

## ***Identity Theft: Rediscovering Ourselves After Stroke*** **By Debra E. Meyerson, PhD with Danny Zuckerman**

### **Chapter 11: People are Social Animals**

1. Sandberg and Grant refer to, “pre-traumatic growth”, or the concept of learning from being close to a trauma rather than actually going through one directly. (p. 137)
  - a. Have you gained any insights from your survivor’s journey that have changed you?
    - i. If so, how?
  - b. Have other people in your life shared any impacts?
  - c. If you have not yet taken the time to reflect on the experience, is this something that might be informative or helpful to you?
  
2. Debra writes that, “Nearly every stroke survivor I talked to had initial difficulties in rebuilding a social life” (p. 138).
  - a. Did your survivor find social interaction difficult following their stroke?
    - i. Have these feelings changed over time?
    - ii. What do you feel might make it difficult for your stroke survivor to rebuild a social life?
  - b. Did you find social interaction difficult following your survivor’s stroke?
    - i. Have these feelings changed over time?
    - ii. Have you been able to rebuild your own social life following your survivor’s stroke?
  - c. Have any foundational relationships in your personal or professional life been broken by the stroke or the realities of post stroke life for you as carepartner?
  - d. What did you and your survivor enjoy or gain from social interactions before their stroke?

- i. Has that changed since their stroke?
    - e. In many instances, carepartners are able to find community among other carepartners. Has this been the case for you?
    - f. Do you feel interacting with other carepartners is helpful to you?
    - g. Are there support groups that you enjoy attending virtually or in person?
      - i. If so, share some of them with your group.
  
- 3. Debra writes “When I’m feeling particularly down, I try to recognize that need to give myself a little time to feel down and angry about my stroke ... When time is up, I can appreciate having given myself space to acknowledge the bad stuff, and it usually helps me refocus on looking forward.” (p. 143-144)
  - a. Do you feel your survivor generally has a positive attitude?
    - i. If so, how has it helped in recovery?
  - b. Do you generally have a positive attitude?
    - i. If so, how has it helped during your survivor’s recovery?
  - c. When feeling less positive, do you or your survivor allow space for self-compassion about the difficulties you’re facing?
    - i. Is it difficult to shift back into gratitude and a positive mindset?
  - d. What tools or techniques do you use to work through these feelings?
  
- 4. Consider the example of Randy and Rose who started their own aphasia Meetup group. The group has provided them with new friends, and Randy shared that he, “enjoys practicing speech in this safe zone.” (p.143)
  - a. Why do you think this group has been so helpful to Randy and Rose?
  - b. Would you consider starting your own group for your survivor or other carepartners?
    - i. If so, describe your goals for creating a new group.

- c. What are some ways to bring other carepartners together and get them to engage?
  - i. Since it may be difficult to meet in person, would you consider utilizing video meeting platforms such as Zoom or Skype?