

June 2021

BRAIN INJURY MATTERS

NEWSLETTER

Feature Article:

Terry Mitropoulos



'We is greater than me'

Terry Mitropoulos

The man who survived multiple brain surgeries.... and walked out the other side.

Terry's story is one of tragedy and triumph- overcoming a terrible situation with confidence and faith...but most importantly, support from loved ones.

Terry was a successful businessman who collapsed one day in 2010 and discovered he had a brain tumour. He went through 13 brain surgeries and contracted a superbug infection. Doctors gave him a 5% chance of survival and told him he wouldn't walk again.

In 2019, Terry walked from Adelaide to Melbourne, raising \$65,000 for mental health through the Black Dog Institute and YMCA.

You can read his incredible story and watch his documentary at
www.walkandshine.org.au

Adrian met up with Terry and asked him some questions:

- **How long ago did you acquire your injury?**
 - 2010 - 11 years ago
- **What is your greatest achievement since your injury?**
 - Through my pain and suffering, I managed to inspire thousands of people by walking from Adelaide to Melbourne - after being told that I'd never walk again.
- **What do you want to achieve in the near future?**
 - To keep inspiring people
- **What do you find your biggest challenge?**
 - My biggest challenge is getting people to understand brain injuries.
- **What is your favourite food?**
 - Gyros on the Spit
- **What is your favourite movie?**
 - Lone survivor
- **What is your favourite hobby?**
 - Watching MMA / Boxing
- **What do you want to achieve through Brain Injury Matters?**
 - To raise greater awareness of people with brain injuries
- **What advice would you give to someone with a new brain injury?**
 - Always believe that you can better yourself
- **What does Brain Injury Matters mean to you?**
 - It's an organisation that raises awareness for people with brain injuries



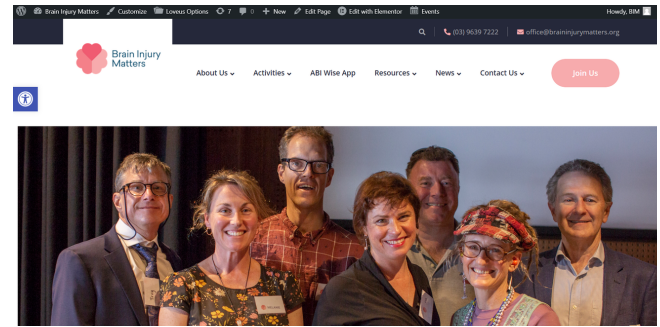
Terry's Take on Life

- Stop thinking and start living
- Find out what your gift is
- We is greater than me
- We cannot change our life experiences. While they will define who we are, the actions we take now will move us forward.
- I create my own luck, I make things happen. And when it works, is it luck or is it effort?
- I'm not doing it for myself, I'm doing it for them. I want to enable others to give them the strength/courage. Look at where I was, and look at where we are now. How we overturned it and you can do it too.
- Acceptance is the key to moving forward

Things happening at BIM:

New website goes live on June 5!

Check out our new website
after June 5th at
<https://www.braininjurymatters.org/>



By Accident Workshops

Next series of By Accident workshops will be
July 1, 8 and 15.
Venue to be announced.
Contact office@braininjurymatters.org if you
are interested



Online Coffee Mornings

Mondays at 11am
Contact office@braininjurymatters.org to
receive the link

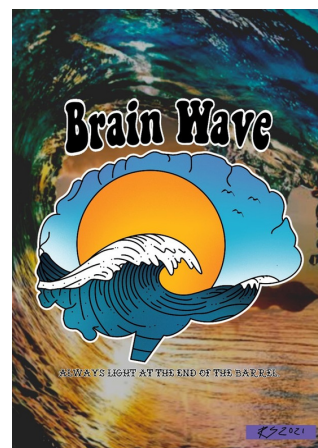


Peer Support Groups

Current groups:

- Tuesdays at 10am (Northern Metro),
- Wednesdays at 10am (online),
- Thursdays at 10:30am (Eastern Metro).

There will be more PSGs to come.
Contact office@braininjurymatters.org if you
are interested in joining a group



Annual Needs Survey

The survey is now closed - results will be made
available in next newsletter

ABI Wise App Survey

To access the survey go to
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/L6FKRGL>



Updates

From the Committee of Management

The BIM Committee of Management (CoM) continues to meet monthly, returning to face to face meetings at Ross House with some committee members attending by ZOOM. There have been several internal and external issues that we have been working on. We have provided input into the new Victoria State Government Disability Plan, attended the Leadership Plus/United Brains conference in Bendigo, SARU meetings, decided on how to spend unspent project funds, written to Martin Hoffman, Head of the NDIS about the needs of people with ABI, and looked at other funding for BIM. BIM continues to work on improving the ABI Wise App and updating our website. The CoM wants a sustainable organisation which offers something to all our members, not just committees; we want to make it real for a range of people, supports like peer support groups that connect people with each other.

Brent Alford Chairperson

BIM ILC Project

The Brain Injury Matters project to develop and support peer support groups is making good progress. Peer Support Groups provide opportunities to share information, ideas and experiences and discuss practical ways to manage living with brain injury. Three peer support groups have been set up – one in the Northern suburbs, one in the Eastern suburbs and one run by ZOOM. All three groups meet weekly for about 1.5 to 2 hours. Two more groups will be starting soon – one in the Southern suburbs and one in the Western suburbs.

Please get in contact if you want to come along!

Coffee Mornings

Our online coffee mornings have been well attended.

Yannick and Brent do a great job hosting and coming up with quiz questions and conversation starters. We had our first in person coffee morning at a cafe in the city on 10th May.



Updates continued...

Peer Support Groups

- Get-A-Head (Tuesdays at 10am) have been alternating between meeting at a Neighbourhood House and a coffee shop.
- Brainwave (Wednesdays at 10am) had a song writer as a guest speaker and have been talking about creative ways to tell their stories.
- Brainstormers (Thursdays at 10:30am) have been to Puffing Billy, made pizzas and recently went ten-pin bowling.



By Accident Workshops

The most recent series of By Accident workshop were held face-to-face at Ross House.





If the Shoe Fits

Written by Fiona Hopper

Finding the perfect shoe can seem like a massive challenge for some people living with brain injury. Whether you wear orthotics, have lost some fine motor function or are just looking for something practical and comfortable, you don't need to be Cinderella to find the right fit of shoe.

Tips and Tricks from People Living With Brain Injury

1. Elastic shoe laces

These laces look ordinary enough but they don't need to be tied. They come in a wide variety of colours and styles, including different toggles and aglets. Elastic shoe laces are relatively cheap and available from a variety of stockists. Ask your shoe specialist or search online to find a shoelace that's right for you.

Fun Fact: Did you know that the plastic at the end of shoelace is called an aglet?

2. Velcro, zips and other ways to steer clear of laces

To avoid the hassle of shoe laces altogether, look for alternative styles when you're shoe shopping. Consider shoes that slip on, zip up or have Velcro fastenings. There are a number of stylish and practical shoes available but you may need to visit specialty shoe shops or websites to find your perfect pair. Once you've found a good match, consider buying multiple pairs of an everyday shoe or a few pairs in different colours and styles. This will keep you well-stocked for a while and save the time and hassle of shoe shopping. Buying multiple pairs from an online store may also reduce your shipping costs.

3. Orthotics

Orthotics are devices that provide support to the feet, increasing function and/or reducing pain. They can be "off the shelf" or custom made for your feet. Seek advice from a podiatrist or other specialist about what type of orthotics will work best for you. The podiatrist will measure your feet, order the orthotics and fit them for you, ensuring that they are the best match for your feet.

Orthotics can be expensive. If your foot issues are related to your disability you may be able to get funding through NDIS, TAC or Workcover. If you have Private Health Insurance with Extras cover you may be able to make a claim for some of the cost. If you have a Health Care Card you may be eligible for subsidized podiatry at your local community health centre.

If the Shoe Fits cont...

Brands and Stockists

Brain Injury Matters members have reported satisfaction with the brands below. Remember to do your own research, check out what works for you and seek professional advice when needed. If you have found something helpful, why not get in touch with BIM to share your experience?

Brands popular with BIM members:

- Asics
- Brooks
- Doc Marten (zip up boots)
- Rockport (shoes that can be worn over splints, as fitted at Royal Talbot Orthotics)
- Skechers

Stockists

Here's some stockists of specialty shoes, orthotics and other things footwear Brain Injury Matters has not used or independently assessed these stockists. We recommend that you do your own research and shop around for a good price.

- Archies Footwear <https://archiesfootwear.com.au/> (stocks orthotic thongs)
- Fitflop www.fitflopshoesite.com
- Footlogic Australia www.footlogic-shops.com.au
- Laceez (no-tie shoe laces) <https://laceez.com.au/>
- Mr and Mrs Shoe <http://mrandmrsshoe.com.au>
- Cool Nice <https://www.coolnice.com.au/shoelaces/no-tie-shoelaces.html>

Other tips

- Wear shoes with Velcro fastenings to avoid shoe laces
- Use double sided Velcro dots to secure orthotics in shoes
- One BIM member can tie a shoe lace one handed! Can anyone else?
- See this article about a 16 year old with cerebral palsy who convinced Nike to build the Nike Fly-Ease (hands-free shoe)
<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/02/nike-hands-free-shoe-disability-inclusive-clothing/>





Quiz Questions

See how many of these Coffee Morning quiz questions you can answer!

1. How many times does the average person laugh in a day?
2. What is the Italian word for pie?
3. How many months have 28 days in them?
4. What is the correct term for a question mark immediately followed by an exclamation mark?
5. What is the collective noun for a group of pandas?
6. Which sea creature has three hearts?
7. True or false: You can sneeze in your sleep?
8. The first hockey pucks used in early outdoor hockey games were made of what?
9. Which European country has 158 verses to its national anthem?
10. Which world city has the slogan: "What Happens Here, Stays Here"

Riddles

- a) What has four fingers and a thumb, but is not living?
- b) I have keys, but I don't have any locks.
I have space, but there is no room.
You can enter, but you cannot go outside.
What am I?

Word Games - Answers

1. 13
2. Pizza
3. All of them!
4. Interrobang?!
5. An embarrassment
6. Octopus
7. False
8. Frozen cow dung
9. Greece
10. Las Vegas

Riddles - Answers

- a) A glove
- b) A keyboard

Newsletter Contributions Welcome

Contributions by BIM members to our newsletter are always welcome. If you have any tips, stories or experiences that would be of interest to others, please contact office@braininjurymatters.org

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