

Information for Stroke Survivors BY Stroke Survivors

Prepared by members of the Cleveland Stroke Club

No one is expecting to have a stroke. No one is prepared to have a stroke, but strokes happen. The following information was put together by stroke survivors, to help you understand that You Are Not Alone.

First Several Months

You will ask “why me?” You will get frustrated and want to scream. Allow yourself these feelings but do not let them stop you from moving forward!

Faith is a great support (faith in a higher being, faith in yourself, faith in others) .

Find and join a “Stroke Club;” you **need** the support of people who understand.

These first 6 months are the hardest adjustment, understand that you are not alone. Join a Stroke Club!

Be patient with your family and friends throughout the recovery process! They also are adjusting.

Family and Friends are great support; let them help, ask them for help, even if this is hard to do.

Do not let the “professionals” tell you what you cannot or will not be able to do...although you can use that to be motivating!

You are a work in progress, how you are today is NOT how you are going to stay.

Follow advice of your therapists, do your exercises! They help with recovery!

Communicate with your therapists. Tell them how you are feeling and what you are thinking and help them define realistic goals!

6 Months to a Year

If you are not in a stroke club join a stroke club!

Have your loved ones/friends come to a stroke group, they need support too.

This is a period of trial and error: you will be learning new skills, figuring out who you are and how to cope with your situation.

This can be a “scary time”. Your therapies are ending, and insurance decides you are finished.

Seek emotional support (family and friends are great but you may need to seek **professional** help).

You may feel a lot of frustration and wanting to scream, but hard work and setting goals and redefining goals helps (not just in therapy but hobbies, new skills, volunteering, work).

Get active! You can define what active means for you!

Do NOT compare what you can or cannot do to someone else! Remember different strokes for different folks!

Do not compare your new self to your old self!

You will be tired!! Rest. **Listen** to your body! Taking care of yourself is important!

Remember your loved ones are learning the new you...tell them what you need/want if you can, they cannot read your mind.

Ask for help!

A Year and Beyond

This is a period of coming to terms with my new life: this is not an “ah ha” moment. It just happens and keeps happening.

This is a **continuous** period of “redefining” yourself.

You start coming to terms with and loving “the new me”.

You will still get frustrated and want to scream, but it is easier to look forward and focus on “the new me”.

Focus on what you **can** do, not on what you should be able to do!

Things that you could do will still be hard so you understand that you must focus more to do them.

You **never** stop improving, there is no timetable, you will continue to surprise yourself!

Change will happen; not necessarily good, not necessarily bad, but it will happen.

Recovery is a process...it never ends!

Celebrate every day! Survive and Thrive!

We have posted this on our Website at:

<https://clevelandstrokeclub.files.wordpress.com/2021/01/information-for-stroke-survivors-by-stroke-survivors-v4.pdf> Further information on The Cleveland Stroke Club or other local stroke clubs can be found by accessing the Cleveland Stroke Club website at: <https://clevelandstrokeclub.org>