

Student name

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A Patient's Story

People always say that you never know when something bad is going to happen. I never really knew just how true that statement was until my life was turned upside down because of one tiny slip-up. One evening, my wife and I were out walking the trail that runs through our property. The sun was setting and just peeking over the mountains, and the sky was clear and filled with the most beautiful colors. The cool breeze kissed my cheeks and neck as it gently wisped through the trees. Suddenly, my wife notices a doe and her fawn grazing on the grass just a few feet ahead of us. As I left my head to look, my foot caught a root from one of the white oak trees that we were walking by. I fell to the ground and then a thud and a crack rang through the air. This once calm and gentle scene quickly filled with fear, frustration, and uncertainty.

A few days later, I was in a hospital bed with a fractured hip and bruising from my backside to halfway down my thigh. It was probably some of the worst bruising that I've ever had, it was definitely the darkest. It was almost as dark as the night sky.

My wife was sitting in the chair next to me. With every fiber of her being, she was trying to put on a brave face and not stress about what was ahead of us. However, once you've spent your whole life with the person that you love, you learn to see through those masks. I could see through her smiles and her jokes when I looked into her deep blue eyes. She has always had the most expressive eyes. I could see just how much fear and uncertainty filled her mind. I could see her trying to figure out how we were going to survive. Can you blame her? No one ever truly plans for something like this. Seeing her go through that and trying to figure it out all on her own filled me with the most gut-wrenching guilt because there was nothing I could do or say to help her. I had officially become useless.

Once I had the surgery to fix my hip, I was scheduled to start therapy so that I would be able walk on my own. The first few sessions were awful. I was in so much pain that the smallest bit of movement or pressure would make me cringe. You could probably say that I was in a small state of depression. I couldn't see myself making any progress between my therapy sessions. The only thing that I could was my wife working her tail off to support me. She worked a full day's work, did all of the housework, worried about the bills and insurance, and took care of my sorry self.

One day when I was feeling sorry for myself, I thought back to the day that I fractured my hip. I remembered just how wonderful that evening was. I pictured the sunset and the beautiful colors that painted the sky. I imagined the feeling of that perfect breeze brushing over my brow as it danced through the branches. And I remembered the look on my wife's face when she noticed those deer grazing just a few feet from where we were walking. It was a look of pure excitement and happiness. "I miss that face," I said to myself. "I need to help make her feel that happiness again."

The next few sessions, I felt a level of motivation that I hadn't felt in a long time. I pushed myself to improve and set a goal to make my wife happy again. "I want to walk with my wife again," is what I told the PTA student that was working with me. He listened and heard my goal and helped push me to reach that goal. Each day that we worked together I would ask, "Are we gonna walk today, son?" And he would always have something planned to help me walk again. I am always one step closer to my goal.