

My Story

By Bill Croft

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When you go to a doctor, you generally put your trust in what they say. For me, it was that I was depressed. I didn't have many of the signs that people generally have when dealing with a stroke. I was forty-eight years old when I had the stroke. I was in pretty good health. No paralysis, blood pressure was good. I was an avid runner and biked from Seattle to Portland for two straight years. So, why a stroke?

I began to confuse many of my words; "spaghetti" was "Jello-o," and various other word problems. I was running through stop lights and wanted to turn at almost every light. Many people with me had known me for years, but didn't recognize the problem, something was wrong. Directions became confusing and mathematics created tremendous downfalls considering I majored in Accounting when I went to college. Last-but-not least, I couldn't find my car after I parked it.

My wife, of just a short period, six months, suggested perhaps I should see another doctor. The new physician asked some very basic questions. Like, had I had a physical, or did the doctor do an MRI? The answer was "no" to both questions.

In short, wrong diagnosis. The MRI showed that I had had two strokes, one on each side of the front part of my brain. Since that time I have developed seizures and aphasia. I have found the support groups that I attend and the Speech Clinic at the University of Washington very helpful. The people that I have met are so encouraging. Life is always filled with struggles—I am blessed and grateful for the life I still have.