



Recalculating: Adjusting to Life After a Brain Injury

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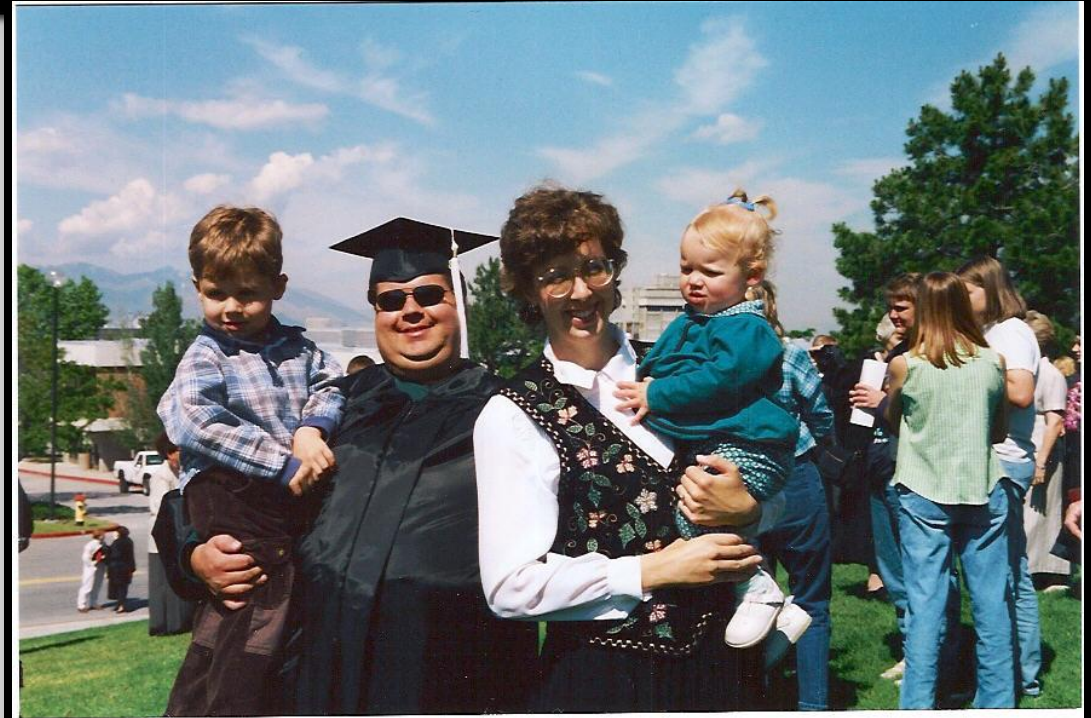


Disclaimer: My Perspective

- July 4 will be 20 years
- Story of support group 20 years ago
- Every situation is different
- Some ideas and principles that I hope will help
- I am still on the journey



Our Story: University of Utah- June 1998



Laurent was in his last quarter at the University of Utah majoring in Communications. He walked in the graduation ceremony since it is only offered in June. He would finish up his classes by fall.

The Accident

July 4, 1998 motorcycle accident in Salt Lake City resulting in a TBI and being in a coma for 2-6 weeks and in the hospital for 3 months with continuing outpatient therapy.



Things People Taught us on our Journey

- Navigate to resources
- Recalculate
- Enjoy the journey
- Practice self-compassion

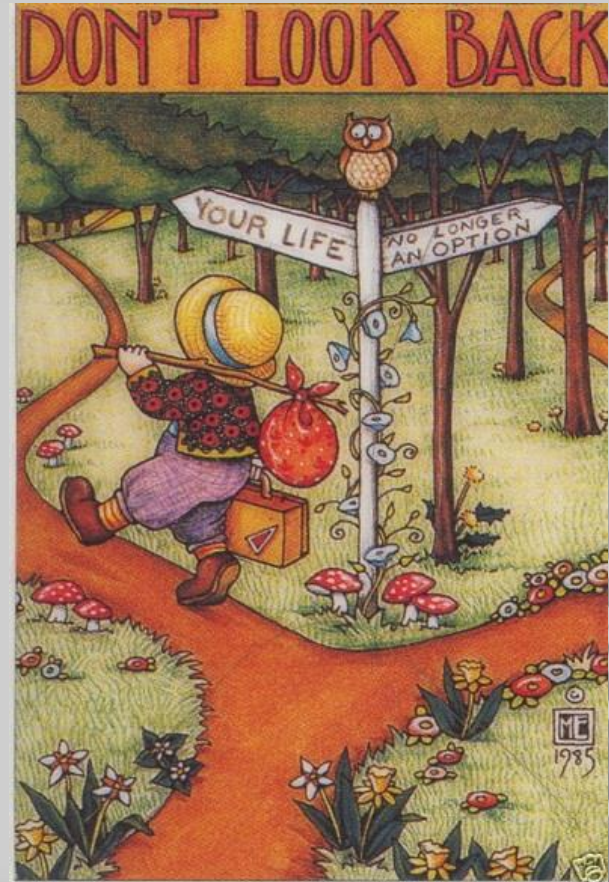




Navigating to Resources

- Gas stations
- Repair shops
- “In the context of exposure to significant adversity, resilience is both the capacity of individuals to **navigate their way** to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical **resources** that sustain their well-being, and their capacity individually and collectively to negotiate for these resources to be provided in culturally meaningful ways.” (See also Ungar, 2008 and Ungar, 2011) www.resilienceresearch.org

No U-Turns



4 Tasks of Grief



By J. William Worden

1. Accept the reality of the loss
2. Process your grief and pain
3. Adjust to the world with your loved one being different
4. Find an enduring connection to the person while embarking on your own life

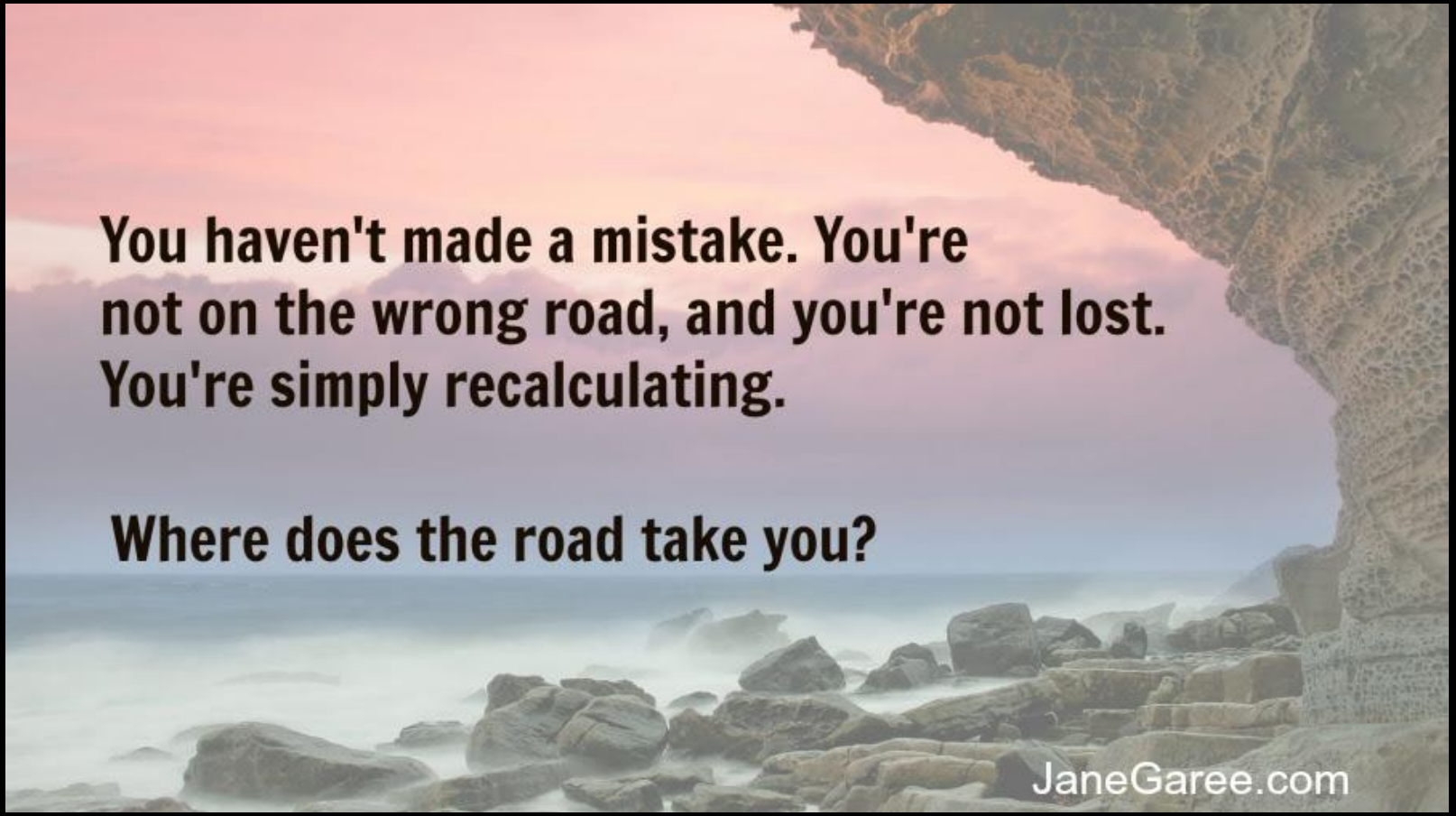
A counselor can be helpful in this process since we experience ambiguous grief or ambiguous loss.

Recalculating

If my life was a
GPS it would constantly
be recalculating.

VIA FUNNYSTATUS.COM

Recalculating



You haven't made a mistake. You're not on the wrong road, and you're not lost. You're simply recalculating.

Where does the road take you?

JaneGaree.com

Recalculating: Discover New Routes & Destinations



Flexibility

Open to new possibilities



Crystal Ball



- We can't see the future.
- We don't know what your new destination will be.
- Be ready to recalculate
- Be open to new ideas

New Destination- Unknown



Short Term Adjustments

- Survival mode
- Focus on recovery
- Home structure
- Family responsibilities
- Employment
- Finances

What adjustments are you having to Make?



Long Term Adjustments

- Schedules- nap time, fatigue, therapies, doctor appointments, caregiving
 - Employment- unable to work? part time? new job?
 - Daily activities
 - Physical
 - Cognitive
 - Social- friends, family, filters
 - Financial
 - Family roles
- What long term adjustments have you experienced or anticipate?**



Recalculating

Whatever your destination, there is a million beautiful ever changing ways to get us there.

YOUR ALL NEW COMPASS.

JEEP®

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**Recalculating.
Recalculating.**

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Destinations and Journeys



Enjoy the Journey





Enjoy the Journey

- “Are we there yet?”
- Celebrate milestones, moments, and memories
- Friends & family
- Find joy in every-day moments



Make Today Worth Remembering

You pile up enough tomorrows and you'll be left with nothing but a bunch of empty yesterdays. I don't know about you, but I'd like to make today worth remembering.

(Meredith Willson)

izquotes.com

How?

- Mindfulness in the morning
 - “Today I will celebrate one thing.”
- Mental photos (or real ones)
 - “I want to remember this moment.”
- Nightly reflections
 - “What can I celebrate or remember from today?”
- Other ideas?



celebrate
everyday
moments.



Neu Birthday vs. New Birthday

- Laurent had celebrated 29 birthdays before his accident. These were his “Neu Birthdays” celebrating being a Neu.
- On the 18th anniversary of his motorcycle accident, while celebrating his best friend’s birthday, we began celebrating Laurent’s “New Birthday”, rejoicing in each “New” year of life since the accident.
- This summer we will celebrate Laurent’s 20th New Birthday.



If our GPS talked to us like we talk to ourselves...



Rest Areas: Self-Compassion

- Self- Compassion: www.self-compassion.org by Kristin Neff
- The GPS doesn't yell at you when you make a wrong turn "Idiot, why did you turn that way? If you had only turned left instead of right we wouldn't be in this mess!"
- It simply says in a calm voice: "Recalculating"

Rest Areas: Self-Compassion

- What self-compassion is:

Self kindness: Be warm and understanding to ourselves when we suffer, fail, or feel inadequate.

Connectedness: Recognizing suffering & personal inadequacy is shared human experience

Mindfulness: Balanced approach to negative feelings: neither suppressed nor exaggerated

- What self-compassion is not:

- Not self-pity
- Not self-indulgence
- Not self-esteem

www.self-compassion.org

WHAT IS SELF-COMPASSION?



Mindfulness

Self-compassion involves recognising when we're stressed or struggling without being judgmental or over-reacting.



Self-Kindness

Being supportive and understanding towards ourselves when we're having a hard time, rather than being harshly self-critical.



Connectedness

Remembering that everyone makes mistakes and experiences difficulties at times. We are not alone!

WHY PRACTICE SELF-COMPASSION?

Research shows that people who are more self-compassionate are...

HAPPIER

Practising self-compassion leads to more happiness, optimism, gratitude and better relationships with others.



MORE RESILIENT

Self-compassionate people bounce back more easily from set-backs are more likely to learn from their mistakes



LESS STRESSED

Self-compassion is a powerful antidote to the self-criticism and perfectionistic thinking that can lead to stress, anxiety and depression.



www.self-compassion.org

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