



**BRAIN INJURY
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No Brain Injury is
Too Mild to Ignore,
or Too Severe to
Lose Hope

Hope Springs Eternal

Life is a one-way street. No matter how many detours you take, none of them leads back. And once you know and accept that, life becomes much simpler because then you know you must do the best you can with what you have and what you are and what you have become.

Don't look back, look at the future. Keep advocating for your child. It's the most important thing you can do to keep the issue of brain injury before the general public and those who make decisions relative to social service programs and laws. Don't become complacent. Take advantage of every opportunity you have to renew yourself emotionally. Faith in a higher being appears to be the most widely-ascribed source of hope that sustains people through tragedy. More than 200 studies offer evidence that a religious belief is food for one's health. Harvard's Herbert Benson, M.D., says humans are "actually engineered for religious faith." In studies he conducted, patients who were actively involved in spiritual growth and study showed less stress, greater resistance to disease, had better health and more rapid recoveries from illness.

Never lose sight of the fact that scientific research is learning more about the brain everyday. A standard joke around our house is that perhaps in my son's lifetime, we will be able to order him a set of frontal lobes and a right temporal lobe. Black humor to be sure, but sometimes humor gets us through some very bad times. The future is uncertain for all of us, and there are no crystal balls to help us develop and execute a plan. Nevertheless, we choose the road to take. For some, it is caring for our kids because we can physically and emotionally manage it. For others with limited options, it may mean giving over the care responsibilities to those better able to meet the need. The important moral and ethical issue is that persons with brain injury, regardless of their impaired abilities, can be cared for in environments that support their humanism.

The 18-year-old young man whose mother is working so hard to help him is one of the lucky ones. He surely knows about her efforts and basks in her love. I pray her efforts will be rewarded and that she believes that she is the best mother her son could ever have.

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