

What Can I Do Now That I Have a Traumatic Brain Injury?

By Patina Malinalli

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Congratulations! You survived a traumatic brain injury and have been able to return home. You may have already discovered the challenge. Now that you succeeded in returning home, you may feel like you are rarely able to leave.

There are various ways in which you may have lost your independence. Someone needs to take you to the store, to work, to church, to visit family or anytime you cannot walk. You may not be able to get everywhere you need to go on foot and you are less conscious than before about watching for hazards (like traffic). You may also be less aware of dangerous situations in general, or you may have become hyperaware and feel somewhat insecure leaving home — even just to go for a walk.

First, let me assure you I understand. I incurred a traumatic brain injury in 2005 and suffered some circumstances similar to what you are going through now. However, you don't have to be or feel incapacitated. You do have options. Another effect of a traumatic brain injury is that time slows down. It is easier not to feel rushed. Whether it's working from home, or finding hobbies to start enjoying yourself again, your life can still be fulfilling. Let me show you how.

Bloom (or Work) Where You're Planted

One way to move forward is to find a job that permits you to work remotely. Many sales, education, and office jobs offer this option. Working from home might be a possibility depending on where you are located and if work schedules are appropriate for you. You might also think about your hobbies — consider what you can pursue at home. These might include:

- cooking
- sewing

- yarn crafts
- exercise
- horseback riding
- gardening
- reading
- writing
- anything else you love to do that can offer a service or product to someone else

You may even be able to become an entrepreneur – start your own at-home business by pursuing something in which you are skilled and begin marketing that product or service. Many people with disabilities, including myself, have done it. Success is not always immediate, but if you keep going, you can do it!

If this is something you're interested in, I believe God's grace is a huge factor in helping us become independent and productive. However, it is only possible to truly be fulfilled through belief in Jesus Christ. He can make you feel complete no matter what you have to endure. I have seen God bless brain injury survivors with the ability to continue with certain tasks after others may have been either temporarily hampered or permanently discontinued. God created us and gave us the talents and abilities we have. He can also bring new ones or help us maintain old ones after our injury.