

TBI UP-DATE

SEPTEMBER 2020

KNOXVILLE AREA BRAIN INJURY SUPPORT GROUP

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all meetings of the Knoxville Area Brain Injury Support Group have been cancelled until further notice effective with the April 2020 meeting.

As there was an interest from regular attendees of the Knoxville Area Brain Injury Support Group to meet, efforts have been made to locate another meeting place during this time. Earlier this month, a contact was made with the Knox County Community Action Committee (CAC) located at 2247 Western Avenue in Knoxville. From Western Avenue, the sign will indicate that it is the L. T. Ross Building.

CAC has agreed to allow use of their Meeting Room for a meeting in October 2020. **The meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 6, 2020 from 3:00 – 4:15 P.M. This meeting will not be on the first Monday of the month due to the availability of the meeting room at CAC.**

In agreeing to the requirements to use the CAC meeting room, the following will be necessary:

- Number of attendees will be limited to 10 total - no exceptions !
- Attendees must wait outside the Main CAC entrance at 3:00 P.M. until the screening process takes place. The screening may be completed by a CAC staff member and will include a temperature check and responding to a series of questions. This will be necessary before being allowed in the Meeting Room.
- A face mask must be worn at all times at CAC upon entering the building.
- No Food or Drink will be allowed in this Meeting.

If you have signed up to attend the meeting on October 6, 2020 at CAC, please consider thanking a CAC staff member for allowing the Knoxville Area Brain Injury Support Group to hold the October 2020 meeting there.

As this meeting is limited to ten individuals due to COVID-19 recommendations, there will be a later opportunity to participate in a “Practice ZOOM session”. This session will include approximately six individuals.

If everything goes well with the “Practice ZOOM session”, a ZOOM meeting will be scheduled before the end of October 2020. At that time, it will not be limited to participants.

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BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION OF TENNESSEE

The Brain Injury Association of Tennessee will hold a Virtual Conference on October 1, 2020 from 10:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M. The title of this Survivor, Family, and Caregiver Event will be “Managing Psychological Health during COVID-19 for Brain Injury Survivors, Families, and Caregivers”.

The topics and presenters include:

- Brookhaven Neurorehabilitation Network
Tom Brown, CEO
Dr. Roscoe Burrows, Neuropsychologist
Debbie Spaeth, Case Manager
- Information will be provided on this program, history and outcomes.
This program is located in Oklahoma and has been successful in accepting individuals with brain injuries who have TennCare as medical insurance.
- An Athlete Panel Discussion from Vanderbilt
 - Athlete Story and Poetry Reading of “My Head Hurts”
 - Neuro – Therapy Nashville Resources
A Whole Person Approach, Re-thinking the Rehab. Journey

If you are interested in participating in this FREE virtual conference, you can contact the BIAT Executive Director, Christal Gammage for the link. She can be contacted at the e-mail address below:

Director.BIAT@gmail.com

SHELTERING IN HOME: WHAT MAY I DO . . .

Al Kaye, MS, CTRS, FDRT, CBIS

Who would have thought that such a small microscopic thing like a virus could impact us all and change our everyday lifestyle...? The media reports over 6 million cases in the US alone, almost the entire population of Tennessee to put it into perspective. The entire world has reported cases of COVID-19. As all of us have changed to protect ourselves and to protect others by hunkering down at home and limiting our physical contacts, we may feel isolated, worry about our health, and become bored. Masks are a new fashion statement. One thing we can do to maintain our sanity and know that we are doing some positive things is in this article.

Often boredom comes from the lack of purposeful activity. If you want to be bored, try this: take a piece of paper and put a dot on it. Find a blank wall in your home and tape that piece of paper to the wall. Finally, try to stare at the dot for at least 15 minutes. Did you make it? What do you feel? This is true boredom.

We do not think about the variety of things we do each day as a day full of activities though it is a part of what and sometimes who we are. Daily Activities may be broken down into three types: subsistence tasks, work/chore oriented tasks, and play/fun tasks. Each type of task involves and impacts various levels of physical, emotional, and cognitive functioning.

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First of all, subsistence tasks are things we need to do to take care of our basic needs, like eating and sleep. What are your habits for good nutrition and your health? Secondly, work / chore tasks involve either financial gain, personal improvement, or self-subsistence enhancement. Are you keeping up with your work/chore duties? Finally, we have play/fun tasks which should bring enjoyment and help to balance out our lives. Often play tasks help to maneuver our emotional and mental health into a good place so we enjoy play. If we are lucky, our play may be involved with our work like a professional athlete usually enjoys his sport while he gets paid. They once said that there are over 10,000 things in the world to do for fun and the average person does about 250 in their life time. Can you list all of the things you have done for fun in your life? You have an opportunity of something to plan for the future with 9,750 other activities.

We are all creatures of habit. The pandemic has changed our habits. Our body is lazy and if we do not work it, we can end up in quite the mess with our health: overweight, high blood pressure, diabetes, shortness of breath, mental fatigue, and increased aches and pains from non-activity. Anxiety and depression may get the best of us. Essentially the lack of structure may lead to boredom and poor health.

Here is a simple tip to help make the pandemic more palatable: Structure your life so as to develop your routines again. Outside commitments establish our time and without them, it changes our habits. If you go to church each Sunday, then you know your routine for that Sunday and what time you would need to get up to make the church service, when and how to dress, when to grab food, and how to get there and back.

It is a routine. Most people when they dress, they know which sock they put on which foot first as a habit and they do not think about it. It becomes routine.

What happens when we change our routines? We get frazzled and can fall apart. So to beat this, make a schedule of the entire day and start from the time you get up until you go to bed.

Research demonstrates that we do better if we have a routine. Schedule at least on 30 minute increments. Add your grooming times for morning and night after your wake and before your sleep times. (Nap time added if needed but keep to less than 30 minutes for good sleep hygiene.)

Add your meal times and medication times. Add your outside obligations from doctor visits, therapy schedule, grocery shopping, and alike.

Add what chores or work related things you have on your To Do List like laundry, vacuuming, dusting, feeding your pet, washing the dishes, etc.

Finally, add your down time for breaks and your free time for fun adventures. Now look at the schedule and try to stay on time with your schedule and you will develop some structure back into your life.

