

## LIFE BEYOND STROKE

### Stroke Support Association Newsletter—January 2019



#### **MEET GARY, Stroke Survivor**

*"I come out of habit. It gives me something constructive to do."*

#### **Occupation/Hobbies:**

Retired. Formerly in transportation management. Served in the US Army from 1968-71. Now a volunteer at Stroke Support Association, serving as a Board Member and a Support Group Facilitator. Also volunteers at the VA. Used to volunteer at St. Mary's Hospital in Long Beach.

#### **What has been the most helpful thing you have learned since your stroke?**

"A zillion things. When I had my stroke, I went into a coma for a month. When I awoke, I couldn't do anything. The VA taught me how to talk—literally how to do everything, including tying my shoes. I can tie my shoes with one hand now."

#### **What do you wish people knew about stroke survivors?**

"We're normal people. We don't like people hanging on our wheelchairs when they talk to us. The wheelchair is me."

#### **What are some difficulties that you have experienced as a result of stroke?**

"Walking, talking, arithmetic, and certain cognitive tasks. I can read for one paragraph, then I forget where I started. The first thing I learned to read again on was comic books; they have just a few words and the pictures helped me understand the story."

## What is the best advice for new stroke survivors?

“One of the most valuable things I learned was to help other people because it gets your mind off you and onto them. I started practicing this the first week after waking up from my coma, while I was still in the hospital. My roommate could do nothing for himself, so if he needed something, I would push the call button to summon the nurse.”

## What is your favorite thing about Stroke Support Association?

“The people.”

## POST-STROKE CONDITIONS EFFECTS



There can be fear, apprehension and uncertainty about what you will face in the aftermath of stroke. Questions often arise about what life changes to expect and how to gain control and independence in everyday living situations.

There are many conditions that may develop after a stroke. Most are common and will improve with time and rehabilitation. It's important to become aware of the common effects of stroke and how to improve your physical and emotional well-being. Learn more about common conditions, their treatment and tips for managing your new challenges.

### Physical

Physical conditions post-stroke include weakness, numbness and stiffness. Learn more about them, treatments and tips for managing physical conditions post-stroke.

### Emotional

After stroke, experiencing emotional changes can occur due to natural responses or changes caused by physical effects of the brain. Learn more about these emotional experiences, changes, and problems after stroke.

### Cognition

After stroke, the process of thinking, remembering and recognizing things called can become challenging. Learn more about what it is, treatment, and tips on how to handle problems with cognition.

Support Groups for Stroke Survivors and Caregivers  
Tuesdays, 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.  
(every month except April, August and December)

California Heights United Methodist Church  
3759 Orange Avenue (at Bixby Road), Long Beach, CA 90807

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