



Brain Injury

Alliance

WASHINGTON

**PROVIDING RESPITE FOR INDIVIDUALS
LIVING WITH BRAIN INJURY**

BRAIN INJURY ALLIANCE OF
WASHINGTON 2019

THIS TRAINING:

- Is intended for professionals.
- Serves as a basic introduction into the brain, brain injury, and its effects.
- Is geared toward providing foundation information from which the professional can build upon.



THIS TRAINING IS NOT:

A Comprehensive,
Medical Overview of
Brain Injury

A One Size Fits ALL
Solution

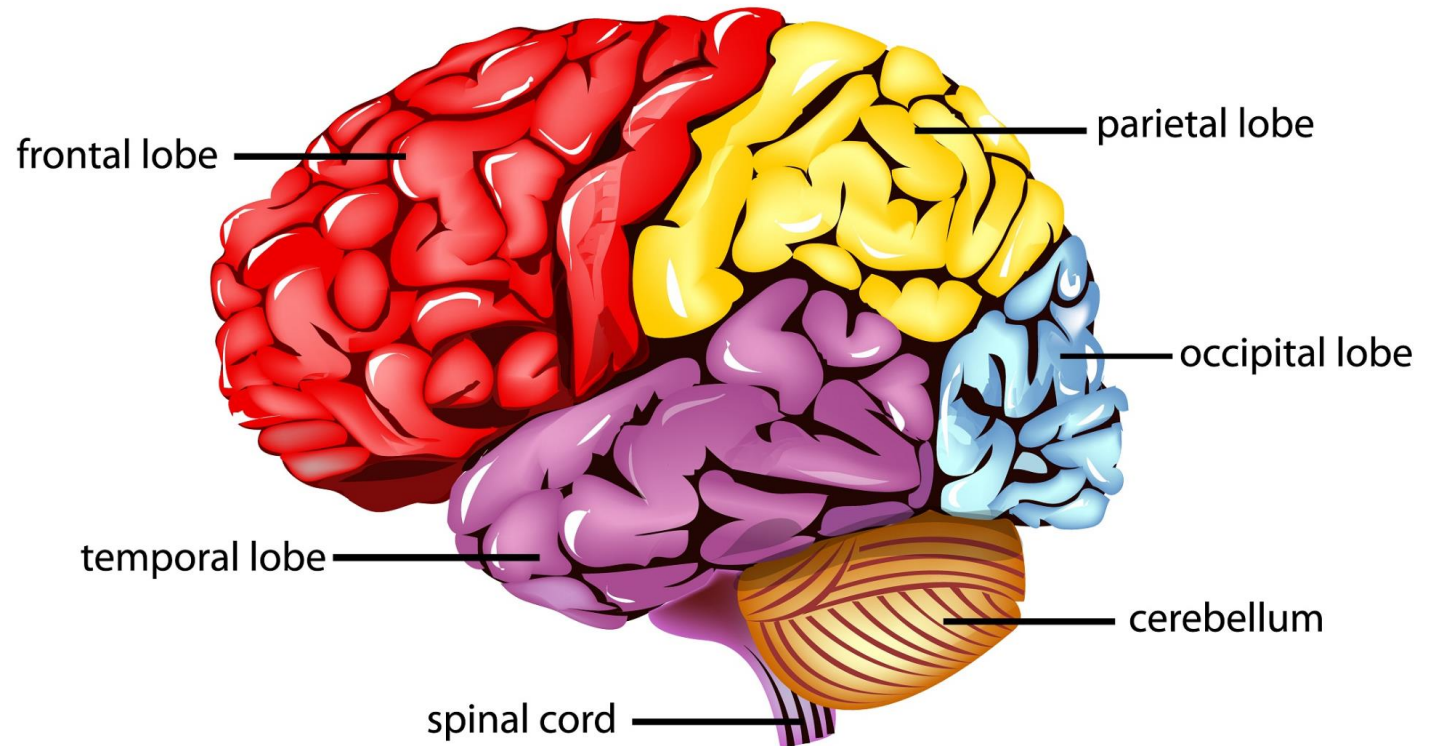
Everything you May
Need to Know

“If you have seen one
brain injury. You have
only ever seen one
Brain Injury. No two
brain injuries are alike.”

THE BRAIN

- The Brain is a complex system that controls every facet of human life
- It is separated into two hemispheres and four lobes that play a critical role in the maintenance of our well being
- It is responsible for making your body function properly, everyday, all day long
- It is responsible for decisions, interpreting data, behavior, prioritizing, understanding right from wrong, emotional regulation, social response, and much more
- It is responsible for interpreting and perceiving reality

Parts of the Human Brain



SO THEN... WHAT IS BRAIN INJURY?

Brain injury defined occurs when there are changes in neuronal activity, metabolic activity, functional ability of the nerve cells in the brain.

A Brain Injury can be a life altering event which affects nearly every aspect of the individuals life—including their social, emotional, and physical wellbeing.

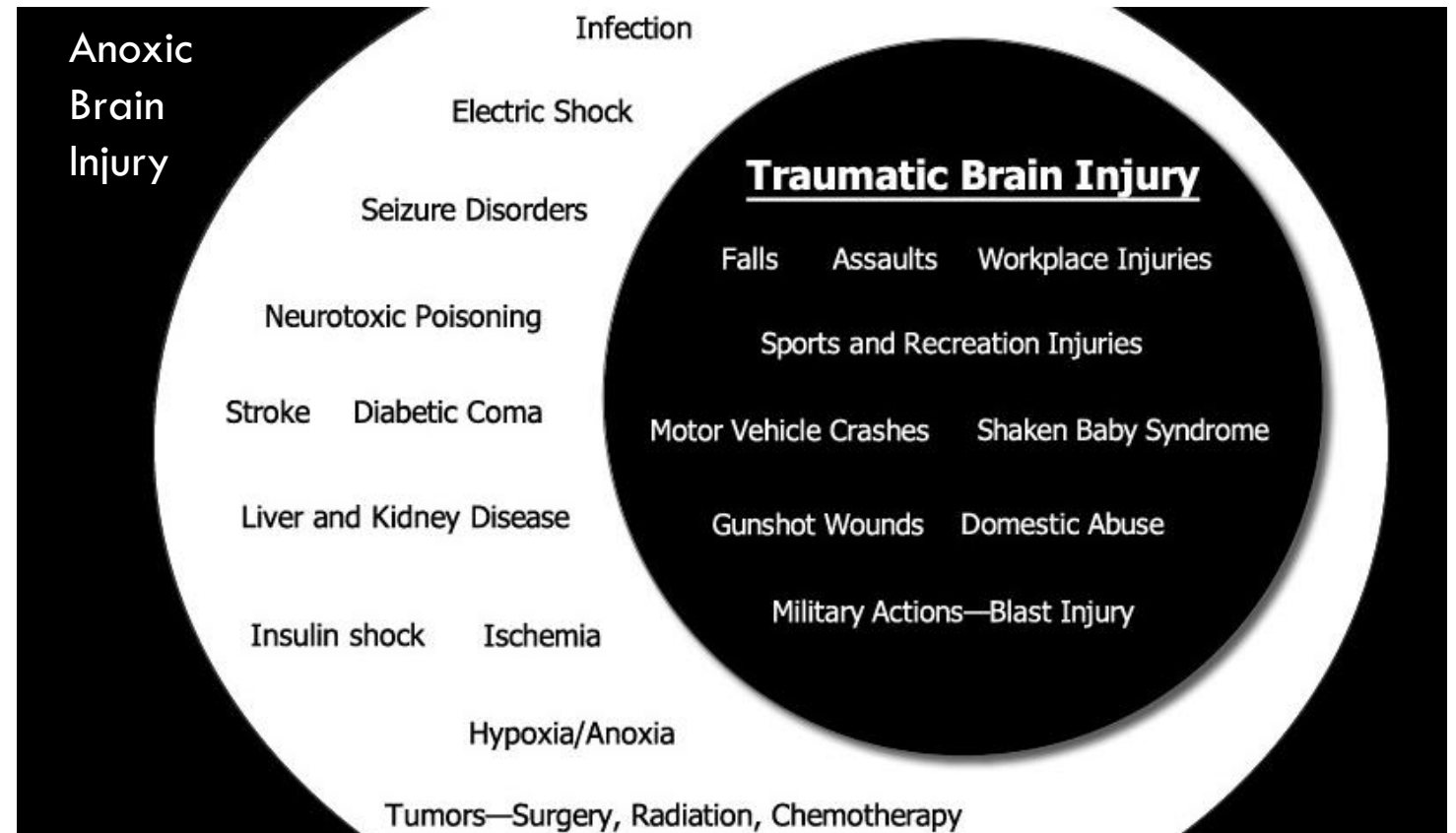


BRAIN INJURY HAS THE POTENTIAL TO EFFECT THE WAY THE BRAIN:

- Interprets information
- Communicates information
- Remembers information
- Considers information as reliable
- Reacts to information
- Prioritizes information
- Exchanges information into behaviors

COMMON BRAIN INJURY TERMINOLOGY

- Brain Injury (BI) is the all encompassing term for changes that occur in the brain and its associated impact. This includes: ABI, TBI, and Concussion.
- Acquired Brain Injury is an injury to the brain, which is not hereditary, congenital, degenerative, or induced by birth trauma. This includes strokes, effects from chemotherapy, damage due to bacterial infections or high fevers, oxygen deprivation, and much more.
- Traumatic Brain Injury alteration in brain function, or other evidence of brain pathology, caused by an external force.



NOT ALWAYS WHAT THEY MEAN...

Mild. Moderate. Severe.

You may encounter the terms “Mild” “Moderate” and “Severe” when working with a client. It is important to note that these terms refer to the level of unconsciousness your client experienced at the time of trauma, it does not always speak to the level of severity brain injury they are living with now. A person with a mild brain injury may suffer lifelong consequences.

UNDERSTANDING “SEVERITY” SCALE

Mild

- Traumatically induced physiological disruption of brain function marked by:
 - Any period of loss of consciousness (usually 30 minutes or less)
 - Loss of memory (posttraumatic amnesia not to exceed 24 hours)
 - Any alternation in mental state (confusion; behavioral; emotional) but does not days into weeks

Moderate

- Unconsciousness lasting between 15minutes to a couple hours
- Mental confusion can last days to weeks
- About 10-15% of TBI are rated as “moderate”

Severe

- Loss of Consciousness for more than 6 hours and followed by a period of clarity. If a person remains unconscious for an extended period of time they may be diagnosed as vegetative or in a coma.
- Mental confusion or side effects can last for an extensive period of time, or may be permanent
- Less than 10% are rated as “Severe”

Congenital Disorders

- Intellectual Disabilities
- Cerebral Palsy
- Birth Injuries



Progressive Disorders

- Alzheimer's Disease
- Parkinson's Disease
- Multiple Sclerosis



Psychiatric Disorders

- In which there is no known or obvious central nervous system damage

WHAT ISN'T BRAIN INJURY?



IS A CONCUSSION A BRAIN INJURY?

Yes! In fact, concussions are the most common type of brain injury. A concussion occurs when trauma has altered the chemical balance in the brain, changing the way it thinks, perceives, reacts and communicates. In short, the brain demands more blood to heal and the body gives it less, causing a (major or subtle) disruption in how the body functions. It is important to remember that concussions are not diagnosed with MRI, CT scans or imaging, they are based on signs and symptoms. You can have a concussion or brain injury and receive clean scans.

It is critical to let a concussion heal and to minimize the risk of Second Impact Syndrome (a life threatening occurrence when a second concussion occurs before the first heals causing the brain to swell) or other adverse effects.

The good news is most concussions can be healed with proper care with no longstanding effects!

COMMON SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CONCUSSION

- Headaches

- Difficulty concentrating

- Behavioral Changes

- Light and sound sensitivities

- Difficulty understanding

- Inability to complete tasks

- Fatigue

- Changes in eating

- Nausea

Symptoms that occur longer than the recommended healing time are often associated with Post-Concussion Syndrome.

*Please note that timelines and guidelines regarding children are different. Please consult BIAWA for more information.



WHO DOES BRAIN INJURY EFFECT?

EVERYONE!

This **largest minority group** is the only one that *any person can join at any time*: from birth on – through an accident, illness, or the aging process.

--“People First Language” Kathie Snow, 2009

SOME STATISTICS

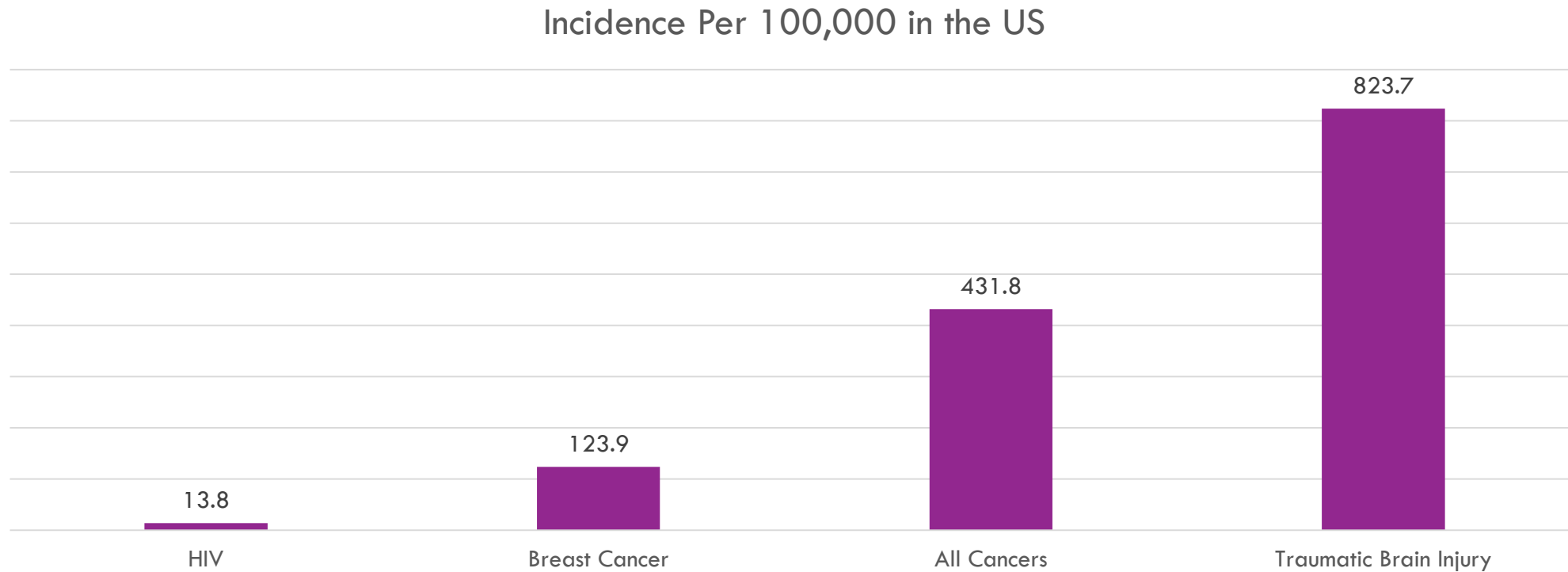


- **Every 15 seconds** a person in the US sustains a traumatic brain injury (TBI)
 - In 2013 about 2.8 million people sustained a TBI
- An estimated **4.5% of the population** lives with disability due to Brain Injury
- Brain Injury is the **2nd most prevalent** disability in the United States
- Brain Injury is the **#1 cause of Death & Disability** for Washington's young people

SOME STATISTICS



- The risk for brain injury is highest for those who are below the age of 20 and above the age of 65. However, all ages can experience brain injury.
- Native American and Alaskan Native communities can experience higher rates of TBI. Nationally, African Americans have the highest death rate from TBI.
- People who have had a TBI before are at a greater risk of having another.
- About twice as many males as females have a TBI than males.



IN COMPARISON, BRAIN INJURY EFFECTS MORE INDIVIDUALS THAN HIV AND ALL CANCERS COMBINED

OBTAINING A BRAIN INJURY THAT COULD IMPACT YOUR LIFE HAPPENS QUICKLY



You Could

Fall on ice and sustain a long term brain injury

Or

Fall on ice and sustain a concussion

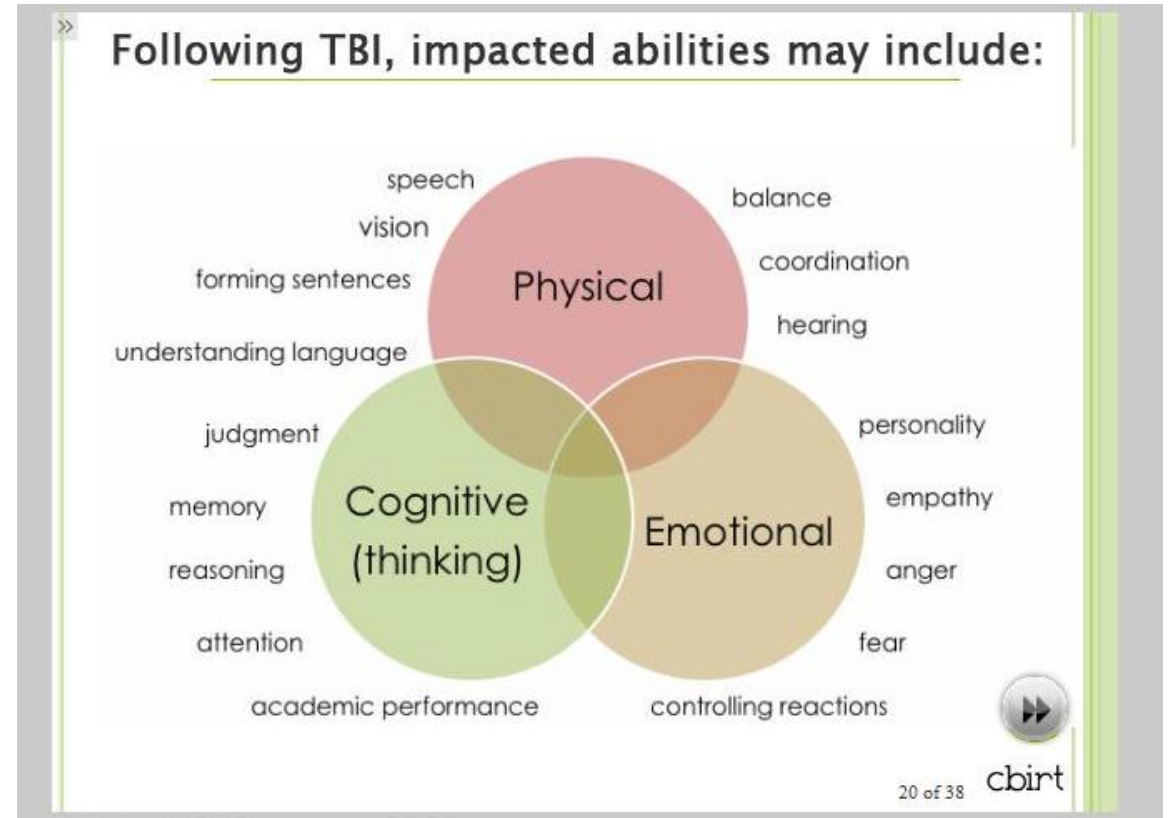
Or

Fall on ice and have no impact or side effects

WHAT DOES BRAIN INJURY EFFECT?

Everything!

The Brain and your body have a very delicate relationship! When something changes the way your brain works, it in return, effects all of the systems your brain controlled. Thus, the effects of brain injury could include changes to short and long-term memory, personality, behavior, emotional regulation, executive functioning or the ability to determine consequences and future planning, cognitive functioning, language, social interactions, and much more.



A photograph of an older couple smiling in a grocery store aisle. The woman, on the left, has short brown hair and wears glasses and a light-colored top. The man, on the right, has grey hair, wears glasses, a red polo shirt, and light-colored trousers. They are standing in front of shelves stocked with various products, including bananas in a wire basket in the foreground. The text "THIS MEANS THINGS THAT USED TO BE SIMPLE..." is overlaid in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. A thin white vertical line is positioned to the right of the text.

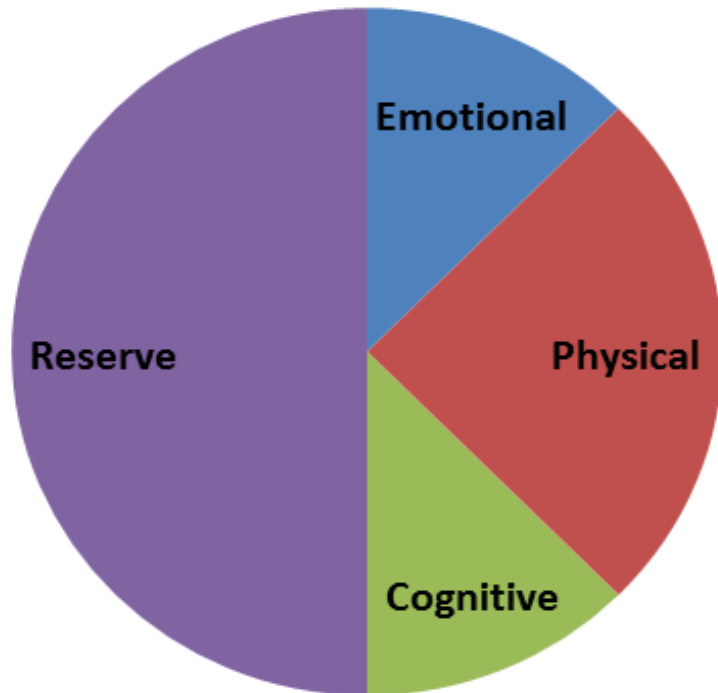
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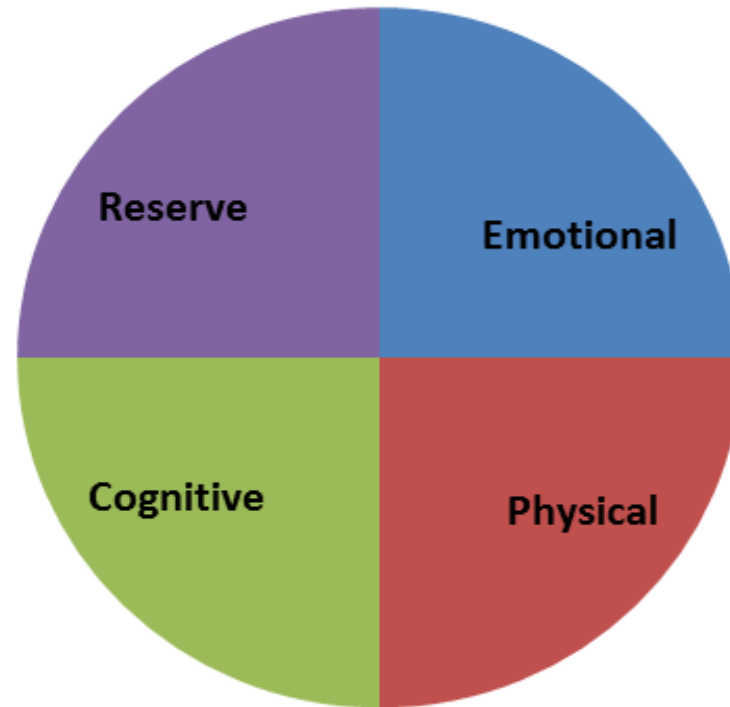
**...ARE NOW VERY
COMPLICATED**

AFTER BRAIN INJURY IT TAKES MORE ENERGY TO COMPLETE BASIC FUNCTIONS LIFE DEMANDS

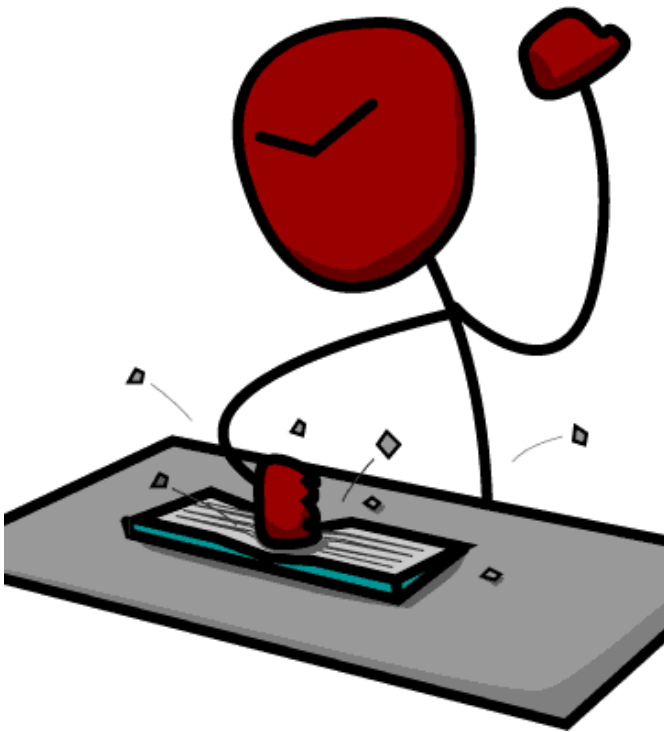
Before Brain Injury



After Brain Injury



HOW COULD SOMEONE WITH BRAIN INJURY FEEL?



Someone with a brain injury often feels frustrated. Sometimes, every day. Sometimes, all day long.

They can become fatigued easily and have very little energy without proper rest.

They may have difficulty with social cues, memory, or social interactions. This includes difficulty with longstanding relationships or fulfilling roles of any kind.

They may be in pain, have sensitivities to the external world, difficulty concentrating, or live with constant headaches.

They may have difficulty acquiring new information or learning new things impacting their ability to work or get through their day.

They may find it difficult to create goals, finish tasks, understand consequences, or change their behavior.

Remember: the brain is a regulatory system responsible for every aspect of our life, physiology, wellness, personality, and ability to function.



A loss of Self & Self Advocacy



A loss of Future



A loss of Possibilities



This can continue for weeks, months, and even the rest of their lives.



Approximately 90% of all persons who experience severe disability following brain injury experience some emotional or psychiatric distress



40% continue to demonstrate behavioral difficulty 5 years post injury

**FOR MOST,
BRAIN
INJURY
MEANS**

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING



Executive functioning or self-regulation enables us to plan, focus attention, remember, and juggle multiple tasks (Harvard).

This means you may have a client

- Who has difficulty keeping or making appointments
- Who may not be on time, or fail to see the importance of those meetings
- Who has trouble creating goal plans or following them
- Who might not understand right from wrong, or consequences
- Who may have difficulty with organization
- What may not be able to complete tasks
- Who may not be able to oversee their finances, gauge healthy relationships, grocery shop, or assess their needs

MEMORY

Brain injury may effect your client's memory. This may be their short-term memory: like keeping an appointment or remembering to call at a certain time, or their long-term memories where skills, memories, or abilities were stored. It is important to keep this in mind as you create a workable plan to assist your client.

Strategies that may assist:

- Creating a visible task list for them to consult each day and check off when completed
- Utilizing technological or assistive technologies. Cellphones are great!
- Create reminders
- Utilize assistive devices
- Be prepared to reiterate information multiple times and use reminders as needed



**IT ALSO AFFECTS
RELATIONSHIPS**

THE IMPACT OF BRAIN INJURY ON RELATIONSHIPS

Traumatic brain injury has the potential to affect an individual across every aspect of their life, often changing their personality, emotional regulation, abilities, level of need, memory, limitations, fears, financial capabilities, sleep patterns, and much more. As such, this often changes the dynamic of relationships between the individuals, shifting roles.

This includes but is not limited to relationships between friends, partners, spouses, children, extended family, community members, physicians, peers, significant others who often become caregivers, or primary support.



STRATEGIES THAT MAY HELP!

1. Frame your questions so your client can respond using “Yes” or “No”
2. Hold meetings in environments with low stimuli, low lighting, and neutral colors
3. Address one topic at a time
4. Ask if mornings or late afternoons work best as sleeping cycles are different
5. Do not use open-ended questions
6. Be clear and concise, and ask one question at a time. Do not ask another until the first has been answered.
7. Set reminders before the meeting has ended for further appointments in their phone to create alerts
8. Educate family members on realistic expectations

THE BRAIN INJURY ALLIANCE OF WASHINGTON

Please Contact
1-877-982-4292

To find out more about how
we can
Assist You!

BLAWA offers **Free Support Services** to adult and pediatric individuals throughout WA whose lives are affected by Brain Injury. This includes the individual and their supports.

We support individuals in attaining the quality of life they deserve using an empowering client-centered approach to support.

We connect individuals to the supports needed to succeed!

