

LINDAKAY228

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Why do I do what I do?

*Saturday, September 13, 2014***Voted Featured Blog Post**
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This blog has been going around in my head for a week or two. So why do I do what I do? I've thought about it. As many of you know, I was doing strength training, and cardio training to build myself up for the past few years until last Halloween. I was hiking and/or walking daily and increasing my mileage. I run in some 5k races, a couple of 10k races, and walked in a half marathon. I walked the 15.2 mile course for 4 years in the Bataan Death March Memorial on White Sands Missile range. There was a 26.2 mile course too, that included a 5 miles hill on that one. I was thinking about doing training for that one this time last year for the last March. I did water aerobics twice a week too many times (when my lunch hours didn't interfere). After being a couch potato until age 55 I loved the new athletic me.

Then last Halloween, October 31, 2013, I had stroke with a severe brain bleed out of the blue about 8:30 that morning. It led to a transfer that day from a rural hospital to a much bigger hospital in Phoenix, which was about 6 hours by car for us from where I was. I was flown that time though since they had me on life support. Once there they put a drain in my head for the bleed. I woke up a few days later in intensive care and then after the drain was taken out on Nov 11 I was moved to the step-down unit from intensive care and still closely watched and had therapy and lots of drugs that kept me pretty doped up. I had a hard time seeing and had to learn to walk with a walker too at that time. When it was time to move me to another unit there, which had more intensive various therapies, my oldest son had me moved to a hospital in Dallas, TX, about an hour from where he lived to continue to inpatient. Therapies included an hour a day of each physical therapy, speech therapy, fine motor skills, and recreation therapy with games etc to build skills. One I remember was a bowling game on the Wii. I still slept a lot between them, and had trouble seeing also. Part was because my main glasses got broken when I had the stroke and you can't get your eyes checked for glasses in the hospital. My attention span was much shorter. I had my laptop and my computer glasses but couldn't use my either of them for several weeks. I could listen to tv and I did a lot but couldn't see it or what station I was on. And much more. Gradually my eyesight came back, and my son took me for a quick trip to get new glasses at an optometrist between the two hospital discharge in AZ and checking into the hospital in Dallas. Since my DIL is a nurse practitioner, and before that a flight nurse on medical flights, she was allowed to bring me to Dallas on a commercial flight and administer my med then. Even with the new glasses I had a lot of trouble for a while. I was discharged from that hospital on Dec 3 and then went to outpatient therapy from 9 to 12, Monday thru Friday, until my insurance had covered all the therapy it would cover in February. Gradually my eyesight got much better. My right hand and arm still shook a lot, I still had to use a walker till January 1st when I refused to use it anymore, my attention is still short, and my balance is off when I walk or look at things when I'm not sitting, I still have those things. I run into the walls in my apartment multiple times a day. I use a walking pole, or sometimes 2, when I walk outside very far. But I can now drive again. I had to take a Texas test with an examiner to get it but I passed and drive myself around now. And I can't work because typing requires much backspacing, especially from right hand, I have to text with my left hand (I am NOT lefthanded LOL), I have to eat with my left hand, and I keep learning how to do things. I've had my own apartment now since June 18th and live in Arlington TX, about ½ hour from this oldest son, and about 4 hours from my middle son. I'm not going back to NM, about 800 miles from where I live, because there I was taking care of two grown daughters and there kids and I can't take care of them anymore. My youngest son is also there and I do miss him but text or talk to him several times a week. I can't write

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because of my hand. I have trouble walking. I'm social security on disability.

I have a routine though that I have to do. Every morning I do about 25 minutes of stretching which I found helps my muscles that got worse from Fibromyalgia when I was hospitalized. Before that I kept it way under control but those weeks in bed did something to me. Maybe it's from the stroke too. Anyway, stretching helps. Every other day I have a number of strength training exercises I do for upper and lower body and core. Sometimes I use videos to walk and exercise indoors. I try to go out and walk some but the hot weather kept me from doing it and I'm looking forward to lower temps again. 100 degrees or so and high humidity just doesn't agree with me ha ha. I live in a second floor apartment by my request to make me climb stairs. Most days, except when I give my legs a break, I go outside early before daylight and climb those steps over and over. I can usually do 5 sets up and down, rest, do 5 more, etc. I usually do 30 flights altogether a day. I have to hold on the handrail on the steps all the time to keep from falling but I have to do it for me. I had to start over with everything almost because of things left with daughters. My furniture wasn't worth going that far to get, or household items. I did get some of my clothes when I got my car, my DIL bought me some, and eventually I got some of my own. I have a small living room and dining room, and I walk 15 laps at a time around those numerous times a day to get my 10,000 steps per day in. If I do go out and walk, I have to stop and rest often. I was doing this more before temps climbed so high. Takes me time to get all these things done but I do them.

So why do all this? Some of you may know I worked with all kinds of senior citizens in a senior program from 1995 to 2006. First as a director of volunteer programs funded through the federal Corporation for National Service and then as executive director of the agency. I worked with seniors of all types, from homebound to senior centers to Senior Olympics at the local and state level. I worked a couple of other jobs after that, then in late 2008 I started working for a major insurance agency who had a contract with NM for the elderly and disabled on Medicare. I worked with those that received homemaking services in their home and visited them on a monthly basis at least and helped coordinate different types of care. I met both younger disabled adults and senior citizens who often had just given up and didn't do much of anything because of their disabilities. They didn't use what they could do, although a few did. I did that job until my stroke. I can't be one of those who just give up. I may be "disabled" now but I will do what I can and will keep pushing myself. I will not stop. I could stay in bed or in a chair and watch tv most of the day and do nothing but it's not in my nature anymore. I might have at one time, but the last few years something changed in me. I do know that medical professionals have told me in offices and therapies that the shape I was in when I had the stroke helped keep it from being even worse, or from me being dead. So I do it because I can. I can't walk like I could a year ago, but I can walk some. I can't do some of the things I did but I can do some. I insist on enjoying life all I can. I love zoos, and there is the Dallas zoo and the Fort Worth zoo near me. I have a yearly membership at both so can get free parking and admission and have been to both numerous times. Today we have a cold front and thankfully we need a jacket today instead of temps around 100. I plan on going to a nature park that has some trails and multiple benches to get out in nature, which I love. I do these things because there is something inside that drives me to keep living life to the fullest I can, whatever that may be. Not to waste what I have while wishing for the "old" days of a year ago.

So this is why I keep pushing myself, exercising, trying to eat healthy most of the time, staying active on my computer even if I have to backspace numerous times, and other things. Why do you do what you do?

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LYNDALOVES2HIKE

Great blog but you confused me about one thing - did you lose your disability payments? I know you were getting them for awhile but you said you are 'not on disability' so I was wondering what happened to change that? Anyway, good luck and keep up the good work - we all have our challenges and it's great to hear when someone overcomes theirs. Maybe I'll have to find time to start blogging here again myself, haha! Congrats on your progress!

2448 days ago

[v](#)



PUGLOVER1999

This is the most inspiring thing I have read (or heard) in a very long time! I glory in your spunk and will remember you when I am tempted to just "be tired and old!" (I'm lots older than you!)



2450 days ago

[v](#)



CD13538600

That is a lot to go through. I would think you could get on disability. I wish you the very best.



I'm not sure I would be as strong.
2454 days ago



READYRISA

What an amazing blog post! Thank you so much...I also survived a stroke - had one just in February of this year...it's been a quite a journey.... and I'm trying to keep my sense of humour and just keep going day to day... Thank you again for the wonderful post...!!! God Bless You... and also



thanks to Brooklyn_Born who sent me a link to your wonderful blog post.
2454 days ago



REENSKI

Your dedication and determination is an inspiration to us all.
You are amazing!



2455 days ago



TEMPEST272002

Wonderful blog. You are such a hero to me.



2455 days ago



CHERALA

Thank you for sharing your inspirational and motivational post.



2457 days ago



GRACED777

I'm Barb, and I too had a stroke, but it was July 29, 2008-six years ago. I loved hearing why you do what you do, and I do what I do for the same reasons. My typing is still hard, but I too drive again, and just got a gym membership Monday, because I want to keep gaining ground and living



my best life. God bless you, friend.



2457 days ago



SPEEDY143

Anne (REGILIEH) sent me and I'm so glad she did because I've seen you around SP for a long time but I wasn't aware of your stroke or the incredible progress you've made by sheer determination to "live" You are inspirational for sure and I applaud your strength and resolve to do what you can and improve each day... the human spirit is amazing. YOU are awesome and it is because of people like you that share their experiences so we can take a deeper look at ourselves



and our excuses for not doing what we clearly can do with little effort. for sharing

"Why do you do what you do?" Because I still can and because of survivors like you Linda...



I'm in your corner
2457 days ago



CELIAMINER

What an amazing story!
2461 days ago



SONDRAJ20

Linda, You are so awesome. You were awesome before you had the stroke and even more so now. You're right, it would have been so easy to give up, but you never have and I know you never will. You inspire me every day when I see how much you've already been doing while I was still asleep! You are the best!!
2461 days ago



STRINGI719

You actually got me back on here after all these months because I was so curious about this





blog you mentioned! I am so grateful that I got to read it. I really miss having you here to visit with face-to-face everyone once in awhile. But I'm so happy that you are making the absolute best of it where you are at. And I'm not in the LEAST bit surprised that you are continuing to inspire all those around you!

2461 days ago



DAISYBELL6

I have enjoyed your blogs for a long time and I am really glad you are one of my special friends here on Spark. You have always been a role model for me with your hiking and running, but now you are even more important as a life model. You are dealing with your adversities and moving on. I admire and respect you more than I can say.

2461 days ago



LADYSHERRY

Awesome blog. I call the "old Days" The Land of Use to". I live here now. You are inspiring!

2461 days ago



KANSASROSE67

I hope your blog gets a popular post award. It is wonderful...very inspiring! Keep on doing what you're doing and having that positive attitude. We can all learn from you!

2461 days ago



SGTSUNNY

So inspiring! Thank you for the reminder that we need to keep pushing and do what we can. Your attitude is a reminder to us all. We should all strive everyday and everyway to improve our situation.

2461 days ago



SLENDERELLA61

Thanks for an inspiring blog. Best wishes to you. Keep up your wonderful attitude. Enjoy the zoos! and life! You are very smart to keep doing all you can. Wishing you happy days and improving health, Marsha

2461 days ago



BARBARAJ73

You are an inspiration.

2461 days ago



SUNSET09

You have been tested for your testimony and someone needed to hear this.

give up and be a living witness to that no matter what, we can make it if we try. No pity party for you and you've already stated, it helps you. It's in all of us. There is so much left for you to

do!
2461 days ago



and



POINDEXTRA

Wow. What an inspiration!

2462 days ago



POINDEXTRA

Wow. What an inspiration!

2462 days ago



ALICIA363

I followed BROOKLYN_BORN's link, and I sure am glad I did! I want your perseverance! Thank you for sharing your experience!

2462 days ago



ADRIENALINE

You are a hero! Thanks for sharing your experiences with all of us. You are the embodiment of "where but for the grace of God go I" The proverbial sh*t can hit the fan when you least expect it so we must all be grateful for whatever we have and you have helped re-see that.

Thanks!

2462 days ago

CD4114015

I loved this blog! BROOKLYN_BORN sent me...and I am subscribing to you! She was RIGHT and I am glad she sent us! You truly ARE an inspiration!



2462 days ago



GINIEMIE

LindaKay, I believe we commented on each other's entries a long time ago and I lost touch. I've been so focused on getting my Erik better and what I can't do because I am his caregiver I forgot to do what I can. Thank you for your courage and inspiration. I'm beginning now to increase my steps-now today-not tomorrow. Thanks for your inspiration and persistence. I pray you continue to improve each day and that you will regain use of your right hand. Bless you,



2462 days ago



LIVINGLOVINLIFE

Your blog is amazing, I wrote a blog about how hard it is for me to stay positive and motivated. Then I get an email from Brooklyn Born with a link to your blog. I will ever be thankful to her for the email. You did more than give motivation you gave me the will to keep going. Thank You, Thank You. I am 67, very out of shape. A retired nurse and have been struggling. Your blog was a gift to me. I will keep working at getting healthy and will remember your story when I lose the drive. Hugs and hope every day is full of life and joy. Pat

ps. I have added you as a friend, you are that and much more.

2462 days ago



SPARKNB

Very inspirational. NOW I will do more, based on your experiences - 'tis a fool who doesn't learn from others, and I am trying to be a fool no more - especially since you have seen both sides of the health and social systems- as a worker and a client. Thanks for sharing; thanks to Brooklyn



Born for sharing the link to your post.

2462 days ago



MISSROCKABILLY

You truly do inspire me every day, Linda, and I am so glad to know you! Words can not express how proud of you I am as well!



2462 days ago



TRAVELGRRL

You are an inspiration! You are the epitome of the saying -- when you are given lemons, make lemonade. I'm proud of you for doing what you can, and enjoying your life to the very FULLEST



each and every day!

2462 days ago



BOOKAPHILE

I came by on Brooklyn_Born's urging. I'm glad I did. You inspire me to greater efforts!

2462 days ago



PHOENIX1949



2462 days ago



HOLLYM48

What an amazing story and what an amazing woman you are! Keep on fighting for the joy in every single day that you have. We not promise tomorrow but it sounds like you cherish every single day and after your experience, I can understand why! Keep up the great work! You are an inspiration!

2462 days ago



DDOORN

What an amazing testimony to the fact that we are ALL capable of doing such incredible things with our lives!

Don

2462 days ago

**REDEEMED_DANCER**

What an amazing story! You have such drive and determination! Thanks for sharing!
2462 days ago

**MISCHAKEO**

I am very inspired by you. Your determination to make the best of your life is wonderful and courageous. You are doing what you can do to stay healthy and to stay happy. You are so right about focusing on the present on what you can do now.

May we all have your strength and determination as we proceed in life.



2462 days ago

**KSGROTHE**

All I can think to say is "Wow!"

- Karen
2463 days ago

**AMBER281**

You have been through a lot in the last year and you continue to push forward. I feel truly blessed to know you....even if we've never met in person. Reading this blog reminded me to not take things for granted because it can change in an instant. You are such a strong and inspiring lady



2463 days ago

**CD14903239**

Forgot the given! Crazy little keyboard on the phone!
2463 days ago

**CD14903239**

Thanks for sharing the details of what happened...always wondered, but didn't want to intrude. That was so shocking to hear you had a stroke after being as active as you were! Shows us the body can betray us no matter what we do sometimes, just from family history! I had an uncle that was a fitness fanatic, ate healthy and still had a massive heart attack! And then another one a year later. Family history! His lifestyle is what saved him! Keep up that awesome determination! Very inspiring you never have up!! Hugs
2463 days ago

**CHEBBA**

What an inspirational person you are. Well done you. VERY well done.



2463 days ago

**MARYJEANSL**

I am so impressed at what you have achieved! The word 'inspiration' is used a lot, maybe even overused, but you are the epitome of inspiration to me. Wow!

As for me, since you asked, most of what I do, I do because I have no choice. I do what I have to. My kids, especially Danny, depend on me. I have actually had people say to me that they could never do what I do....I have never said this out loud, though I have wanted to...what choice did I have?

So I don't think what I do is particularly admirable...what you do is, because you do have a choice, and you choose the hard road.
2463 days ago


**1CRAZYDOG**

Three words: You are awesome!
2463 days ago

**FLYCHRISTI**


Linda I am so proud of you!
I love you for the way you thinking and for the way you see life.
I admire you more now and wish you from the bottom of my heart to be strong and healthy as you




were before.
Once more you show me the way I have to choose in order to be strong and active.
Thank you my friend!
God bless you!!!!



Christina


P.S. Don't forget, Greece is waiting for you!!!
2463 days ago



BROOKLYN_BORN

Focus on what you can do not what you can't is a slogan we hear a lot. You are the living embodiment of it and an inspiration to all, disabled or not.

I "liked" this blog. It deserves a wider audience.
2463 days ago

v



SLIMMERJESSE

Great blog. I've been wondering how you are doing. I bet it was hard to come home after such an amazing travel adventure you had.
2463 days ago

v



KSNANA2

You are an inspiration and I am happy to see you make progress. I though you inspired me

before the stroke, but you do so much more now! I think you are just amazing!
2463 days ago



v



SWDESERTLOVER

Thank you so very much for this wonderful blog. You have been through so much and your strength and determination to not just give up is a real inspiration. It is so easy to feel sorry for oneself when things are not going as we believe they should, and I am certainly guilty of this over the last couple of months. As I sit here today wishing my weekend away because my cast comes off on Monday, your blog makes me realize just how fortunate I truly am. I have always known this, but sometimes I backslide a little and need a reminder. Thank you for providing it today. You are an amazing person and I feel better just by knowing you here on Spark People. Carry on my friend!



2463 days ago

v



NATPLUMMER



2463 days ago

v



ONEKIDSMOM

I LOVE this blog. It so captures your spirit of carpe diem. No one is guaranteed tomorrow. You do because you CAN... same as me. I know that one day I might become someone who cannot... because I can't predict that, I don't control it. I could become injured or ill or "disabled", but I'd like to hope I keep an attitude like yours if I do become "less able".

And aren't you glad, now, in retrospect, that you started becoming more active when you did? Because NO ONE can take that away from you... and no "circumstance", like that stroke, can take away what you have done in the years before that.

You are truly a kindred spirit... one for which I am GRATEFUL, today and every day!
2463 days ago



v

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