



Brain Injury Touchpoint



**Pyrenees Mountains
August 1998**

BITP presentation:
Headway, Hackney
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My Accident

Involved in horrific Road Traffic Accident on motorcycle touring holiday (Sep.1998)

Smashed left Tibia and Fibia lower leg bones

- Brain dead for 9 days
- Coma for over 5 months
- Wheelchair for over 1 year

Long bones contain bone marrow (~30/40% compressed fat). Fat embolism crossed blood brain barrier coating brain in multi layers, prevent oxygen transfer leading d to coma and brain injury.

Disability 1: Spinal injuries: Spine vertebrae fused together in coma (L3, L4 & L5); daily physio helps to manage mobility; reduce joint pains & maintain health. Require ongoing physio therapy to address issues

Disability 2: Diagnosed ~ 2008 'Significant and Severe Brain Injury', obliged to re-learn to read, write, talk and eventually walk again. Brain injury also known as 'Silent / Hidden Disability'

Additional Challenges: Unable to articulate or speak eloquently for over ten years.



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Frontal lobe: Clapham junction of body

Parietal Lobe: Planning, organising, initiating

Temporal Lobe: Sensory, spatial judgement

Occipital Lobe: Memory, hearing

Cerebellum: Balance, walking, articulation

Brain Stem: Arousal, alertness, breathing



Effects on My Brain Injury

- Loss of Balance
- Perpetual Anxiety
- Mumbling Speech
- Personality & Mood Changes
- Right foot 'Dragging / Tripping'
- Scanning; Missing out Important Information; Confusion
- Lack of Spontaneity in thought process & Interacting with Others

Summary: *My sense of Shame and Disappointment with not being able to articulate and stand up for myself; career impact*



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“Serendipity: The faculty of making happy and unexpected discoveries by accident”

Another description: *‘Happy Coincidence’*

In my 24 years working in Research & Development for Procter & Gamble, I have found *coincidence* does not just ‘happen’ to you, one has to actively seek it out.

Then, it’s up to you to guide that coincidence



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My version of Serendipity is '**Joining the Dots**' and making connections which may not at first be obvious.

One positive element of my brain injury is being able to look at problems from a different perspective, find resolution(s) and make them happen.

Connecting the dots: Circa 2006, out of hospital ~7 years, I knew deep down something was not right - Alistair Bradford

-Connected me with Dr Ruth & Andy Tyreman, Aylesbury Community Head Injury Service (CHIS). 'Significant & Severe Brain Injury' diagnosis **ten years after accident.**

-Who in turn connected me with Dr Giles Yeates 'Therapy' comment

-Who in turn connected me with Dr Shai Betteridge and CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy)

Finally understood complexity of my brain injury with CBT

-~2014: James Humphries & John Coughlan



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Only through my own personal drive and determination was I able to navigate the many hidden (non obvious) pathways to eventually find help.

Decided to make my experience(s) more transparent to help other brain injury survivors via the construction of my website... www.braininjurytouchpoint.com

The Aim of the Website is to share:

Knowledge (about Brain Injuries)

Information (where people can find help)

Hope (that some form of recovery is possible)

For **ALL** brain injury survivors, friends & families



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Brain Injury is a Family Injury

People know little about the full extent of Brain Injury until they are directly faced with it, be they the:

- Victim
- Spouse
- Parent
- Son / Daughter
- Sibling
- Relative
- Friend
- Neighbour
- Boss / Work Colleague

BITP aims to provide a central source for some answers to the myriad of questions that immediately arise, thereby providing some **Hope** through **Knowledge**, & **Resources** at the initial injury and beyond. Crucially, it provides video and text testimonials of people who have been in exactly the same position as the reader, demonstrating real hope and clarity as to the possibilities and coping strategies that can be adopted



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My Coping Strategies

- ❑ Elongating my working day with 03.30 am alarm and completing my day between 17.00 / 18.00 (longer as and if necessary)
- ❑ Physio helping to define my thought processes
- ❑ Compartmentalising & structuring everything
- ❑ iPhone Diary / Calendar / Alarms / Notes





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Any questions?