think about what I was, how it has changed, why. I like the book about aphasia because it makes me feel better. It isn't about knowing vocabulary or intelligence. It tells me that they are there but aphasia makes it hard to get them out of my brain.

Paula has told me the story about how my life is. She would tell me how it would be. She said she came into where I was and I would always say that I wanted to go home. She would tell me that I had to pack my things. That would make me tired so I would take a nap. When I woke up all the things that had been packed were back in the hospital room. I forgot that we had packed before I went to sleep so then I asked her to pack again. This went on all day and finally it was time for me to be tied down in the bed for the long night.

She told me that one of the groups of people were in the office. They would give me a chance to take files there and say things. They enjoyed it and it kept them able to watch me and keep me busy. I don't remember any of these stories. I was hopeful that when I started to remember that over time I would get memory of things. I guess when your brain is so messed up there are some things that brains can't record for you. It isn't like I was or am trying to forget things. It is that my brain was working well enough to do that for me. I know when I first started to remember in April I knew that one was my sister and another a friend but I didn't know their names. I couldn't remember them. They would help me with their names but they would have to tell them to me every time I saw them. Once they would say them after a few minutes I would ask them again what their names were.

I became assigned to a therapist. I started going to meetings with her twice a week. I didn't know what would happen. It became clear when we started that I needed to do work on my therapist. She told me later that she wasn't sure that I would be able to distinguish and determine what words are and what they mean. She thought to start with that I say words I don't know what they mean. There was a possibility that I might not speak with the words in my

head in a useable way. Some people who get what I have are stuck in that space. They cannot associate and distinguish the words. It kind of reminds me of my favorite word of all time. It has Drew Barrymore in it and she had a brain injury from an accident. What happened to her means that she did not have a long lens develop from the time she was in that accident. She had short memory so she could function through a day but as soon as she went to bed and sleep anything that happened during the day would not be there. I don't know if this movie is an accurate representation of problems people can have if something goes wrong with your brain but I think it was important. I don't think we pay enough attention to this event occurring to now over a million people. We need to be preventing this from happening to people and for people who were in an injury that caused aphasia we need all of us in this country to have knowledge about it.

My therapist has been working with me since April. I get better every week but I have a long way to go. I get better because I work on finding the nouns I need to use in sentences I am speaking or writing.

Chapter 21

November 23, 2007

Back in the Home

That is so much to consider. The problem is that I haven't finished or completed all I should before leaving out of the home. It is easy to talk about being here. I know what the house looks like and I like being in it. The problem is that day to day I don't work like I used to. I am trying to establish a new reason to be here. I can't work now and people around me who know me say that I won't be working ever again. I would guess there are people who get up every day and put on their working clothes, whatever they are, and get on transportation or there own car transportation to go off to work.

I get up every morning and am not going any where. I have people describe of what I am supposed to do each day. I have a shower scheduled for the morning and Paula has to help me do that so I don't hurt myself. It seems strange that I need help with that and I do notice that I feel loose like when I am in the tub. It seems wrong for me to need help with the smallest things. I try to think about it as if you had broken your arm. The problem with that is you can compensate, use your other arm but still be able to do most things. When you break your head, your head has oversight on everything in your body and if something isn't working on your brain there isn't any other source to go to get it fixed.

I want to know how to get better faster. I find that every day I feel like I am doing better but that the better moves very slowly. I came home with the head cabinet to keep on until I go back to the doctor to get the bone in my head replaced. Every day I have to get up and do what I can learn and get back at least to where I was when this happened.

When I look at myself in the window it doesn't look good. My skin is shaved down to the skin and the hair is cut down to the skin over half of my face. It looks kind of funny to me. It is like if I were guessing about it I would like a grape, a purple one. I think my head looks swollen. It is large and looking swollen.

If I had avoided something in my brain I would have done it for sure. I think that is why what I had was so hard. I am going to find out the number of people who have a version of what I have had. The part is not easy on people is that only 1% - 2% of people with this illness attack

survives it and returns to their life. Almost 75% died right away and those of the 25% who made it to the hospital most of them were able to regain the things they used to be. I think this is very hard. We have things we can get by being using things to support us and prevent things from having. The facts about whether or not you can come out must come from the people who are at some version of reality.

Each day when I get up I have a wonderful hour or two. I don't dash around, or reading specific things, or request a person to help me get rid of the shampoo. It is more like I just know that my brain keeps a memory that it cannot get a way from you. It is part of what happens and I have to represent it. I never feel so good first thing in the morning. It is kind of funny because of my years of work I felt like I was being trashed because of the continued effort to get me focused on the data notes. It doesn't have to be too difficult but there has to be proof that I would be here the move around the veiled pasture.

It doesn't feel to horses now or in the 60 years I have been alive. The reason to pay attention to me was to check if I could do the things I once did in the past without checking with anyone. I talked with Mike one day for quite a while on this situation. It is funny. He suggests by moving around the pie by using certain separate pies held each one of them works from the stone. I think that is wrong thinking. Put each person into their own file folder. Have them record what is going on. What makes this happen and makes it work is the sponsor of this particular packet.

I think it is very hard to have lost a lot of the natural energy and to make my force work towards far more similar energetic. Get up. Make a bedding place near the ocean next to me. Look at that as a way to take care of this animal. It's like we would want the Lord to taking care of us. People need great big wrapper on their cotton based flowers.

Chapter 22

November 26, 2007

Golden Blond

I can't remember or distinguish between the surgery actions. I am fairly certain she was at the surgery to put my bone by surgery back into my head. She seemed to be the person that was trying to make sure I did everything I was supposed to do. It is the sort of thing that makes you wonder about what she thinks about.

She would come into my room with the various things I am supposed to take and make sure that I took them. She was in my room only when it was day time and regular type days. I had the surgery for this at night. I went into the hospital for this surgery for a Friday. I didn't get checked into a room until after the surgery. I had a bunch of friends in a waiting room that they were able to take over by themselves. No other people came into that room once so many of my friends sat with me to work.

Someone assured Paula that I would be operated on that day but in the hospital if something else came up and happened they could delay mine. My sister gave the chance to go to her school where they were going to give her an award for all the things that she does. By coming to the informal school action she would have felt that those people that she works with listen and award her. She started to cry in the waiting room where we were all. I told her that I felt bad for her. Other people told me that they were feeling positive because the surgery today would put me back onto normal beginnings.

I think the blond nurse who was probably in her 40's was a little weird to me. I made up my mind that I would be nice to people who took care of me but I did that so I wouldn't have them reserving things I needed or was supposed to have. She was one of those people who is very uptight. If I had to guess I would guess that she really doesn't like here job or people who are in the hospital. When I think about it at now I imagine finding another way out of this life. I don't ever want to go to a hospital again. When I was a kid I had appendix operated upon. In those days you were in the hospital 4 or 5 days. Now that thing goes through it is an over night thing. Used to be when people had a baby they would be in the hospital for 4 or 5 days. Now I think they are only there for a day. That's why starting out to find out that I had been in the hospital two months and was starting the third one was so hard.

When I could start to remember day to day I started to think about what had happened to me. People would talk to me and I am sure I probably asked them questions about why we were there but it wasn't much later when I began to understand what had really happened and things I had been through.

In any event there are lots of tough discussions I believe families should have with everyone that will be working with the person who is in the hospital because of brain damages. I was in a room with another person who was a woman. When she was first in the room she did not talk. Later she seemed to be making more noise. I could hear her but not see her because they kept her in a bed that was also used as a hanging cloth attached to metal grasps that can be pulled on an established mental items. That way they can pull it along or pull it back so she is open to the whole room. She seemed to want the hanging sheet pulled all across the room all the time. Later at that time I saw her in one of the classes they were making us go to so we could go home. We had all these activities that we did and ran into people we might have similar activities. They kept us going to those things so we could function in our own homes. It was simply things brushing our teeth and more complicated like going to the grocery store. Mostly I thought those things were funny. I would never want to do any of the things they were having us practice but I didn't want to do them. The one person that was teaching me how to look at things in a notebook did have an impact. He was showing me items human and animals that I know. He was asking me to say who they were. I began to realize that this was hard to name while at the same time I was thinking about how bad this was if I couldn't identify friends and animals. Each day when we went through those things I would get some right and some not. Mostly it made me sad that I needed to have suggestions on how to remember these. I would say it is like a friend you have who has his dog. Imagine that he does things with the dog for every day for the seven years he has owned the dog. Then he has brain damage and he can't remember the dog. It is weird. It feels like you are having to guess or imagine about the dog and then that is kind of funny but you know its not supposed to be. I think it is interesting what people like me have lost the ability to think from their brain damage.

Chapter 23
November 27, 2007
Time is Controlled

From the time I started to remember things I started to have new experience. I would remember that different members of the staff would walk by me enough to say things are

happening. I had a wonderful night nurse. She was very nice and it was her job to come and unhook me so I could go to the bathroom. As I was waking up I realized I was tied to the bed. If I didn't contact the nurse then I wouldn't be able to go to the bathroom. It was odd because there was a room where the person that was in my room was very old. She would cry and ring for them to come to her so she could let go of her urine. They didn't come right away and so she would start to cry. She would cry and ring for some one but no one came right away. After what seemed like what was a long time a nurse would come with something you go into while you are in your bed. The person would leave the water holder and she would use it. They would pull a guard around her bed so she had privacy. The rest of the time she would sleep. No one came to see her. Her only people contact was the nurses.

In other times I had other people that I didn't know. There was the girl around 40 who didn't talk with me, there was the old woman who didn't talk, there was a black woman who didn't have anything brain problems. I don't know why we were in the same room. She was really nice. She talked to me like a normal person would. It was the first time that anyone did. She was in the hospital because of surgery she had on her neck. They were removing valves on her neck so they could get rid of cancer in those valves.

I tried to understand what she was doing. She was very nice to me and knew that I was tied down but she wasn't. She told me that I had to be careful with those tie downs because they keep me from following on my brain. I told her that I have an injury there and that I don't remember anything from when it happened. I told her that I could remember a little bit now. She was very nice. She told me things I should do. She said I should have a book that has information in it. I don't remember what she said it would be but it made me feel good to know there might be a book that will have things that will help me.

Dori has brought me a bunch of books. I think they will help me know some things that are out there about brains. I have this impression that they have made some progress on brain injury but I think it is still at the beginning. I saw the add the other day in Newsweek of how in one hospital is trying to lead everyone. I think that is the problem too. I live with a person now who is usually home every night. Because of that there is someone who is aware of me. If that hadn't been that day I wouldn't be alive. So then I start to think about what had started before it got to the this is your time to die. I want to know if there is something we can do in this country so it isn't so horrific. To realize that they can operate and save people but that the ones that have a brain that bursts. It is how the person is build and so it is time.

Chapter 24
November 28, 2007
What is What?

I got a ride with Paula to my house on Whidbey. It seemed like a long and hard ride. I had trouble seeing out of the window. It was making a weird sound to me but I don't think so to the driver. I wanted to be very good because I know the only reason I get to stay in my house is that I follow the rules she has set up. I thought we weren't ever going to get out of that place. They tied me down. I have mentioned that in other writing but I will keep mention it. I don't think it is ok to be tied down. Of course I also know that I would have escaped from the hospital if I could get away. I remember sitting on my sometimes when no one was in the room. I would pull the

tie on my hand or my shirt. I was trying to get those constraints off of one or two. They would be checking on what you were doing.

They would look at the clock and then my watch and the attempt made on the things tied to me. Just as I had made to get off some of the bed they would find me. Any nurse service person who found me taking it off and fix it would tell me that it is not ok. I didn't like them controlling my body. I learned to be very quiet and try to get the stuff taking off my body so that I can leave. I am home now and I look at what has taken to get here.

I started in a speech specialist at the hospital. She is someone who can work with me to improve how my brain is working. The first time I met with her she thought that I would not be able to separate meetings of different words. What that means is that the person can read the words but can't distinguish one from another. What that means, the way I understand it, is how it some times means things to me. Like if I am talking to some one about what is going on that particular day and I say something I don't get off the right thing. I will say that there are horses over there when there aren't any horses and what I mean are birds. I got really angry sometimes when I was talking because what I was saying did not have the right words. Family members watching me do that would laugh. They had told me that as long as I was trying and as long as I was trying that's what counted. I really think they enjoyed laughing because it is pretty amazing that people who know you and love you and laugh at you for using the wrong word like horse instead of bird enjoy helping you get better.

I was and am trying every day to get better. I still go to a therapist to work on improving things. I want to make sure people know about me so that they can help someone like me that is one of their folks. My therapist that I get guided from had a way of explaining things. It think it is very important because the way we talk about this in this country isn't the best way and it can actually cause problems for people. She gave me definitions of what has happened to me. That made me feel better because the kind I get represent 20% and those following into this group can be any age. The hard part is if you are in this group only 1%- 2% fully recover to who and what they were before this happened. The other 80% type has blood blocked. People with this may have some warnings that it will happen. My therapist said that one group, 80% is occlusive (blood flow is blocked). The others, the 20% are hemorrhagic and (blood flow into the brain). The general word that is used to describe this is stroke but it is not a medical term. The phrase Cerebral vascular accident or CVA.

I want all of us to be familiar with CVA and what we need to do to make it better. If we are in the hemorrhagic group and we survive we have to work every day to get our brain back to work. I'd like us to have some way to find this on people before the attack itself does it's worst. When they tell us that only 1% -2% are all that make it back to normal self...it just isn't good enough.

Chapter 25
November 29, 2007
Home Finally

The entire time I was in the hospital I wanted to be home. The fact that my arms and legs were tied down night after night made me realize how much I wanted to get home. I wanted to be around people and be able and talk and do things but most of all I didn't want to be tied down not now and not ever.

The last day for awhile at the hospital was April. I tried to behave well so that anyone who could bring me to my home would think that would work. There were so things that I could not do. I had to write the bills for the last work I did in January. I would have to use the computer as I always had to write a note and talk about have to be paid as well as use the form to do that. When I first got home I didn't try to do it because I couldn't even figure out how to turn on the computer much less find the things that were on it.

I didn't have trouble making phone calls but there had to be a print that had all the numbers and names of people. I also had been given a phone where the numbers had been printed so all I have to do was push a button by the person's name and then they would have been run off so that the call was made. I didn't like that phone. Something was wrong about not pushing the little numbers.

My roommate made foods three times a day when I arrive at the house. It was wonderful to look out the window and see it. I could see the Sound from the deck and Mountain Baker out in the distance. There are lots of birds. It made me start to think about them more than I ever had. I had almost died and would never have seen more birds so seeing birds and watching them is great. There are eagles and hawks and herons. There are lots of little birds that are yellow and red and have white spots. They made me feel like a bird watcher.

On the way up to the house I had dropped into a sleep off and on in the car. There takes so much energy to move on little things like walk. My bedroom is down stairs. That is where all the bedrooms are in the house. There is another bed in the guest house which is nice. If I couldn't make it by walking down the stairs then I could have stayed on ground level in a separate.

The most important thing that almost killed me was finding out that very few people know about it. We think about the stroke activity and think about people who are older having it happen. What I had can happen to people any age and the ones that get it not because they are older...exactly the opposite.

Being at home was wonderful. I was not tied down with those bounds. I could walk around when ever I wanted. The only guidance I had was that I could not go down the stairs unless I had someone with me. It was such a small rule to follow compared to the rules they used in the hospital. I went to bed each day very tired for night. I went to bed around 7:00PM. During the day I often slept for two hours or more. I just didn't have in energy. Part of what happens is people like have our brains working. Some days it works a lot and I make progress. Other days I don't talk as well as yesterday and I can't remember what I thought about. We watched movies but my eyes couldn't stay open for them.

My roommate, Paula, went outside to do things in the garden. I sat on the deck with the newspaper. Every day I would try to read it. I found that I could read the title but after I read one paragraph I couldn't remember the title. I subscribe to Newsweek and they have a section that has quotes from people. The give the desperate quote and then background information. I don't understand any of the Newsweek. I keep reading it because before I had these problems I was reading it. Each week I get a newspaper and I would try to understand it. The same thing happened with the local newspaper and the city paper. I would be able to read a paragraph but no more. As soon as I tried to read any more of any article then I would forget what had been said previously. When I put them down they had both floated away. When I first got home I started to wonder if I wouldn't be able to understand those things. It kept just going on and on.

Chapter 26
November 30, 2007
Every Day at Home

Being home this time was and is different than any time when I was in the home. Paula would make food. The concept of figuring out what and when to eat was a great deal on my mind and I didn't do well with it. I would wake up and that for awhile was the best time. Before I could really wake up I would be in bed. I would look around the room and it looked safe and familiar. I would feel rested and like I felt good. When I clearly woke up then I would have to go to the bathroom right away. I had to do that because I would have significant bowels that had to pass. I wouldn't feel like I could wait even one extra minute when it was time. Paula suggested that I keep a journal. I started doing that so I could right down what I was feeling and thinking and what happened. That way as each goes by I will be able to look back at what I've thought and experienced. When I remember the people in the hospital that I either liked or didn't I think and my behavior while I was there all of those things and more things have a great aspect to the fact that I lived.

I am going to return and then talk about the journal. The first one when I started in April 10th. On that one I talked about my sister and what was going to be happening in the summer. April 11th Kelly talked about Paula and my feelings for her. She talked about the Mayor and the ages of people and then she talked about coming to visit. When I talk I think I am listening to strategies people suggest. One was about how to set up a system and how we would use a system to take advantage of them. We took care of Kelly's daughter Addie. Paula took bird and car and went to juice at washed car and have a fund. She showed what she liked practical. Dori checked in with me on the 11th. Melody wants to visit here. Susan may visit and bring clothes. I think it is a very young nephew.

On Thursday of April 12, 2007 I had an appointment and have not changed food but have a bad case of diarrhea (I've noticed that my spelling is not where it should be but I can look at words that are marked to spell them. I need to figure out the rest of potili I need to do that so I have a sense – its hard not to be correct but may have to hurry without making it correct.

I have to meet a coach. I will sit on a couch. Dori talked about herself that she coming here and a person that goes. She should be a star and I agree. Melody (dining) and Linda visited to visit with home room cub cakes. Dori called to say she was bringing something that smells well and she will bring lasagna.

On April 13, 2007 I started thinking back to when I was working and doing what I always thought were important things. Rode on stuff on a field in things. Donna went off to acknowledge some real estate. I tried to let the state know that we tried to all the kids. We went to the SDD demonstrated – got my glasses sticked, got Paula's windshield faced, parking strip and went to the grocery. That night for dinner my sister and her husband and her friend and boy friend ate a chili dinner at 8:30 pm.

The important thing about this journal is that by doing it I am able to look at what state I was in. Repeating the journal I did will show me or anyone that has a similar person who has had a similar situation how they progress. There are things that are funny things about words and how we use them. Some of us who find our selves in this situation and hear the words being wrong as they come out of our mouths.

Chapter 27
December 6, 2007
Trying To Find Meaning

My sister and her husband came on April 14 came up and talked about to me about things you have. I learned a lot about disease and other issues. We sat in our living room and had coffee. It was a great time to see them. I have noticed that I am seeing people now than I did when I had my job. Dori and John were going to take off to the places that have tulips. It was good to see them and resonate that they are being here and being supportive of my moving forward in a positive way. Below on from my written journal.

This point is April 18, 2007. They are watching a play. It is one that Stephanie and Paula fell a part. That is a great flya. It is relative nice. Paula meant suicide and stayed and talked with them. The impressionment of folks was pure. Mary, Aimee, and Therea joined the conference. I got help with names because I'm not nameless yet and touching them –speaks- but is not their for the same – the teacher from the spark know is most near- but we had a visit of him. The two split on the nuddy was occur is combination of visits and trees-some combos- fantasy- by my brother – includes my brother and dad both whom are dead – prim who leads my strength who does in fact.

April 19 we went on a traveling trip thing. We went to absence days. All said my abilities were ok. Some times my thoughts are expressed. The ones under this section don't make sense. There is the sentence "I want to keep harder a lot of things I do." It was in a journal list that makes no sense.

Susan visited but we are not quieted. She did dumping on the visit. They liked it. I was set up in until the afternoon. I slept most of the day. Susan and Paula worked with a sort of visit. I was angry and sorry today about feeling like making on dinner. It seems like lots of realities that I won't face off. I want things to keep being used even though as I see it I don't want heart. My life long about Jeff pilots hears made me feel ok – that her iron is ok –that it only just stay going the right distance.

On April 24th I was referring in the igo. It is very nice- lots to accept. Paula is making food liners for everyone. I am apiring everyone will be to help us translate the idea. I sat still in the morning. I went to the school. I wanted that sift moved to later. We had a great old person who worked for those kind of things and managed to be fixed. Paula seemed invised with her worst help and her age habbits.

Paula encouraged me to write in the journal every day. She said it would help. I can see that there is a difference in writing from the beginning of the month to the end of the month. I asked her about it. She said that writing like for all of us learners is one of the hardest to do. We teach all kids how to write and it is very hard. If you have a brain broken and you are trying to have your brain work it gets better on different things. I could talk better than I could write. It seems very weird to me because I taught kids how to write when I was a teacher and when I became a principal I emphasized this with teachers so they would make sure kids so that they learn to write. Now, even though I was 59, I couldn't write when I was coming from the surgery. I couldn't remember people's names that I knew and had known well and I couldn't remember their names. When I talked I couldn't call things the right name. There are lots of stories like that.

I had to wear a head helmet so that I don't get hurt. It meant that part of my head was gone and so my head was open and unprotected. That made me scared all the time because I thought if I didn't have the helmet on then I could have an even more injury to my brain.

Chapter 28

1/9/08

My Job

When I worked as a teacher, a principal, and a consultant I had a clear idea and plan I had to develop in order for me to have successful outcomes. The problem with having my brain hurt and some of it lost isn't the same at all as doing the other work I have done most of my life. I guess I could say that includes how I behaved and things I did when I was in college for a BA in English and then a BA in education and finally a MA in administration. What had to be done and it was clear when I was missing things or not doing it well because it showed on the various reports as to how I did.

With this one it is very hard because I don't from day to day know or understand things that I used to understand. When I first started to work typing on my computer I didn't know how to turn it on, or how to correct mistakes, or even that I had made mistakes. In April I couldn't even write a couple of sentences in a row. My head was filled with things that happened in the hospital. There were a lot of nurses I liked but there were also several that I didn't like or was afraid of. It makes me wonder how they are trained and what they are told they have to do to help people like me in the hospital. The whole idea that a person who doesn't know you at all and only knows you because you are very sick doesn't make me feel good.

One night when I was really sick, I mentioned it before, the male nurse came to move me to another room to be examined by some machine. It was 1:00 am and even though I had been sleeping it made no difference. I remember being strapped to the moving bed, down elevators, down hallways I hadn't seen before, and not in control. That time and others were scary. I think that it tells you right away that they don't trust your body or your mind to do anything that needs to be done. They have taken it over and you are just to accept it. They don't know what you do or what you are interested in or who your friends are or what your life has been up to this. None of that seems to matter to them. What matters to them only is the assignment they are supposed to complete and so it is like it doesn't matter to them if you are not clear or are not certain about what you do.

Recently, November and December I read articles put out to my friends and others to explain what was going on both from in the hospital and when I got home. I had some thoughts about what they were asking me to do and thought that I didn't have to do things they suggested. What I realized over time is that I wouldn't be able to go home and that I would be seen as someone that would eventually move out of the hospital school and end to some kind of institution of housing that puts people who can't function. I think that though things I say or said were not accurate or acceptable the message came through from the nurses and helpers that I couldn't or wouldn't be able to function myself. So my partner managed to work on meeting the goal that I go home even though initially I would not have been able to function myself.

When I first got home I could not fix myself food to eat, or take a shower, or even put on the clothes I needed to wear to be. I couldn't make my pen make, or make phone calls. That was in April when I first arrived at home. So my partner needed to help me with all though things and keep asking herself if I should be put in a place who could monitor every move. In that instance she would not have to do all those things every day.

She thought many things were funny and that I presented them to be funny and to entertain. I talked to her about birds but called them horses. I mentioned things about cooking but

talked about grass instead. Every time I talked, every sentence I used had wrong words. I didn't make those to be funny but it made me feel OK when they laughed and thought they were funny. It is kind of how it is when you are in any place, you have the goal to try to make things work. The fact that they don't work, almost sentence by sentence, makes you feel that at least you are trying.

It has made me realize that essentially it is the process that children go through when they are very young and are learning about language and learning how to say things that are words. We don't get upset with two year olds who say words as singletons, that are complete and making sentences. They smile when they do this and clearly enjoy and have fun doing that. We smile at them because we know they will keep working on words and eventually words in sentences will come together and make sense. People recovering from having their brain broken, lost some of it, lost a part of it, are almost starting again as if they were a child. It doesn't seem like adults who are in trouble are regarded as children though. It feels as if you are wrong and causing painful to others and to yourself.

When we think of all the people who are hurt in this way and few of them manage to survive it becomes a theme and concept about what we need to do. When I was in the hospital at the start of it they would pound my chest to get me to respond. I couldn't talk at all. I would think about the things they did when I heard of them because I don't remember what they did. They looked at if I talked or tried to respond and didn't know if I would or wouldn't. They knew that if I didn't respond my ability to survive was decreased and they also knew I didn't show that I understand it.

It is so hard when people I talked to, especially nurses who were there at night, had a picture of who I was and how I interpreted things, they could hear what I said and on most items my statements didn't make sense. The one thing I knew from the moment I could start to remember was that I had to get away from there and away from the people there. One of the night nurses was very nice to me. She was one of the few who talked to me and made sense. She listened to me and tried to help me with what I wanted. Like I told her I didn't know how to make the TV work. She would get the two handles and tell me to try to push the buttons to get what I wanted. I would try and it wouldn't work but she would be patient and show me and try it again. It was sort of funny almost. Somewhere in the back of my head was the notion that turning on a TV is something I had done before and silly that I am having trouble. I would let go of that thought though because the TV didn't work when I was left by myself.

I almost think it would be a lists or an outline that would list out the things you as a victim need to work on and do. In my head I was thinking that but the conversations were very much simpler than that. The people who were helping me were showing me pictures of my cats and asked me to say what there names was. I struggled to do that but at the same time I was thinking that I know what they are. It was like my brain could do things but not translate any of it. It made me cry.

Chapter 29
January 9, 2008
Strength

One of the most important things for me to think about is what I thought about at all the times I can remember when my brain began to be more connected. What did I know, what did I connect, what did I do right or wrong? I remember when one of the people helping me helped me stand up at the sink. She was telling me how to wash my face and brush my teeth. I remember looking down at the water in the sink. I looked slowly up to myself in the mirror. It was freaky. I didn't look like myself at all. My head was naked with short hair all over. My scar was surrounded by fat tissue. My eyes looked like they were barely there as the side of the skin around them came down to them. It was the first time I could see myself in the mirror. It was the first time I realized how bad I looked and how much I had been. It made me feel bad, that I looked bad to every one who knew me.

When I had thought about how the nurses should know who I am beyond this experience it makes sense that they have no information that would give that to them. What they see is a person in reading nightgowns with sunken eyes and puffy skin around them. The hair is shaved and the scars on both side of the head are easy to see. The capsule cover to protect the head has to be worn whenever the patient gets off the bed for protection. The patient seems to bend over at the shoulders and look down at her feet whenever she moves. The floor is what it is and has always been, flat and kind of a cream colored. Still the patient looks at each step taken on this linoleum. On these days where people are coaching her there should have been happiness for me. Mostly it seemed like they were concerned about what they were testing me on...not happiness...but could identify the things they checked.

It is funny when I was doing these because there was a woman staying in my room who had been through an operation. She had serious pieces of veins taken out of her that were not safe. They were all over her neck but that was what was targeted. She was a very nice person to me. She talked well. She didn't make mistakes on her sentences like I did. She listened to me and she tried to help me get things I wanted like the TV channel changed or answering the phone. I don't know why someone who didn't have anything wrong with her brain was in the same room with me who did have trouble. Sometimes when I think about it...I think it would be better if that's how people were assigned. I can think of four or five different people who may have had a similar thing to what I did. Most of them didn't talk at all. So instead of having someone I could ask about who they were and what they had done I couldn't talk with them at all. The hospital makes sure that men and women are split up, but I have to say that there might be some interest and talking if men and women were put in the same room.

I knew about going home and hopefully would have my partner and other people I knew who could help me be OK. One day the partner needed to go somewhere so she asked this person to look after me. I didn't feel well that day so I was downstairs in the bedroom. I didn't get up and try to say hello or let her know how I was feeling. I realized that she felt lucky not to have to see me. I looked scary with the way my face was and how funny the words come out of my mouth. She had seen when I had said hello to her when a friend was driving me around. I tried to be friendly to her but I had several words missing so that sentences didn't make sense. I knew what they meant but she couldn't know. What was strange about the day she was staying there to watch me for an hour or so for someone else she was nervous. I was feeling too tired and too sick to care.

There always had to be at my house because I needed to be watched. It has also bothered me that the notion of sitting in a house is viewed by others to be so difficult and so confusing that someone like me is going to make important mistakes if I am there alone. I have no idea what that might have been, only that know one was going to find out if I was doing things by myself.

So, what do you do when most of the major surgery is over except for one still coming to put the bone back in your head. What it is that I have to practice and do things every day so that my brain will communicate back to me so that I can be accurate. Just because my brain has something in it that might be OK, make me feel OK, but be the wrong word. If people hear the wrong word then what I said wasn't accurate. The funny thing about this is that your brain will take the nearest word not the accurate one. So there is sentence after sentence where the verb is there and the general idea it is just specifically wrong. When it has been like that I have been frustrated I am talking to but I try not to be negative about it.

Chapter 30

January 10, 2007

Communication Help

So, I am home every day in my house on Whidbey. When I am first there I can sleep every day I would take naps. That is strange to me because each morning when I wake up there are just a few minutes before I come totally awake and during that few minutes I feel normal. It is my bed and I slept well in it. I am warm and I feel peaceful. I look at the walls. They are white and crisp. I have two large pictures framed on the wall. There is one that has a picture by Georgia O'Keefe of a bunch of white clouds in the sky. It is like you are looking out of a plane at all the clouds and as if you were flying in a real plane it gives you the same feeling...that you could walk on those small clouds and jump from one to another. You know that they couldn't hold you up but it seems like they could. It is a painting that reinforces how I feel now about things I look at and that seem like I could do something real with them. The other Monet is like many of the paintings he painted where things aren't clear but general and drawing. There are gentle trees (*expressionist came out when I was thinking...that's over five minutes for my brain to track down the accurate term about the trees and painting, what I was trying to do and come back only because I pressed again by thinking and asking my brain*) and a stretch of river and all of the items are quiet and peaceful. You can't see clear things that are sharp if you had taken a camera picture of it with sharp lines. I have other pictures in this area. Most of the pictures of animals and pictures are of water and ocean. Some are drawings, some of photo pictures. One is of seeing through buildings of Seattle that are clear with water in them and goldfish floating and swimming around.

Each time I talk to a friend who knows me and saw me go through this has developed an interaction with me that is different than before. Before I was an administrator and a supervisor and then I tried to be friendly. I knew that we are friendly it was an extension for the basis of our being somewhat like friends. Now my interactions with people are very different than it used to be.

Those who know me from before talk differently to me. Those are different who didn't know me very well or didn't know me at all have gotten to know me after my incident. One that knew me from before that I talked to in January talked to me about speaking a different language. She had helped me in the hospital from last February and March. At that point I could talk but it made no sense. I would say sentences that weren't sentences I would have had before

this happened. She would listen and talk to me and help shape what I was saying so it made more sense. She was one of the special friends who tried to help me get better and regains the ability to speak and write in ways that once again made sense. Instead of saying make sure the horses are fed, as I did often, say instead put seeds out for them. I didn't have a horse so all the times I mentioned them or got horses mixed up with cats or dogs or birds was when my brain has sent out a first item. It seemed to me as a person who has hurt her brain that I would notice when I am pulling the wrong word out. I didn't. People who were helping me laughed at those kinds of things and when I heard them laugh I would have to ask what was funny. They would tell me which wrong noun it was and even though the word I did use, it was generally in the background it wasn't the exact word so that it was right.

My partner has been helping me each day in looking at some pictures and say what they were. On the front of the card was the picture and on the back was the answer. Each day I would look at the picture and try to remember the right answer on the back. I will talk more about that whole process but the important thing right now is that I made lots of mistakes on this practice every day for weeks before I could finally get them right. That the dog's picture on the front was called and Husky on the back.

So the friend that knows me before and after my brain problems also knows the Spanish language that she speaks. She told me how the frustration made it difficult to talk with people who were natively learned language. She said there would be difficult times when she was trying to talk with them and her Spanish wasn't as accurate it needed to be even though they still managed to communicate. I think she was trying to make me feel better now since I make mistakes and still have the wrong noun in my language. I don't talk with clarity and accuracy during the times when I spoke to friends and people I work with. So, she was trying to help me understand that she has similar problems with her Spanish communications even though she has never had a brain problem.

So, there I am and I guess it is a fair acknowledgement to compare them in some ways. I also think that if you never have been injured then the decisions you make about a foreign language you use have to do with study and coaching about something that is really there. For me, making mistakes in talking is not about words I don't know, it is about my brain connecting accurately with my talking. I think the best thing I can do is to keep practicing but it is ironic that some times it goes smoothly and other times, even at days later, I can't do it at all. It makes me wonder if our brains after an accident or aphasia never settles in stable. You can get better and as long as you are thinking about what you are saying and watch carefully what verbs are released. You know that if you are tired or if there are a number of people there which distracts your focus that you won't do as well as talking clearly with the right nouns that work with the verbs. It is funny to realize that with this kind of damage the ongoing and toughest is nouns. I remember when I was a kid and what we did was get to know and use hundreds and even thousands of nouns. After the damage I find that I still have many of the nouns but getting the exact one out in a specific sentence when I am talking can not be trusted. It's like I have worked very hard but I can't have guaranteed success because with every and each single statement there can be problems.

Chapter 31
January 11, 2008
Kelly

Being at home following the time in the hospital is very difficult. What is funny about it though is that it feels like I'm so inaccurate, so unable to talk correctly, so hard to understand basic objects that the people around me can tell what happens when I try to do anything. It is so far off what it was like before this happen that they can either cry or laugh. Most of them who knew before this happened know what I was like and so they are patient for that person to come back.

Kelly who is a good friend to Paula and has a young baby came to see me and Paula three for four times a week. She would come from Anacortes and pick up Paula's mom in Mt. Vernon and then drive to the hospital to be supportive to Paula and to me. Some who know that because of how seriously I had been injured that there was no point in coming to see me because I had no memory of it and for the most part at that point I couldn't remember their names. I was nice to them and they were very nice to me. The emphasis they had was to talk with me and even though I had a bald head and pipes sticking into it they would come to say hello and say things they hoped would be heard by me.

I didn't start to remember some parts of things in April. It is odd when you think about it. All of the people we know and are for the most part don't worry about what is in our head. People who have been injured like me worry about it all the time but it is odd that because of the seriousness of the head injury I worried about things that would be normal and small problems. I couldn't turn on the TV or work the phone. I couldn't get out of the bed there because I was tied down. I couldn't remember what my house looked like or even where it was. I couldn't remember the names of my cats and dogs and of various people I knew. But even with that injury and those problems there was something else going on in my brain.

I wanted to know people's names and I wanted to get out of the hospital. The first memory I have was when Susan brought movies to watch. I didn't remember Kelly being there or Bev being there or Barbara or Bonnie. I didn't remember Paula from before but I was starting to remember her from every day because she was a good friend and she was going to get me back to my home. My sister was there almost every day and when I started to have a little memory then I would remember my sister.

When I moved to the area of the hospital for training there were several people, each who worked on certain areas. I was brought to understand that unless I can do those things that I could not go home. I believed that was the case and so I tried very hard to do what was right and expected. Looking at pictures and having to label it or say what it was served as one of my assignments. Each day I would be directed to look at a map, and pictures of things in my house, and I had to say where things were and the names of the animal. The person teaching me was making the point that I had to get all these things and many more coming.

So Kelly was there to see me before I had a memory. But I think that is the thing with your brain. If you have someone special who is going through this I have since then become to a believing about what has to happen for you to get well. I think you have to go to the situations you went through and have the persons who visited and talked to you tell you about that again. Having those things happen make you realize that even though you were very sick and almost died people who care about you, and know you in a very different way from how you are with this sickness, stay with you and give you support.

It is January 11, 2008 and Kelly and I had a lunch together and yesterday talked about how many times she had visited me in the hospital. It feels very strange and adds a little sadness to me because I believe that kind of support is why I lived through all that difficulty. My surgeon told me that while they could do the operation that would give the patient a chance, whether that chance is taken depend on the patient working so hard and deciding to try in order to overcome the exceptionally difficult things going on because of a damage brain. Kelly was nice to me and talked to me and cared about me. Even though my brain was not in the shape to take those things that were given to me and pull them through my body's communication so I recognize them and remember them, it is wonderful that Kelly helped shape me to win out on this difficulty.

At an August 25, 2007 party was planned by my sister and Paula so that all the people who helped me in the hospital. I had improved a great deal by August but it is a very different place then where I am now. Kelly came to that party with her daughter and her husband. She was very special in the little presents she gave me and she made me feel special and helpful. It is weird to say but it is true that there was a feeling inside of me about how wonderful she was and is and thought I don't have a memory in time from the first length of time in the hospital, I do have a memory of her now from the summer, the fall, and I believe forever. She helped me make it keep struggling. She helped me be alive. Thank you Kelly.

Paula sent this out on April 03,2007

"We had our final meeting with doctors today – we WILL be leaving on Thursday morning, heading back to the island! We had a crew from Oak Harbor come over for a "work party" on Monday – boy, did they work! We have the house cleaned up, yard planted and weeded, power washed...all ready for Steph to come home and enjoy the view from the deck.

We will continue to update the journal from home to let everyone know how she is doing- feel free to call and visit if you get a chance. Thank you for all your love and support –without it, she wouldn't be where she is today."

My memory was improving when Paula left the hospital and went back to the house on Whidbey. I tried to tell her that I would go with her to help. She said no I needed to stay in the hospital because of the things I am learning. She said I wouldn't be able to leave if I haven't done enough. The thoughts I had almost every minute was that she was gone and she was working on the house. I didn't want her to leave me at the hospital but I didn't want her to be mad at me. She had arranged for Susan with movies to keep me distracted from thinking about what she was doing. Paula put lists on the wall so that I could look at what I needed and do what I should. (I wonder if we still have those for this book) I think scary things actually turn your brain on and start to connect because your body is thinking you are in danger and you have to do something.

Chapter 32

January 12, 2008

Making sure you pass

So, I had looked at my mirror and I remember thinking that I didn't have to see it as being me. That what I had been for wasn't me though it happened to me. They had put me in the recreation center which people like me had to go to. Before you would go in they would test you. I was worried about passing the test because I knew that people could make decisions that wouldn't let me go home.

One day I was taken to an office. There was a desk chair and the socialist with a minor nurse, learning how to be one, were there to measure me. I was sitting on the chair on the other side of the desk. They seemed very nice. "How are you today? We have a test and you can tell me what you think the right answer. Marsha is learning how to be a nurse so she is observing."

She handed me a piece of paper. There were fifteen or twenty statements except that each statement had a blank slip. So the examples are fairly simple at this point but they were too hard then. For example, the color of the soap in the sink would be, pink, blue, or white. The horse, dog, or cat would bury his toilet items into the flat box. The bed has brooms, tea pot, or pillows." I thought as I looked at the sentences that I couldn't be sure. I didn't know their answer though and not getting them right would mean I couldn't move onto the trainings which would let me be released.

I thought about it and I thought I need to show them that there could be a different answer. That way if I didn't get the right one at least they could see that there was an alternative answer that also works. They were nice people. The lead chose to smile and tell me that even if I don't have the answers that don't mean that I am not smart, no I am just at a place in my recovery where this isn't done yet.

She had been nice about having what I have and seemed open to what I was going to say. I needed her to be that way so I could say what I wanted to when it was wrong. So when she asked the questions I answered horse. She told me that the right answer was cat. I said it could be either and she needs to let it go that way or otherwise you aren't treating people fairly. She said OK, then explain your answer. I told her that horses move to stand in soft grainy boxes. They like how it looks and feels on their hooves. If they happened to have to urinate they do that in the box and at the thrill of how powerful that makes the horse happy. She said she could understand that but it isn't the usual method. I said on the second one that blue could be correct even though they said the answer was white. She said the white was clear about washing people. I said that the reason is blue is because people don't always wash their hands and do what they should. The blue color feels like airplanes and oceans and so washing my face and hands with blue feels better. Another question was about the pillow. I said you could have a tea pot. The reason for that would be to have a pleasant place to enjoy tea and read something before going to sleep. She said I had missed the question but she liked the reasoning.

The thing about this is that I knew I wasn't going to get the right answer. She knew I was trying to justify a wrong answer. I want to go home and if I can't do these things, even the most simple ones I am not going to pass. I have to say that this socialist therapist was very nice and I think she had figured out that I didn't know the most simple things but that I knew that. I think if she had just said that because of how injured and where injured I was hurt, the ability to get the right nouns in the right places. The thing about this is that it doesn't seem to borrow me before the rest of the sentence. Like if you say we will paint the house, the people, bumble bee, or dog I know what it means. It means something or someone will paint the house. So I can get that part but not the rest of it...especially the noun.

When I was first given things like this I had decided that it would be way to much work to learn nouns and that if I knew verbs then I wouldn't have to try to learn nouns. I had to do that when I was little and I had to do it in school, so maybe I just don't want to learn them again. I felt that way for awhile. Here are all these people who know nouns and who give me sentences without the nouns with the task I need to do so I can get well enough to go home. I think it is amazing that they don't give you the noun and ask you what it does. It is how we taught spelling

for years. We would show kids four words all the same word but three of them wrong. This helped some kids but a large group of kids actually got confused about having three of them wrong. I don't think we do this in schools any more. It doesn't help. Seeing what the word is and using it while it is spelled right, and telling kids they can use it helped them understand and getting better.

The socialist supervisor and the pilot nurse saw how I preformed on the questions. They said I had done well enough and that while I might not have gotten the exact noun I still understood that these have things and have meaning. Passing this test meant I went onto be the training which if I pass that is the final. It scared me because I knew I had liked about many of the answers and they were nice. In the next step, will that keep me locked up because I don't have the answers.

Chapter 33

January 17, 2008

Slowly

It is funny how things move so slowly. I don't think that I call someone and say...hey come on over and do things me at the rate I am doing them. It sure is important but I feel like I will just go as I can. I have those daily morning symbols where someone gets me ready for the shower. I think it is getting better. If I can describe to people how stuff feels I will but I think people need to know what is going on. I keep trying to put descriptions of every where and thing I've done so it make the best self.

My mother died in 1995. I think of her each day since. Some days it is less than others, but we haven't given her all the glory should have. We planned a time for her from the hospital. We thought she would go home to face the cancer in her body but we didn't know what would happen. We took her a Saturday and she passed away by Sunday morning.

That is what death is to family and loved ones. You don't know when and you think in your head things you can do that will make things better for your mother. As soon as she gets home she starts to fade out and did the final steps to dying. There was nothing we could do to save her. I still think about the doctors there and I will never get over their encouraging her not to take something that would have made her more comfortable. They gave it to her and gave it to her on Wednesday. It had mostly run out by Saturday and without any of it she simply died.

I think it is amazing that people who work with doctors to do things for patients that require judgments and all kinds of thoughts about each person. I think that there is a problem for us as we watch someone being sick. In 1999 my brother's wife, went to the Stephens hospital. I was talking to a nurse there who said he had an attack and they would know where he was. She said I should get out of room and come back in the morning so that he can rest that night.

I didn't like to come back but they essentially said I would cause my father trouble if I didn't leave him. The fact was he died that night. He had another attack and it was enough to put him permanently to sleep. I now wonder about the people in hospitals. I wonder how they view what they are supposed to do.

I had nurses at the hospital making sure that I was tied down. They told me things I was supposed to do. They guided to the bathroom and then tied me back up. They would tell me that if my relatives weren't there then I had to be tied up. The only time I could not be tied up was

when my family and friends were watching me. Every day they left by 6:00 to 8:00pm from that time on until 8:00am or later. At least half of my day every day bothered me. I liked some of them but I would sleep during the day because I felt safe around my sister and friends. As soon as they went out to go home then I knew that I would be dealing with the night nurses.

One group of them, two that were there every night and one who came in to be a substitute were going to make me wear a cap. I didn't want to and I didn't think they could make me. They left for awhile and this went on every hour or so. They were laughing at me or what they were doing. They thought what they were doing was something they liked to do. I didn't like them and when they found out that I had called my mother they had a fit because they knew someone would go into the administrator. They didn't know that my mother had passed away. They didn't know and I used the power that your family can imply that they have things to help you.

Chapter 34 **January 25, 2008** **Seeing some one like me**

So this day in January I had lunch with Ruth. She is a very sweet person. Her husband did work for us when we cleared our profit. She is 71 but she had the same thing I had when she had turned 60. She and her husband came by to see me in the hospital and also came to a reception in August. The intention was to thank everyone who had done things to help me and I also told them all that August 25th was being used to recognize my birthday, which actually is on September 4th.

I talked to Ruth and hope to talk some more with her. She had essentially the same thing I did. She says that now she has serious aches and that a strike in her brain and make it very uncomfortable. She gets this ache every day around 4:00am. She said that she used factual things but she can't do that now. She can read things that are fiction which she never liked before but now she can. She misses reading the factual things. She said they don't make any sense to her.

I asked her how much this condition has affected her and how it happened at the beginning. She passed out and her husband took her to Everett Hospital. They looked at where she was going on and sent her immediately to Harborview. That is where they analyzed to find out what was wrong. They did that and then did surgery so they could deal with vein that had exploded.

She doesn't remember any one when this was happening. She is like me and maybe all of the people who have this. It took her almost two months before she started to recognize where she was and who the people were. That way she knew what they were doing and what she had to do to get better.

I asked her if she knew anyone else who had the same thing she did. She said she had not met anyone who is like her until I came along. It seems odd that I knew her as an acquaintance when her husband was doing the property for us. We now have this and we know there are other people who have gone through it. I wonder if we haven't met very many because the vast majority of them die. If you lived through it then you are a miracle.

The therapist working with me shared something happened with one of the people. When they did surgery they could not make sure that there was separation in your thinking. If you can't get that then you in a situation where you say everything but it means nothing. She said that the

woman was moved to stay in a home that takes patients who cannot live by themselves. They can't figure out what to do from the most simple thing like getting dressed and picking what to eat. Someone had to do all of those for you or you won't be fed, or clean, or slept. The surgeons don't know exactly where that person we will try to help her get better.

When I first was starting to remember things and get a sense of where I was looking around and recognizing that this was not my home. I didn't know why I was there. My family and friends tried to tell me what was going on. I wanted them to take me home and I was sad that they said I had some things I had to go through and get better if I am going to go home.

I also I had difficulties with things. I would say things but they didn't make sense because it was the wrong nouns and didn't make sense. My partner tried to get me to write down in a journal so I can work and practice on getting my brain to work again.

I have been doing a journal. I need to talk more about it because it is what I can look at and others with how a brain gets better, back to what it was before the explosion, and how I move one day at a time.

Chapter 35

January 28, 2008

Introduction to Journals

Paula and others suggested that I keep a journal so that I have a record of what things were like as I got up each day. My bedroom felt very good before I got up and saw others around. It was the first few moments from being a sleep to waking up. Then every day after just a few minutes I realize that that day I have to remember things, I have to remember how to do normal things. The proposed journal got me to work on talking, thinking, and using the right words.

People watching me and visiting would give little suggestions. They would compliment me on what a great job I had done on any day. They watched as I walked and talked using the round nouns. Folks seem to enjoy what I come up with because it is amusing. Like I said things like make sure the horses get fed. I don't have them.

So my label probably referred to the cats...quite a bit different from a horse.

Part of everything I try to gain is to make me constantly move up towards better understanding. Looking the journal serves as a guide as to how far away I was from being my comfortable self. So when I went to my house it was just the very, very, beginning on the road back to my being comfortable, understanding, and others making sense.

We left the hospital downtown. It was a drive home that took two hours or maybe a little less to get there. I was exhausted because I didn't know that I would be going home for sure until it checked out of the hospital. I needed to be very careful. It's like I've said before, I make sure to chew gum. That way I think I can look smarter because I don't come off with things that aren't too smart. When we got to the house I was so tired. I walked directly into the driveway and then into where the front doorway stood. I went over to the couch, sat down, and then put my head against the comfortable couch pillows.

I didn't have enough energy to talk to the people that were there.

The friends put together a recommended behavior. First get to a point when I had just come home to take care of the basic needs. I need to go to bathroom, I need to figure out what I should eat and prepare it, I should try to read the paper, I should watch TV shows that tell what

is gone on the news, I should plan when I would get exercises, when I get when I would eat, and when I would rest.

Now if you thought about doing the sort of things I mention, those might think of it as easy and not hard. The truth of the matter is that you have to build abilities and it is important for each of even the smallest thing. In order to go to the bathroom I had a nurse let me go, she waited right outside the bathroom with it open, and she said I had be tied up again so I don't get hurt. That's what it was like at the hospital and now that I am in my house I have to be very deliberate in the things I do because I could lead myself back on a wrong and hurtful situation. I tried to write out each day and everything that was important.

So, it is the time the record of the journals is shared. Lots of people would talk about their diary or their journal as personal and notes. In one way that is what my journal is. It is different though because it changes as I start to get more in charge of my brain. To me it is funny how I feel. I will write things and as I keep writing I will go for a month. Then when I look back at the beginning of the writing and I find that lots of changes have taken place. I started in April and it is now 10 months later. Understanding how you think, change, think better, change, think better, that's what your brain does. It has been broken and now if you work on it you can build it back up. What's really strange about it is that as you grow you see differences and you too are surprised at the things you take on as new learning's

I moved back into my house. This is my latest house. I lived in a number of houses in Seattle, moving and going to a better one each time. This house is wonderful. It is on Whidbey Island and faces Mt. Baker and Puget Sound from the deck and inside the open living room, dining room and kitchen. There are glass doors on all sides of the house and lots of windows. No matter where you sit you can observe woods, mountains, and salt water. The whole time I am looking I know I have to keep working and improving and get my brain back to working effectively. I think one of the most important things to do is understand your journal and what you said so you get what your brain is doing. *(I am going to put in a chapter on what they did to work on improving my brains. It is already talked about off and on ...but maybe a singular chapter.)*

Chapter 36 – 2/21/08 Starting Up The Journal In April

Even though I thought I could read, and even though I thought I could use writing to explain things, the reality was that it didn't translate into writing. Amazingly enough I began to read my journal entries and on one level they made sense to me but the more things I talked to people about, the more times I looked at a paper, the more time I tried to read a magazine, I realized that my brain was going to come through with the right answers. My brain would give me hints but not the full answer. I had to get the hints and then put things together so that they made sense.

So, I arrived at my house. I was so tired just from sitting in the car on the ride I needed to sleep. The real journal didn't start until a week later. On April 10th I talked with my sister and wrote down notes.

She talked about Johnny in the summer on Friday for the weekend. On April 11th a friend Kelly talked about my feelings for her and Mayor and ages - then come to visit - brining her husband to lose weight - fix bathroom. Sharon called high stuff. The chores beat in fire in the place fire house. Fed the cats and spent them. Live on alystening to strategy with antrol. It has something to do how we use writing to put in what is going on.

We took care of Addie, Paula took bird and car and went to jice and washed car and had fund - She felt practiced in how she felt.

Also called Dori, checked in brought of runners, District Melody (wants to visit) Susan Toth brought something you can do tings with flowers for.

Thursday 4/12

Had an appoint -not changing food but have a bad case of diareha (I've noticed that my spelling is bad) but can (spell) write words - Abeba is yealous a beer - she does what she knows - (Steph)

Need to figure out the rest of the potile - I need to do rest of the potile. I need to do that so I have a snes -its hard not to be correct - but may have to be hurry without modes.

Buy staff now with Edwind Lindsey and meet with coach - I appear on couch.

Dori chathed about herself that she's coming here and a person that goes. She should be a star - I agree!

` 4/12 - Melody (dine) Lind visited to visit with home room cub cakes, brought dinner - cashen start rib robs

Dori called to say she was bringing both hathie smell and then her husband and talked about food - lasagna - Paula has suspended to use with them or extra nights -

Move to extra pharacial

4/13 - Role on stuff field machile. Donna went off to acknowledge some real estate. I tried to let the state know that we tried to all kids. We went to SDD demonstrated - got my glasses sticked, got Paula' windshield faced, parking strip - went to grocery to buy for groceries.

Highlights – Chapters 37- Chapter 58

Chapter 37

2/27/08

Arriving at Home

On April 5, 2007 I arrived at my home on Whidbey. They told me that I needed to work every day to get better. I started a journal and include those for everyone to see. I also participated in behaviors that were directed towards getting better. The doctors said that I would probably need to take naps each day in order to be OK. I also would try to learn things and practice things so I would be able to understand things. When Paula brought me home she said I could take a nap. I went immediately to the couch in the front room of the house and laid on it and went into a deep sleep. I thanked Therese, Amy, and Mary for being there but I told them I had to sleep. I couldn't say their names at that point; in fact I couldn't remember my sister's name, her children, her husband, my housemate, her mother or other people. When I looked at them I knew they were nice and friendly but I couldn't connect with their names. The housemate Paula wrote her name on a little strip so I could tape it on my watch. That way when ever she is in the same room I could look at my ring to remind of her name. I wore that every day until August. Not being able to do that demonstrates any patient like me what a long way there is to go.

The housemate fixed dinner. I ate and then lay back down and went to sleep. After a few hours the housemate told me it was time to go to bed a around 7:00PM. The bedrooms are on the bottom floor. She had to help me going down the stairs so I didn't fall down.

The days and regulars started up after the first week back home on Whidbey. The housemate wanted to make sure that I was making efforts to improve. When I thought about first thing in the morning that felt so wonderful I wanted to feel like that all day long. The only way to work towards that was to practice. In the morning at the home Paula started with pictures. She would show me the picture and I would have to say who or what it was. The first picture was her mother on one side and Bev's name. The next picture of me and the housemate, Stephanie and Paula was shown. The third picture shown was of my sister with her name Dori on the back. The next picture shown is number four of a man, wife, and daughter and on the back good friends Patrick, Shelly and Addison. Picture five was shown of two women, and on the back it says Susan and Jenna. There were more pictures of items on the front and the name of thing on the back of it. The items included a computer, glasses, kotex, short socks, a braw, shorts, t-shirt, jeans, sweats pants, medicine tray, coffee pot, telephones, TV set, shoes, leading to 20 pictures. Starting in April at home I would look at those pictures and get them correctly to tell my housemate. At the beginning of this practice I only got three or four answers, and they would change from one time to another demonstrating that my memory didn't last day to day. When I looked at the picture it looked familiar but I couldn't remember the name of it. Yet, each day at least once a day usually twice I would go over it again.

I did this from April all the way to August. Having it done that often and practiced I could get the names. At the same time I tried to read the paper each day. I would read words in the first paragraph but found that I could not understand what it was saying. I was reading Newsweek once a month. One of the articles has a page with short stories about people based on what they said or did. I would read the article and try to understand what the magazine was saying and

reporting to the reader. I couldn't understand it but every week I tried to read it. As I worked different activities my brain got better. The part of my brain that was injured is known as the part that communicates. When it was damaged seriously it meant for me to keep working on my brain parts connecting so I could again remember or recognize.

Chapter 38
February 28, 2008
Therapy
Susan Walker, Speech Therapist
Whidbey General Hospital

Part of what I had to do when I went home in April was to set up therapists who would help me get better. I had a physical one whose job it was to determine what practice I needed to do so that my physical movements were good and working. It was his job to set up practice for me to get better while working on it. I also had a Speech Therapist whose work with me was to help me to work on communication and improvement.

Rehabilitation was an hour for each of two sessions per week. The purpose of this was for her to help me practice, identify, and improve communication. Each hour that I went to see her we would practice various communication methods. At one point she told me that my danger had been so hard that it was a question as to whether or not I would ever be like myself that got hurt. There are people who have injuries that are so great they can never get one part of their brain to support communication. No matter how they work on it they cannot remember and establish what they are doing so they can function again as they did before.

She at one meeting defined "Stroke". She said that word is not medical and if you want the medical terms it is different. In medicine a Cerebral Vascular Accident or CVA is divided into two kinds. The first is occlusive (blood flow is blocked) – and 80% of a brain person wind up with that. The second part is called hemorrhagic (blood flow in the brain) or 20% of people with brain injury. People in that 20% have an aneurysm. The fact that she would explain helped the connection by me improve. She had to explain things more than once but it helped me have a sense of what was going on. I wrote a journal on the day I had an appointment. How I saw things shows in the journal.

It is clear that I was not writing correctly yet. Part of what I did and I will share more as we go through this, was try to record my feeling at the time. Writing and trying to explain things I felt in a journal gave my brain more practice at working. She is a great person working with people who have had brain problems. I met with her for two days a week in May, two days a week in the first three weeks, two days a week in July, two days in most of the weeks in August, and two days in all weeks in September. After that we met once or twice a year down to meetings being over as in March.

The one thing I believed, especially when I read the journals I wrote, is that writing is very slow to come about and takes a lot of practice. Talking with a therapist who gets you to work on making your memory and things you can say come back helps you develop. The last thing she worked with me on was the writing. She gave me a test to determine how much my writing skills had improved.

Chapter 39
March 3, 2008
What to Do

I knew that I had rules to follow. Inside of me I felt very careful because I had been in the hospital and I knew what it was like. If I didn't follow the rules I would have to go back there. I didn't want to go back there ever again.

The rules had to be based on things to keep me busy and to keep me safe. I had to take my drugs both morning and night. Paula set them up in the machinery container. I couldn't set them up myself. She was very patient with me and would explain each one and why it was morning or evening and each day. I would stand by her and watch her put them in the container at the beginning of each week. I would cry a little when she did that because I wanted to be able to set it up. As a side note it is 10 months later and even though there are pills to take each day Paula is the one that sets them up not me. Even now, 10 months later, and even though I've seen them each week as a group and every day when I take them, I'm still not sure about what someone are and what they do. Now I know that it includes general vitamins, and vitamin D, and cal citrate, and something for cholesterol so that it stays low. I also take some that control stress and anxiety. Those are the ones I can't ever seem to get straight. I am on a new drug that is taken once a week. The intent of that is for my spine combined with other things I am taking to make sure my spine goes back to be strong. The doctor said that might go on for a year or more until I get healed.

On April 20th I had another doctor's appointment in Seattle at Harborview. They are the ones that prevented me from dying with their surgery and monitoring. The point of the meeting I had with them was to check on how I was doing and how I was doing at rehab things at home. They wanted to make sure I was taking all my drugs and that I was wearing my cap to protect my part of the brain that is not protected yet.

It is hard for me to imagine that I have a hold in my skull that has a hole on it and that if it doesn't stay protected that it can be hurt. Paula is very consistent and when she goes outside to work on the five acres I have to make sure she always sees me with the cap on. I was using the journal to record my feelings. I felt like I talked better than wrote but Paula wanted me to use the journal so that I was coping with my head.

While I was working on my journal and going through the things each day that I had to do to help me get better, Paula would send updates on how I was doing so that people I know and care about how I was doing wanted to know. She was a regular person who is an excellent reading teacher and things she wrote to be posted for people who knew me and what had happened to me were helpful to them. I didn't read what she had written until November. I don't think I would have understood words and sentences she wrote. I understand them now, March, 2008. It is helpful now for me to understand from that information what I was doing and how much of a difficult challenge it is for an individual, like me, to come back to being myself.

I knew that I had rules to follow. Inside of me I felt very careful because I had been in the hospital and I knew what it was like. If I didn't follow the rules I would have to go back there. I didn't want to go back there ever again.

The rules had to be based on things to keep me busy and to keep me safe. I had to take my drugs both morning and night. Paula set them up in the machinery container. I couldn't set them up myself. She was very patient with me and would explain each one and why it was

morning or evening and each day. I would stand by her and watch her put them in the container at the beginning of each week. I would cry a little when she did that because I wanted to be able to set it up. As a side note it is 10 months later and even though there are pills to take each day Paula is the one that sets them up not me. Even now, 10 months later, and even though I've seen them each week as a group and every day when I take them, I'm still not sure about what someone are and what they do. Now I know that it includes general vitamins, and vitamin D, and cal citrate, and something for cholesterol so that it stays low. I also take some that control stress and anxiety. Those are the ones I can't ever seem to get straight. I am on a new drug that is taken once a week. The intent of that is for my spine combined with other things I am taking to make sure my spine goes back to be strong. The doctor said that might go on for a year or more until I get healed.

On April 20th I had another doctor's appointment in Seattle at Harborview. They are the ones that prevented me from dying with their surgery and monitoring. The point of the meeting I had with them was to check on how I was doing and how I was doing at rehab things at home. They wanted to make sure I was taking all my drugs and that I was wearing my cap to protect my part of the brain that is not protected yet.

It is hard for me to imagine that I have a hold in my skull that has a hole on it and that if it doesn't stay protected that it can be hurt. Paula is very consistent and when she goes outside to work on the five acres I have to make sure she always sees me with the cap on. I was using the journal to record my feelings. I felt like I talked better than wrote but Paula wanted me to use the journal so that I was coping with my head.

Chapter 40

March 5, 2008

Little Trips

Paula had decided that along with the chores that I would pursue each day I would also keep using my journal. As I saw my speech therapist twice a week, each week, I would practice my skills. She shared with me that being able to talk, say things that are appropriate and that would be the right words, particularly nouns when I was talking with her. It is so strange about being at home and feeling OK but not be able to say things the way I want to. When I first was a home I would call things the wrong words. Like I would say look at the horse. I met bird. When I said it I couldn't hear the difference or that it was the wrong word until someone hearing me asked me what I was referring to. When I was told that when I am pointing at a bird but calling it a horse people don't know what I am saying. I was thinking that when I point at them I am saying what a great think it is to look at.

Paula ran into those wrong words every day. One day we were coming home from the store and down the driveway. She was driving the car and I said how exciting it was to see the bees. She knows that I am highly allergic to them and can have serious problems if I am stung. She ran around the car looking for the bee to get it out of the car. I was watching her but I couldn't figure out what she was doing. I knew she wouldn't put a deer inside the car so I didn't understand. Then it became clear that I wasn't look for a bee but at a pretty deer that was in the field. I didn't know I had used the wrong noun until it caused a reaction that didn't match.

Chapter 41
March 6, 2008
Sharing with others

I knew I was going to the doctors in Seattle and check everything to make sure I was doing everything. I thought my behavior was important so that in the short rather than long run they would do the final surgery. The plan on that surgeon was to put my brain back on my head and cover up my hole. I was scared of the meeting with everyone there because if I didn't look good the closure would have completed. Paula wanted me to communicate my thoughts to everyone.

I wrote a note to them. It was very different than my journal. My journal during April 20, 2007 was very hard to write. I tried for it not to be like the journal where I didn't pay attention to whether it was good or not. I wanted them to think I was doing very well and was clear.

Chapter 42
March 7, 2008
Being Active

I think one of the most important things people who have what I have had and try to recover from it need to be active. Every morning when I woke up I had the wonderful sense of being awake. That only last a few minutes. As soon as I realize that it is me, that I have been injured, that I have lots of work to do in order to be OK I get a little sad. But, it is only a little sad because I know that most people that get this, despite their age, job, and responsibilities in fact die within the first 24 hours. The fact that I lived through the first 24 hours is a miracle, doctors who performed surgery say so as well.

Paula wanted me to work on my program she called it. When I woke up I had to do morning washing, tooth brush, cleaning and then get dressed. I had to have Paula supervise my walking up the stairs. I had to wear my safety cap. All that before my other practices started. I had to read the paper and magazines and understand what they said. It took me until November before they started to make sense me but I tried every day.

I had to make my breakfast. I had to plan the breakfast that was good for me and would help get started for the day. Each day I had a muffin, orange juice, acti in peaches or strawberries, a vegetarian sausage, and Soya cheese. I love that breakfast and for the most could eat the same thing every day. Some times I would have egg between the two muffins. Paula made these every day for one to two months because I couldn't figure how to make breakfast. Paula would be both inside and outside during the day and she would make both lunch and dinner. I would help with dishes but she would be in charge. I would take my medicine in the morning and after dinner at night.

With all the things going on Paula added people to visit at our homes, Coupeville, or she would drive us to see them elsewhere.

What is amazing for me to view each day as one filled with work I have to do and things I have to record in the journal. Paula has send out notes and descriptions of where I was in the hospital but when I would write a journal she stopped sending out notes on what I did each day. I hope that my journal and things I can remember now can be shared with all the people who visited and did things to help me.

Chapter 45
March 10, 2008
Gather Family and Friends

Staying active which is strongly recommended includes having people who are friends and family be in touch with you and spend time with you. I was a school principal in three school districts and a school consultant over the course of my career. I had functioned as a consultant to help middle schools. Prior to that I was the one who was a principal and because of that job on every day extended support, help, interest, direction, curriculum guidance and parent involvement. I had wonderful interactions and experiences with students, parents, and staff. I was in a very specific position and always felt confident and positive about it.

Not long ago this year, Paula told me that in March of 2007 at the hospital she was watching a movie with me. At that point I couldn't remember her name or didn't remember how I knew her. She said, we watched the movie "50 First Dates" starring Adam Sandler and Drew Barrymore. Paula told me that while it was on I told her that I loved that movie and here is the best part. It is the part of the Sea Lions. I have to say now as I write this story that I still love that movie. The notion that she had lost her memory because of a serious car injury to her head is powerful. I had thought about following up on it after I retired fully. I thought we need to do more to help people whose brains are hurt. How ironic that my brain was injured so what I want to do the rest of my life is help those who have a problem with it. Simultaneously I want to support medicine moving towards solving problems for those who have Cerebral Vascular Accident, and specifically the hemorrhagic (blood flow in the brain). It can happen to people of any age. Currently, only 1%-2% who have this recover while 75% die of it in the first 24 hours.

I am getting better each day. I can't still get names correct but I know I know them. For May friends were scheduled. In May I saw Pamela, Kelly, Bev, Barb, Georgette, Kris. Meetings with them are scheduled around the work I have to practice and the therapists I'm supposed to attend.

Chapter 46
March 11, 2008
Meeting Responsibilities

Even though I came so close to dying on February 10, 2007 by May I had begun to think about things I did before I suffered through an Aneurysm and from the start of two veins having to be removed as well as blood spreading through the brain. I have no memory of January, February, and most of March. This indicates that the blood had spread in my brain and had they not done surgery to correct it I would have died within 24 hours. In fact if they hadn't begun to work on me within three or four hours I probably would have died in under six hours.

I had the journal that Paula had required me to write every day when I got home on April 5, 2007. She told me every day that I had to work on making my brain come back. It was hard for me to understand how bad my brain was but even I could understand that because I said words that were the wrong ones. I had been a teacher for fifteen years of my career where I also worked with kids on language arts and specifically writing. Now, as I tried to write journals I knew that

they weren't great but for the most part each day as I read what I wrote I felt I had written pretty well. When I look at what I look at the journals I am gaining understanding how much I had to work and how hard I had to do that so my writing and speaking once again made sense.

Chapter 47
March 12, 2008
Doctor's Continuing

Trying every day from the aneurism, not remember anything for two months following the surgery February 10, 2007, and having to make appointments with doctors to do more than other things that goes on and was difficult. In other things we go through we feel that despite and disappointing those things are we at least are in thinking control of what is going on with medicines and doctors. The brain injury does not leave you in that situation. You have to work every day to try to get back to thinking and talking like your injury took away. I struggle every day to regain my brain working as it once had. It has been a little over year as I am writing this and I have made major progress. Writing this about what happened helps my brain get stronger.

One of things I got from the doctors scheduled for the end of June. I knew that what ever I demonstrated there I could earn another surgery to have my brain put back together with my bone they took out when all this started. If they hadn't taken it out the pressure it applied would have led to my death. Not only did they take that out but they waited 10 days after the original surgery and made the decision to put in a sprints stream. It goes from the other side of my head and creates a place where excess liquid is and is sent down through my body so it goes off in my stomach.

As I look at my behavior on the journal and the time in May and June I worked very hard to behave well enough to convince them I could handle the surgery. If I managed that I would be able to stop wearing the head cap to protect my head. It was weird to me that I had working with kids and adults right before it happened where I thought about them and how they were getting what they to do to worrying about whether the head was repaired. I needed to just keep working each day trying to get better.

Chapter 48
March 13, 2008
Observing Progress

It is ironic to me that I found evaluation of how I talked important. It is needed because if I didn't understand what was evaluated then I wouldn't know how I was growing. I'd be looking and hearing what I did but I would not know if I had made progress for it. Paula reported through Caringbridge on the computer as to how I was making progress. That was a great thing.

Chapter 49
Getting Ready To Go Through Another Surgery
March 14, 2008

While I was working to improve I wanted to make sure I seemed good enough to medical doctors and nurses. Wearing a helmet every time I walked even in the house became very tiresome. I wanted to be able to do things I used to be able to do before the brain injury. Part then when I started was to wonder if people looked at me as not being good because of what I had gone through. It was great to find out that people are glad I am alive even if I am not yet able to do all the things I used to do be able to do.

In April I got used to being home. In May I wanted to make sure I proved that I could handle the surgeon. I wanted to move back to being myself and having my bone for my head put back into there was great. I was getting ready of being able to talk correctly. Sometimes I have to think of four to five words as to whether it would work in the sentence I am saying. I try to get the word in the sentence without who ever I am talking with that I am having a mental accuracy problem. I don't want to embarrass me or have people listening to me not understand what I am trying to say. I want to fix it before it comes out of my mouth. To do that for a conversation with some one or several is a whole great deal of work. I keep working on this so it is not a problem every time I go to talk to friends or family.

When I talk to my sister she listens to me but on every sentence there is at least one wrong word. She does a great job of waiting to what I've said and trying to find out what I meant. If it doesn't make sense then she will let me know that things are not clear because of missing words.

Chapter 50
Continue to Work Towards Surgery
March 17, 2008

Getting ready for the surgery at the end of June, 2007 was scary. The other surgery scared me and I wasn't aware of it. Now being at home, I had to work on things and attend things that were training. It is so weird when I was a principal and a consultant and just a year I had knowledge and direction skills to help people grow and need what students needed. Now I can't think of those things at all. It is almost as if it never happened.

Chapter 51
March 18, 2008
Who Am I?

What is truly amazing about this situation is that it is so easy to die. It is so hard to get through it at the start and that is only the beginning. I had to work on improving and gaining every day. I still work on it every day and each day I still have mistakes in speaking or I can't think of something I know but words can't be gotten. I know the reason is that my brain was hurt so the things that hooked them up are gone and I have to create new catches of communication.

What needs to happen in schools is that each child is treated as an individual. Doing that means what ever curriculum or activities that help the student learn also recognize that each student is unique. We need to have a separate and ideal delivery to students, as an individual. When we put them together in groups we move away from looking and working with each child as an individual. If the style works for some of them then they may grow with it. However, it will not grow with as many or even more. Why do we do that? Because each of us were raised under the same thing. It is how we were raised, it's how we were treated when we worked, and eventually we may complete tasks but we have not done them tied to our unique gifts and shaping of what happens.

Being in what happened to me gave me a variety of experiences. I couldn't behave day to day and then be set free at night. I had to be tied down to the bed. That was horrible and it wasn't about how I felt or what I thought I needed to do. It was at the people in the hospital so that they could keep me controlled. They came when they wanted to, not what I needed. They did what they wanted not what I wanted them to do. Now when I was going for another surgery in three weeks was not as scary. They wouldn't tie me down. Think about it. It would almost feel better to be tied down when you can think and understand. Being tied down when you feel like your trapped and you don't want that you are frightened. Is there a way that they could come up with something different to care for people coming back from bruised and damaged people.

Chapter 52

March 19, 2008

Get ready for another operation

One of the most amazing things that those of you who go through this and lived, who have had aneurism, bleeding and therefore extensive blood and loss of your brain, are trying to gain back the use of your brain and reestablish its effect. All the people who try to help you and folks in medicine work with you. If you are smart, you are trying to work and make progress. The pages from the journal demonstrate for all of you and for sure for me how I have changed. Seeing it suggests to you where you need to work and what you need to change.

As I see that processes, where journals were very unintelligible when I began my journals I better understand how damage my brain actually was. I am trying to rebuild it. If I hadn't worked and done the journal I would not see or understand how I was doing. I am going to include all the journals because they demonstrate this and will always serve as a guideline for me on where I was and how much work I had to do to return to a regular sense. My friends and supporters wanted me to keep practicing and talked with me to reinforce that. As a result everything I wrote in the Journal provided practice and a means to insure that I won't give up and won't try to gain. It also showed how I looked at the world around me.

Chapter 53
March 21, 2008
Bone Implant

I know that I have to go over to Seattle and have surgery at Harborview. Getting ready as well as continuing each day in order to be ready was all of what I could think about. Having to go to the hospital scared me. I knew if I were ill or not feeling well or if I couldn't behave well I might have my operation delayed.

Paula and I focused on things to stay working on and doing the practices that will make me get better.

Chapter 54
March 24, 2008
Surgery Process

What is truly amazing is how important it is to pay attention to others and make sure that my respond is evaluated by medical people in a positive way. That will ensure that they will do the job for me and I can at last go home for good. I keep track of things so I know when I have to journal to regard all things.

I was at the hospital so I didn't take my journal with me. I wrote a list of things I needed to cover so that I could record them. Paula really hated this surgery. She had spent most of two months in the hospital with me and she wanted to be free of that. I was having trouble with the follow up after the operation. She wanted to go home and leave me in the hospital. I didn't want to be there alone so I worked very hard to convince the nurses that I needed to go home. It meant that I told them I felt wonderful. In fact I had a high temperature and threw up. I didn't tell them so they would think that I was doing well. I had a nurse that worked Monday–Friday. She was the main office and the responsibility to make sure I was taken care of. She was sort of odd. She was very serious and very stiff. She wanted to make sure she was putting in the time and watching what I was doing. She was very serious and not very warm. She wanted to make sure I understood what she was doing and what medications she was giving me. I wasn't attracted to knowing her because she wasn't warm. I thought that all the people that might have been assigned to her would feel a cold chill. I think if you are having an operation on your brain you need people who are warm and if not it gives you the sense that this thing is scary.

Realizing what things are happening to others is affecting me more than they ever did in the life I used to live. I think that as individuals we get focused on what we as individuals are doing. We don't understand that all people are in fact connected in terms that they do and that we are aligned with them. If you think of Iraq we have thousands of young people who have been killed. If our family is not connected with that war and soldier behavior we don't think about it as something that touches us. I feel more for them now that I never did in my life. Not just what happens because they are soldiers, but because of our government making choices and decisions that are wrong and maim or kill our young people? Would we want to make sure that we are able to do everything possible to have a military that keeps our people and our soldiers safe. It is like recognizing that people are in some medical issues that are far more dangerous to them than some other medical interventions.

If we can explore issues so that we are able to be partners with other places in the world then maybe we could organize better and keep our soldiers safe. We need to organize and put things together for our people who have an aneurism and most of them die. It gives us the message that only 1% -2% actually return to their normal self. We need to find means to evaluate the possibility of this so it is prevented and not died.

When we think about our young children and that they go to schools we need to actually work on something different than we have. We need to establish things for them that in fact treat them as individuals in their learning. The fact that they don't all learn exactly the same can have serious results. If they don't learn like the group they don't learn and actually lose ground. If we design what we do for them so that teachers can design what makes for students so that each one is guided and instructed based on what they can do, they will be successful. We don't want schools where only some of the students are great, others average, and others failure. We have to realize that each one is wonderfully unique and the reality is that if we recognize that and meet the needs of each individual then all of them will be successful.

The operation that happened on me followed me having been trained to deal with the four operations I had on my head. When I think about that medical does try to meet the needs of specific individuals. It is why that five years ago people who are like me died. Now more and more things they are doing to meet the needs of these people and more are living.

Chapter 55

March 25, 2008

I am at home for always...

What is amazing that I believe each of us in our lives is to pursue those things that keep our family and our jobs working. We see all of those things as what we should manage. Often though, we didn't have enough time for the kids, or got involved something from work that took all our time and detracted from being at home. We have responsibilities that have to do with people at work and that take up our time. That goes on for day in and day out and becomes months and then another year has slipped by. Before we know it our babies are walking down the aisle down the church to make a commitment to another for a marriage.

I didn't think like that as went through those times. It is what I think about it now because I almost died I have realized that living is a special gift and is part of which you are when every day comes to you. If you recognize that each day is special and it is as much as you can count on then the love and connections with others that creates an ultimate joy.

Because I almost died and have had to struggle and work to return each day when I wake up, I see and recognize things in a way that I never did before. When I was younger I had a wonderful friendship with a boy starting when he was nine. I was in some ways a person who supported him and helped him grow up. We continue to talk about things he was doing. I shared things I thought he should cover that would help him with in college. We have talked over the phone or out to dinner in Seattle when he comes up to visit his parents from Los Angeles. His sense and connection to me has been so much stronger now than it was. He started to change on how we got along the past three years. He would send things and call and talk more about what he was doing and what was going on. After he found out that I almost died the intensity and closeness we now have is wonderful and amazing.

I believe now that when you realize that someone you love may leave forever and you will be broken about it you approach things differently. The most amazing aspect is that if we all could recognize who we care about and love and extend that to them from when you realized it – we would have a great deal more wonderful time with them that we would have if we didn't reach up.

Chapter 56 –Daily Items

March 26, 2008

Daily Items

When I first came home from the injury and was in the recovery mode each day seemed like an amazing challenge. Could I get enough sleep, could I do things to help me get better, could I practice writing, try to understand reading. Those things remained with me through the summer and into the fall. I was anxious and nervous some times and I would burst into tears other times. The journal helped me track what I was doing. I know now that I want to finish my story so I can give it to others to thank them and hopefully it will be used to help people in a situation similar to mine. The dog, Ruby, comes into my downstairs office to work that is warm and she can share it. One of my cats follows me in here when I work and sleeps on top of the oak four file by the light that is warm. The light is one of those that is special and is designed to give the customer a brightness that doesn't come with other lights. It's nice and brightens up my day with the company and the sense of light.

Chapter 57

March 27, 2008

Dealing with Changes

Stephanie's Journal – July 17, 2007

Met with Jane –talked about items on the taste –Am now on the wait to see how it actually works- Notice some small pains – but they are minor and moved along. Would be great if this pill works without any damage –I am able to use them & have them work once at nite and completed on the next day. Think these are good & hold to keep the method.

Chapter 58

March 28, 2008

A Celebration Thanks

After I had been at my house and worked every day to improve and practice I became tired of the journal. I had a few to say and then I worked with Paula on getting a party ready to thank those loved ones and to treasure my birthday. It was in fact so amazing that I was alive it seemed something that needed to be honored.

How when you lost your brain, brings so much so that you have no memory for over two months after the aneurism. Then things start to stay with you and you have to work at making

my brain respond. I started to write and wrote journals for April, May, June, July, and then a little of August. Writing helps me get what is going on and to understand things better. I am going to watch a movie now 50 First because I am very tired and I need to rest from all I have done so far.