

VOL. 1 ISSUE 2 • SEPTEMBER 2021

# DELIVERING HOPE !

Newsletter of Stroke Support India

Editor : Sonal Goregaokar

## This issue:

### DO YOU KNOW ?

**STROKE KILLS, OR IN ABOUT 80 % OF THE CASES, DISABLES,  
MANY TIMES PERMANENTLY !**

#### IN INDIA :

**THERE ARE ABOUT THREE  
STROKES EVERY MINUTE !!**

**IT CAUSES MORE DEATHS  
THAN HIV, TB &  
AND MALARIA COMBINED !**

**LESS THAN 1 % OF THE AFFECTED GET  
TIMELY TREATMENT, MAINLY DUE  
LACK OF AWARENESS - MANY  
AFFECTED DO NOT EVEN KNOW  
WHAT HIT THEM TILL IT IS TOO LATE !!!**

**YET, MORE THAN 80 % OF STROKES MAY HAVE BEEN  
PREVENTED BY SOME LIFESTYLE CHANGES !**

**JOIN US IN THE FIGHT TO RAISE STROKE  
AWARENESS ! SIGN THIS PETITION:**

<https://www.change.org/p/raise-stroke-awareness-in-india>

**OUR MISSION:  
RAISING STROKE AWARENESS AND  
SUPPORTING STROKE SURVIVORS AND THEIR FAMILIES**

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Know and Share - Help  
Raise Stroke Awareness

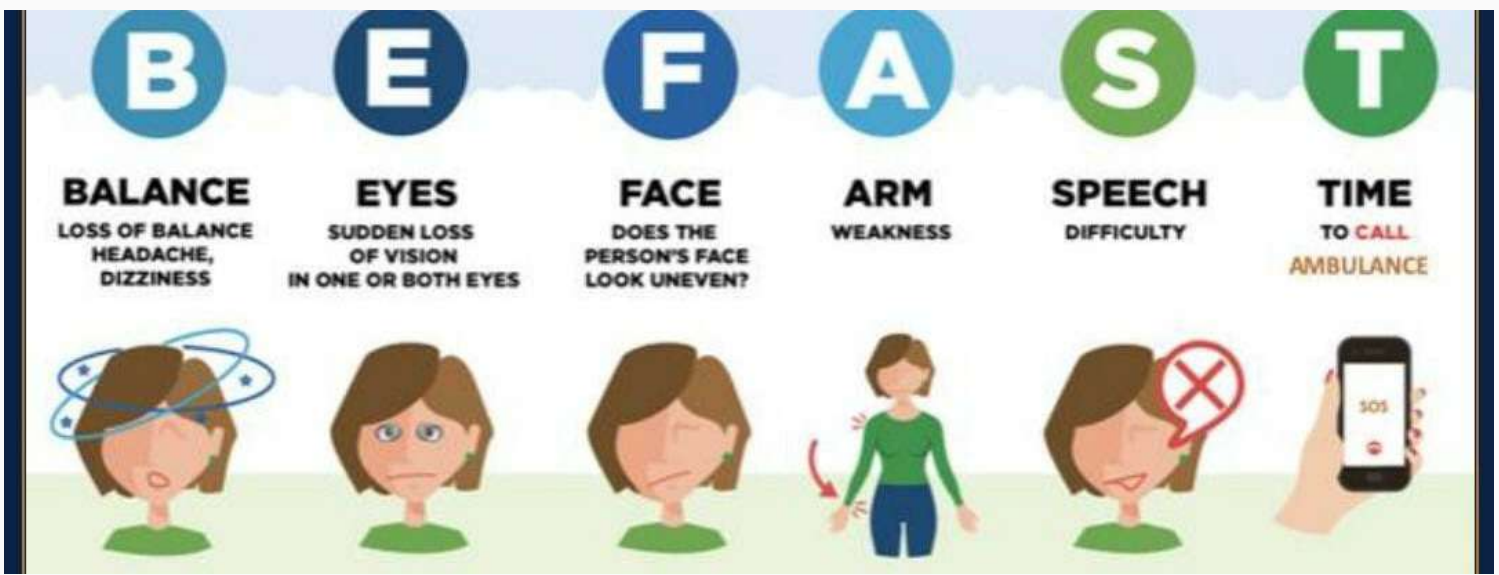
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Know common stroke  
signs. Prevention is  
better than Cure -  
control these factors to  
lower substantially your  
risk of stroke

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Stroke Warrior  
Sameer's Journey

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Some inspirations from  
stroke warriors in our  
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Oriented Training- a step  
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after stroke

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and plans



**ALWAYS REMEMBER AND TELL OTHERS THE MOST COMMON SYMPTOMS OF STROKE AS SHOWN ABOVE ! For more elaboration please see <https://strokesupport.in/be-fast>**

**More than 80 % of the strokes may be prevented !**

Following factors - all in the control of an individual are responsible for a majority of strokes. Indeed, some studies indicate that these are responsible for about 90 % of strokes !

- Hypertension
- High Cholestrol
- Current smoking
- Alcohol consumption
- Diabetes
- Stress
- Obesity
- Lack of physical activity
- Poor Diet

**Remember - Exercise is a BLESSING, not a CHORE !**

Another major factor - heart disease- is also a result of many of above, and is as well a risk factor for stroke. And many( some say all ) of them may be positively helped by a single factor - **EXERCISE !**

**Control the above risk factors to reduce substantially your risk of stroke !**



## My Stroke Journey

BY SAMEER BHIDE



### My life before stroke

I grew up in Mumbai and completed a commerce degree and played competitive badminton and cricket. I moved to the United States 31 years ago as a student to do my MBA. Then I worked for several companies for many years in different roles in technology. I played Racquetball and Tennis. I was a fan of Baseball and American Football. I enjoyed both Hollywood and Bollywood movies and music. Like many other immigrants, I was living the American dream...

### When stroke happened....

On 31st January 2017 morning my left sinus started to hurt. I became dizzy. And then I started to sweat. My wife called 9-1-1. The paramedics arrived quickly in about 15-20 minutes – that might have saved my life. But my vitals were normal. They thought I might have a severe migraine headache. So, at this point nobody thought it was a stroke. I remember seeing the worried faces of my wife and older son. When they loaded me in the ambulance, I passed out. And my life changed forever.....

### Stay in hospital....

After 2 brain surgeries and a month in a coma in the ICU followed by another month in the hospital, I was discharged. I had gained some physical strength, but mentally the thoughts of “Why Me” hounded me.

### Therapies I did/ am doing...

I did different therapies in Western and Eastern medicine – physical, occupational, speech, vision, vestibular etc. All therapies helped me but the 4 which were the most beneficial to me were – physical therapy, yoga, meditation, and sessions with a psychologist

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*Sameer has written a transformational memoir "One Fine Day" which is his story of hope and resilience and how he has slowly tried to embrace his new normal with positivity, grace and gratitude. It documents his experiences, lessons learned, and tips from his healing journey which will help stroke survivors and their families in building resilience to face their challenging situation. You can [find it on Amazon here](#) .*



Sameer Bhide's Journey, Continued....

### **Present status...**

**My strength and vision have improved 60-70% since my stroke, Mentally, I am in much better state than right after my stroke. I have slowly started doing some daily chores. Luckily there were no complications after my stroke. But my dizziness, headaches and balance issues have not improved at all and are a continued challenge.**

**I started to travel on my own only last year. I walk with a cane whenever I go outside. When in my apartment I walk slowly without the cane.**

**Currently I am not working due to my dizziness, headaches and balance issues. I try to meet friends wherever and whenever possible. Friends are indeed precious.**

### **My outlook on life now...**

**It is said that a stroke changes everything. My case is no different. I have started taking a very different view of life. I have realized I have become more compassionate. Not that I was not before – but it is much more now.**

### **The future....**

**My intention is to continue writing full-time in the future, if my health allows it.**

### **Everything has two sides...**

**Surprisingly I found that holds even for stroke. I discovered that I was a decent writer, started to cook a little by myself, got into the habit of regular workouts, got into a habit of reading more books (audiobooks in my case) and healthy eating. What I miss much, however, is not being able to engage in any sports or being able to drive a car.**

### **Family matters...**

**Family is very important in supporting your physical as well as psychological recovery.**

### **What personality traits help towards recovery ...**

- Acceptance
- Compassion
- Faith

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Sameer Bhide's Journey, Continued....

### **Consultations I had and at present ...**

I do exercises at home and visit my neurologist every 6 months. But in my first two years, besides consulting with several neurologists, I also consulted an ENT, a neuro ophthalmologist, a vision therapy specialist, a headache specialist, and an Osteopath. I also talked regularly to a psychologist. It helped me a lot with reducing my emotional stress and to accept my reality.

### **On alternative therapies ...**

I am quite open to trying anything and see if it works. Some that seem to have helped me include :

- Different Ayurvedic Treatments/Massages : Panchakarma , Shiro Vasti Shirodhara, Marma Massage
- Yoga Exercises : Pranayam, Meditation
- Acupuncture

### **About caregivers...**

Caregivers need compassion too. People around the caregivers need to make sure they have all the help they need to be able to be a caregiver – provide tools which make their tasks a little easier, provide cooked meals and rides, offer them breaks etc.

### **Some tips in closing ....**

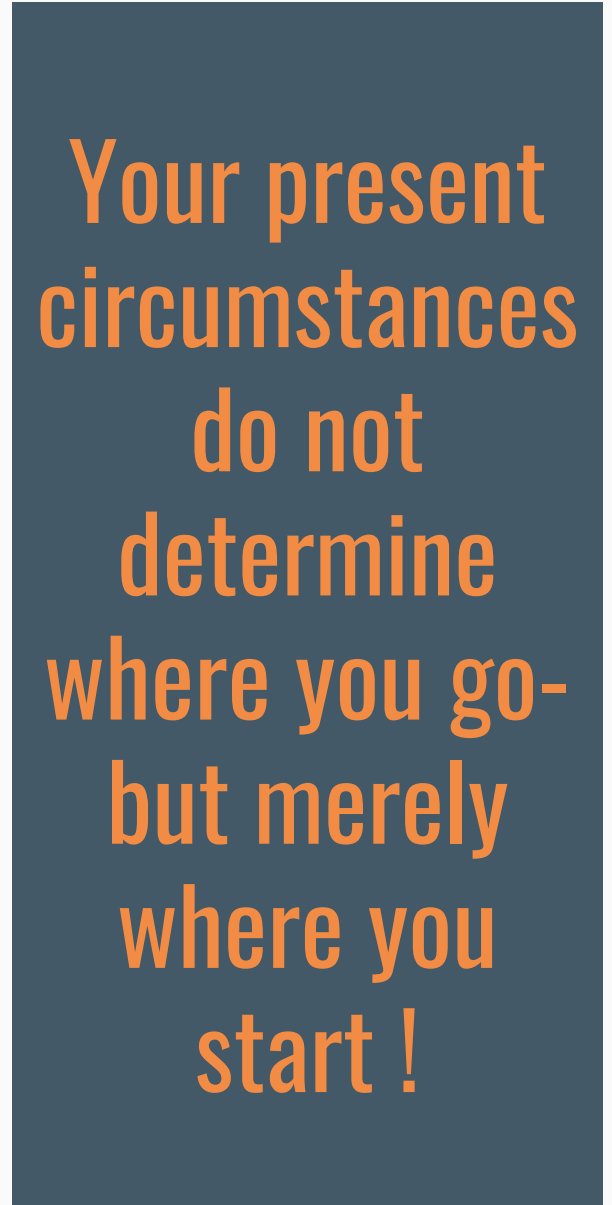
- Do not be tempted to compare your recovery with that of others. Keep in mind that every situation and adversity is different. Learn to accept that you will heal at your own pace.
- You cannot “play the victim” beyond a certain time. It’s okay to pity yourself initially, but that must stop quickly.
- There is no magic pill or potion, whether in Western or Eastern medicine, which offers a total cure.
- If you see some “fatigue” in caregivers and friends related to their involvement or intensity in your care or interaction, do not take it personally.
- Only you can determine if you can participate in certain activities. Listen to your heart and mind. Sometimes the heart wins over the mind; sometimes it is the other way around.

# Yes, we can !

**Some Inspirations from Stroke Warriors in our Support Groups !**



- Shruti



- Arvind Chittor

**You may delay, Time will not. Grab every chance to repeat your exercises and rewire your brain**

- Arvind Chittor

**JOIN OUR SUPPORT GROUPS - SEND A WHATSAPP TO +91-9810290988  
OR CLICK TO [HTTPS://STROKESUPPORT.IN/ADD](https://strokesupport.in/add) TO ADD YOURSELF !**

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## Task Oriented Training - A step towards independence after stroke

-Dr. Forum Shah ( Physiotherapist )



Life of stroke survivors post stroke becomes very much dependent on care givers. Let us just break this status and try to take a next step towards task oriented training. This is an approach in rehabilitation which can help to gain the functional independence and also help in lessening psycho-social constraints for stroke survivors.

This approach mainly deals with helping individuals to cope with the everyday physical environment; it is highly goal oriented and intentional. It starts with identification of problems or difficulties faced by the stroke survivors in day to day life events, and then setting goals for the stroke survivors to achieve to overcome their difficulties. The goals are set by together with the stroke survivors, physical therapist and the caregivers keeping the survivors at the center of the goal setting process. But we need to keep in mind that the goals should be set according the principle of SMART i.e.

**S-Specific**

**M-Measurable**

**A-Attainable/Achievable**

**R-Relevant**

**T-Time Bound**

The physical therapy should be based on giving sessions which are relevant to the goals set and looking at the real life constraints addressing both the environmental as well as personal factors which are causing activity limitations leading to reduced participation in real life events.

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**I don't stop  
when I am  
tired.I stop  
when I am  
done !**





## Task Oriented Training - A step towards independence after stroke

Hubbard et al (2009) outlined some strategies to incorporate into a programme of task specific training.

1. Training should be relevant to the client, including meaningful and real life activities
2. Training activities should be random, so task order, context and environment are varied
3. Training needs to be repetitive
4. Training may initially involve components of a task but should always aim towards reconstructing the whole task
5. Training should include positive feedback.

Here is an example of this approach.

An individual may have difficulty in getting up from chair and walking. As care giver or physical therapist we need to identify the factors which are causing these difficulties. Such factors could be personal or environmental. We then need to modify the factors which can be modified and train the individuals in that scenario and progress further to help the individual achieve his goal. For example, if there is problem in height of the chair then we can modify the height using some measures and then give repetitions for sit to stand activity in that environment and progress further by reducing the height. Similarly, if the individual has difficulty in walking we need to identify the factors causing the problem e.g. is it the uneven surface, foot position, traffic, pain or any other environmental or personal factor and train according instead of only treating him with conventional rehabilitation process .

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*Dr. Forum Shah (PT) is an active member of our Stroke Support Group, and a practicing physiotherapist at Valsad (Gujarat). She has done Masters of Physiotherapy in Neurological Sciences with special interest in Cerebral Palsy, Stroke and Parkinson's disease.*

## Benefits of the Task Oriented Approach :

- \*\* Increases motivational and confidence level of the individual.
- \*\* Increased involvement of the survivor in rehabilitation process.
- \*\* Improves motor learning.
- \*\* Helps in process of neural plasticity.
- \*\* Focuses on individual as a whole looking at all the contextual factors.





## Some Happenings...

Several activities are regularly undertaken by members of Stroke Support India. A very small list includes :

### Zoom meetups on :

- Advances in Spasticity Management-Chat with Dr. Ramnarayan
- Chat with Stroke Warrior Christopher Ward
- First Physiotherapy Session with Dr. Forum ( PT )

### Podcasts on :

- Stroke and Depression - a Podcast in Bangla
- Stroke Symptoms explained in Punjabi

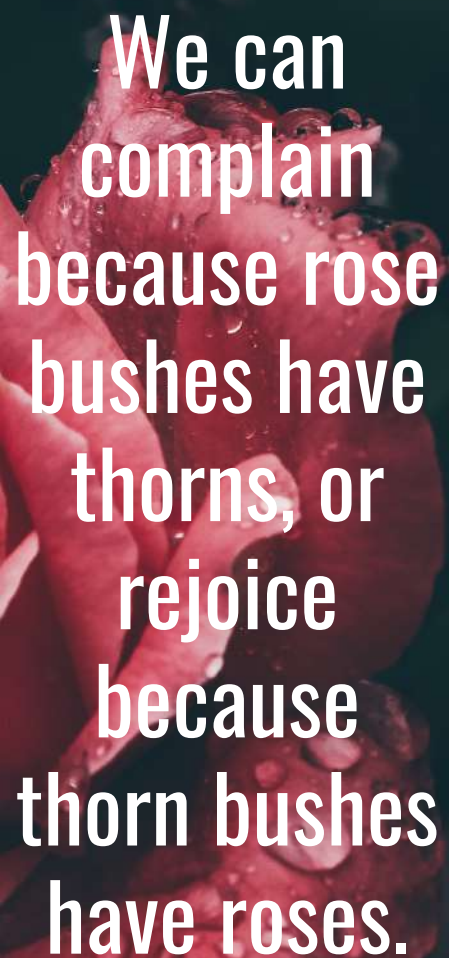
### Other efforts

- Participated in a Zoom chat on Stroke Awareness organized by a major Delhi Club. The chat was very well attended.
- Contacts made with doctors in Ahmedabad and Gorakhpur to spread stroke awareness.

## and some Plans !

Similar and other activities are planned going forward. Some are already underway. And most hearteningly, all are done by voluntary help and participation of the members of Stroke Support India.

Join our Support Groups to be informed of other events and participate/help where you can !



We can  
complain  
because rose  
bushes have  
thorns, or  
rejoice  
because  
thorn bushes  
have roses.

Positivity  
helps more !

**Please forward this Newsletter to any it may benefit. Thank you !**

**All feedback, suggestions and help welcome.**

**E-mail to : [strokeindia@gmail.com](mailto:strokeindia@gmail.com)**