

# Healing through Spirituality

## Introduction of Chaplain Services to TBI/ABI Rehabilitation

PRESENTATION AT BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION OF PENNSYLVANIA

JUNE 25 2019

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PAUL AUCKLAND, CHAPLAIN

BRANDON GRASSO, TBI SURVIVOR

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SUCCESS REHABILITATION INC, QUAKERTOWN PENNSYLVANIA

# Traumatic and Acquired Brain Injuries affect every facet of life

Physical

Cognitive

Functioning

Relationships

Self Concept

Mood

Work and Meaningful  
Activity

Acceptance and Hope



Goal of Rehabilitation is to help with as many of these parts of life as possible

**Physical** – addressed through exercise, PT and OT

**Cognitive** – addressed through Cognitive Rehabilitation Therapy and Neurocognitive Groups

**Functional** – addressed through Vocational and in home residential support and case management



**Relationships** – addressed through Psychotherapy and Neurocognitive Groups

## Self Concept and Mood – addressed through Psychotherapy

## Work and Meaningful Activity – Volunteering and Job Coaching

## Acceptance and Hope - ????

# Where it all started. . . .

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An Idea. . .

Research. . . .

A questionnaire. . . .





Search for spiritual  
healing and growth  
is one part of many  
survivors' lives

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# TBI and ABI survivors have challenges with traditional forms of spiritual offerings



Not all traditional settings accommodate wheelchairs and walkers



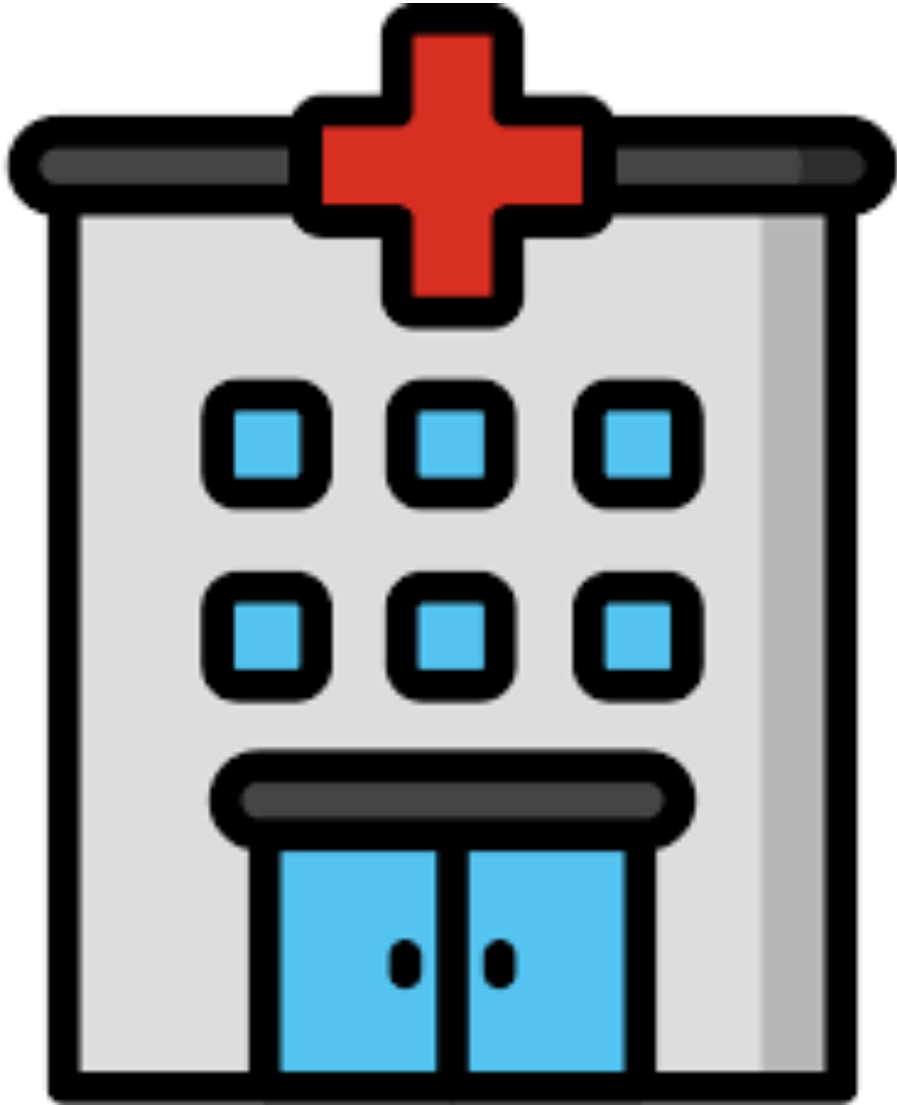
At times local churches and organized religious groups aren't as welcoming



Communication and attention changes with the injuries may make attendance at community services a problem

At Success  
Rehabilitation,  
Our Clients  
experience a  
wide range of  
spiritual needs

<b>Need</b>	For comfort through grief and loss
<b>Need</b>	For celebrating and ritualizing life's passages
<b>Need</b>	For seeking new images for life's journey



Chaplains in other settings  
have helped with the  
rehabilitation process

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Physical Rehabilitation

Hospitals

Prisons

Nursing Homes



# We asked. . . .

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IS THIS SOMETHING THAT YOU WOULD  
FIND HELPFUL?



# The Chaplain Intern's Experience

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CHAPLAIN PAUL AUCKLAND

# Need

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To assist the Clinical Team in dealing with the spiritual aspects of individuals

People possess body and spirit, so it provides for every aspect of the client.



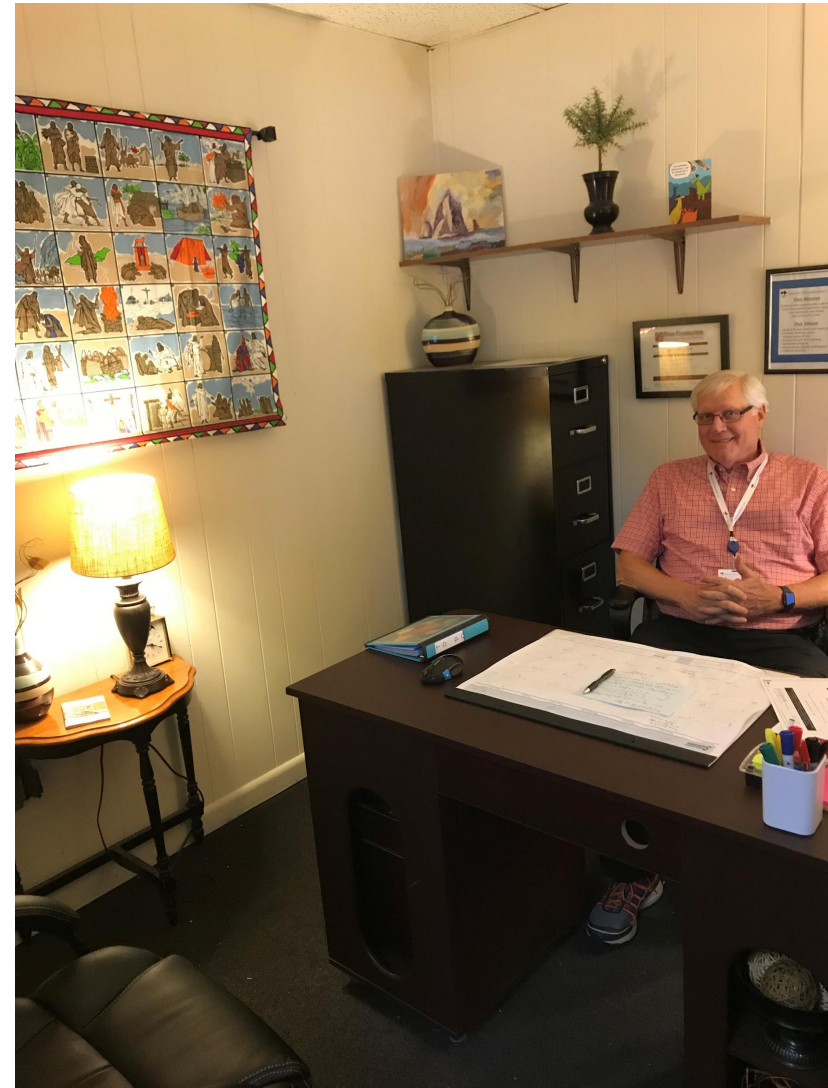
# Scope

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- Meet individually with clients to help them cope with brain injury in relation to their faith journey
  - Two most prevalent emotions –
    - Grief
    - Anger
  - Two most asked questions –
    - Why?
    - Why me?
- Group spirituality class
- Seasonal/special faith-based services







# Examples

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A female –

- Mother of 6 children, youngest 14

- Frustrated with the inability to parent or control her children

- Devised a prayer plan in conjunction with her faith which enabled her to be proactive

- Removed the frustration

A male – going through a divorce

- Why after all this did God allow this?

- Just listen to him and help him process it in relation to his faith



# Challenges/Rewards

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Most challenging –

Helping find Purpose – rediscovering value in living with a brain injury

Helping find Peace – accepting the new realities that brain injury presents

Helping see Hope – being able to see a future

Encouraging Faith – the ability to move forward

Most rewarding –

Watching clients make progress in response to a brain injury!







# The Traumatic Brain Injury Survivor's experience:

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BRANDON GRASSO

# Introduction/ Background

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- Lifestyle before injury
- Drug use - ABI



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# Brandon's Injury

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- Date of injury: April 30, 2018
- What happened







# Course of Rehab – Hospitals/Rehabilitations

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- St. Mary Medical Center, Langhorne
- Jefferson Hospital, Philadelphia
- Magee Rehabilitation, Philadelphia
- Success Rehabilitation Inc., Quakertown



## Conversation with Chaplain Paul

- When meetings began
- Spiritual healing/ growth
- Belief/ faith in God
- Reason you're alive and here today
- What has been most helpful/rewarding about meeting with Chaplain Paul



**MARCH 18,  
2019**

# How to implement a chaplaincy program in a Rehabilitation Setting

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1. Find out if clients are identifying a spiritual need
2. Consider what chaplain qualities are important for your needs
3. Identify chaplain candidates
4. Interview chaplain candidates
5. Set up a schedule: office, seasonal programs, spirituality group being available to staff

## Conclusions:

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A chaplain can be extraordinarily helpful for survivors of ABI and TBI in their rehabilitation

Building a program in a thoughtful way is key



# Looking Ahead: hopes and goals

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-**Dr. Karen Rosenberger**: Hope to expand program and add outcome measures to demonstrate effectiveness.

-**Chaplain Paul** :

- Working with the Clinical Team to a greater degree
- More interaction with the faith-based community
- More opportunities for clients to explore their faith at Success

-**Brandon**: I hope to have a normal life. I would like to inspire hope in others, to make a difference



# Special Thanks to:

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Brandon Grasso

Chaplain Paul Auckland

Success Rehabilitation clients and staff who have enthusiastically embraced this new program

Administrators for supporting our efforts to provide exceptional care for TBI and ABI survivors





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