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RECOVERY

This is the story of one of my greatest accomplishments: My Recovery.



While working as a corporate governance professional working for a tri-listed publicly traded company, I slipped on an uncleared sidewalk. I was also a powerlifter, just that morning I had been lifting 160 pounds, with no problem. I was strong. That fall changed my life, we didn't know it at the time. A concussion was sustained that required several months to recover. I returned to work in January, just in time for year-end, numerous board meetings, deadlines, long hours of sustained high stress. By mid-March, vestibular and cognitive symptoms returned worse than the first time. Looking at a computer screen was impossible, reading was possible, but memory issues caused me to forget the sentence before the next sentence began. The complexity of women's voices and music made my brain hurt. Simple math problems of three plus seven required fingers to count on. I had developed a limp significant enough that walking down the stairs in our house was excruciating and walking any more than across the kitchen was nearly impossible. A call with my family doctor to discuss the symptoms resulted in her telling me "it sounds like you have early-onset dementia". Having enough education about post-concussion symptoms at this point, I knew the problem was unlikely dementia. Family doctors are not well-versed in concussion or post-concussion symptoms. They can't know everything! This was the day that shit got real for me. Taking charge of my health became my #1 responsibility including building a team that could assist in recovery. The only problem was that everything was closed due to COVID. Finally, in April, virtual vestibular therapy sessions became available. This is where the story begins.



Doing vestibular exercises

A return to vestibular physiotherapy for two months helped with the dizziness, light sensitivity, screen time, and walking in a straight line. The difficulty continued with reading, doing math, finding words when I spoke, and bright flashing lights. An occupational therapist joined the team and provided ways to extend my memory so that I could read. Physio and OT became my work, taking nearly six hours a day to complete. Approaching physio and OT in the same manner training in the gym gave me structure and measurable progress.

A psychologist assisted with the PTSD from the night of the fall and the grief of realizing my career was over as stress reignited symptoms quickly. What my future would hold was still unclear. Finding "Concussion Compass" an organization dedicated to educating and supporting persistent concussion symptom patients was a turning point. Learning that my journey was

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similar to that of others was a relief. Knowing that I was part of a group that “got me”, some of whom had also lost their careers allowed me to relax. For the first time, I no longer felt alone. Even though my family was supportive they couldn’t understand what it was like on the days when I thought “What if my doctor is right and I am losing my mind”.

I wasn’t going to get my old life back, but I could reinvent myself. I am grateful every day for the people that helped me to recover. My vestibular therapist, occupational therapist, psychologist, my children, grandchildren, friends, and especially Kevin showed up regularly. They didn’t treat me differently; they knew I needed to have a normal life. Today, I have a new career, owner of MVR Fitness that assists people that want to live their best lives. I have completed three certifications in personal training and exercise therapy. I have made a difference in the lives of those I worked with. I have never been happier.

One of the biggest factors in my recovery has been restful sleep. If you are having trouble with sleep, it is affecting every area of your life.

I’ve created a free guide for you: [5 Stretches for Better Sleep](#). These stretches have been my secret weapon