

Bruce & Barb Knutson

Barbie "B" Foundation

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**Assisting YOUNG stroke victims and their families through:
Stroke Education, Prevention, Advocacy & Rehab**



"If we can avoid one stroke, save one life or keep one more family in tact it is worth the effort."

The Barbie "B" Foundation was developed for individuals under age 55 and their families. It became clear through Barb's stroke rehabilitation that this is a drastically underserved population. Most stroke literature and resources are directed to older people that have different needs. This is not to say that our foundation will not support these folks as well, although our primary goal is to address the rehab and education needs of younger stroke victims. These are individuals that are in their thirties, forties and fifties.

On the scale, Barb's stroke was a nine out of ten. Eighty percent don't survive her significant level of CVA. This website is to serve as information and outline for young families in need of assistance from an organization that can relate and can provide positive feedback and direction. As you will find, everyone is a bit different with regard to their individual needs for recovery from this life changing event. There are so many levels and types of strokes that you cannot broadly create a rehabilitation program to fit everyone.

Committed to Physical Therapy as a Profession

Barb has been so committed to her profession as a physical therapist because she always believed in the value of her work. Further, she saw the fruits of her labor everyday with her patient's recovery from their injuries. This commitment has been applied to her own rehabilitation. Because of her tenacity she is walking and talking again.

You have a choice, either mope and cope or commit to your rehab. As stated, many in Barb's situation don't survive or get out of bed again. Simply because of her commitment her rehab process and strong family support she has put her life back together.

Many feel that their life is over... How will I every enjoy life again??? Trust us; life is not over although it will be different. You control your destiny!

Be thankful for what you have. Friend, Family, Doctors, Therapist... this is your team so use them to the best of you ability. This is hard to see at times but your focus for the future has to be positive or your recovery from your stroke will be much more difficult.

Turning Lemons Into Lemonade

You know you're not well in the minds of others when you're 6 months into your recovery from illness or injury and you go to the mailbox and there are another half dozen "Get Well Cards". Then someone comes to the door with dinner that evening to see how you are doing.

These are great gestures that we have embraced as a family for others. All very warm and sincere wishes authored in the cards. Additionally, the dinners are well prepared with beautiful flowers on the side. Our house started looking and smelling like a funeral home. The reality is that we got to a point where we stopped opening cards and just let them stack up. Further we started putting the dinners in the refrigerator and would go to a restaurant like normal folks. It was time to fend for ourselves and start doing for others again. This is when the Barbie "B" Foundation emerged.

Many friends have said "What an inspiration you two have been. We don't know how you do it." First off, that sounds good but it is not that great being the inspiration. We would much rather be inspired.

Regardless, it is the role we play and it is how to effectively turn a negative into a positive. It is like making lemonade out of lemons. Barb enjoys the self-esteem that the mission of the BBF brings with it, but more so the assistance that our work can provide for others.