

Sharing **OUR** Recovery

A quarterly newsletter dedicated to support victims, survivors, caregivers and loved ones of motor vehicle collisions.

FALL EDITION 2023

ISSUE 24

PIECES IN THIS ISSUE:

- | | page |
|--|------|
| * Leaves Are Falling
Autumn is Calling..... | 1 |
| * Crash Survivor Does
Not Consider Herself
a Write-Off..... | 2 |
| * After the Crash | 2 |
| * Deer Strike | 3-4 |
| * Thanksgiving Recovery
Tips to Keep in Mind..... | 5 |
| * Crash Survivors Knew
They Both Wanted
to Help Others | 6-7 |
| * Post-Crash Tip | 7 |
- Editor in Chief - Dawne McKay

Haven't signed up for
Sharing Our Recovery?

Sign up here!

Brought to you by:



Connecting Crash Survivors
One Step at a Time

Leaves Are Falling Autumn is Calling

September has knocked on our doors and I don't think I am alone when I find myself wondering where the summer has gone. We hope you managed to have a safe and enjoyable summer and as autumn sets into our lives with crisper air and a fresh perspective, we are anxious to see what is on the horizon.

Earlier this month, I was invited back to be a guest on the After the Crash Podcast hosted by Attorney David Craig to speak with Lisa Mary who is a talented singer and songwriter as well as a crash survivor who was involved in a horrific wreck on her way to perform a show. Please have a listen to this highly informative podcast!

In this Issue, you will hear how a crash survivor thinks that some may have written her off and how she hasn't given up on herself, we will also introduce you to a family of five that endured a horrific crash who chose to give back to others, we include an important Post Crash Tip and you will learn why the buck stops with the driver.

We are always thankful to our followers, sponsors, subscribers and members. Thank you for believing in the [Crash Support Network](#) and as we continue to grow, I look forward to connect with so many amazing individuals and organizations.

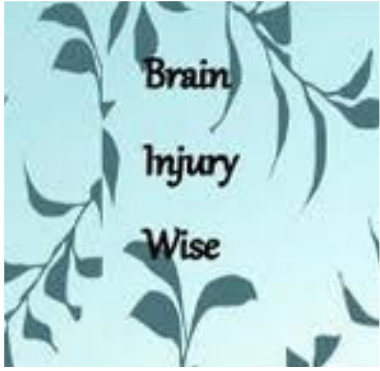
We are thinking of every crash survivor that is recovering this fall and we encourage you to reach out to us anytime as we are always willing to help!

- Dawne



Crash Survivor Does Not Consider Herself a Write-Off

Submitted by Brain Injury Wise



A tax write-off as I understand it is a tax deduction, or any legitimate expense that can be subtracted from your taxable income. I have heard of rich people “writing it off” when referring to dinners on company time or real estate used to conduct business. I never thought

of myself as a write off...but some people would consider me that.

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, a write off is defined as a particular person or thing that is no longer useful, important, or successful. After accidents, under these terms, cars that are irreparably damaged are written off. When I was irreparably damaged myself, I guess my profession, workplace, legal team and insurance company wrote me off too. And now It's easy to see society certainly writes people with disabilities off to some degree as well. These sound like a fictitious Seinfeld episode that would be called “The Write Off”, or better a real one called “The Package” where Kramer tries to talk Jerry into sending a broken stereo to the post office where he insists it will be ‘written off’ and replaced.

I Am Using Different Benchmarks Now

Well, I don't consider myself a write off and would wholeheartedly say I'm useful, important and successful too. I am just using different benchmarks now, and maybe one's society would be slow to adopt. I have learned through time, therapy, rehabilitation exercises, trial and error and lots of tears that to be useful, important and successful can look many different ways. If you feel kindness, deep thought, treating others with decency/humanity, love and respect while trying to do the right thing is useful, well that is me. If

you feel that being instrumental in the lives of your family, children, and friends is important, then I am that too. And if you feel that not narrowly defining success by earning power is crucial to our society, then I am successful too.

When you have so many institutions writing you off it can be daunting but the personal resolve that comes from surviving one or more traumatic events is no match for the threat of permanently assigning you as insignificant and small. It is at these difficult junctures in life where the work towards self-actualization, appreciation, and gratitude happens and not everyone gets this opportunity to do it. Having an easy life actually teaches you less. Society prizes the earners, the rich, the consumers, the heteronormative, and the young. But the disabled, vulnerable, trauma experiencing, rehab requiring slice of humanity is where the REAL is. It's those of us who will always understand struggle, kindness, need, basic love, the value of hard work. Using age or money as symbols of success is a misnomer.

I Am a Better Version of Myself

Miriam-Webster defines the opposite of a write off as an appreciation, enhancement or mark up from the original value. That's me. I am in many ways a better version of myself after being permanently disabled in a car accident. Some may have written me off, or given up on me, but I haven't given up on myself. Instead of being written off, now I'm simply writing. And like with any time I get in my car, I always readjust the mirrors, check my blind side, align my seat and check the road so I can move forward on my own terms, and not subscribe to the sometimes narrow or vacant aspirations society has laid out for me.

For more information on Brain Injury Wise please visit: braininjurywise.com and we also encourage you to follow their story on instagram at [Brain Injury Wise](https://www.instagram.com/BrainInjuryWise).

After the Crash

Watch “After the Crash” Podcast Episode 36 – A Crash Survivor's Perspective with guests Lisa Mary & Dawne McKay.

[Ep. 36 – A Crash Survivor's Perspective || After the Crash Podcast - YouTube](#)



Deer Strike

Submitted by Shelley M. Martin, Personal Injury Lawyer

Everyone in this neck of the woods knows deer strikes are just part of life. Everyone has hit a deer. Everyone has had a deer run out in front of the car. Everyone has had a near miss. It's an accident. It just happens. It's an act of God. It's an inevitable accident, right? Wrong.

When deer and wildlife take us by surprise, we drivers always have the last clear chance to avoid a deadly crash. And when you are a passenger, you are completely dependent on your driver to operate that vehicle responsibly and with care and attention. Your driver holds your life in his hands. He is responsible for your safety. And when deer strikes happen, he is responsible for your injuries and pain. Don't blame the deer. Blame the driver.



Why does the buck stop with the driver? Let's count the ways:

1. **Speed:** All must drive in control and be able to make an emergency stop in safety. This means obeying the speed limits and driving for the conditions. Speed limits are posted for a reason. And in rural and forested regions, limits are there to protect drivers, their passengers and our wildlife. When we speed, we lose our ability to brake in safety and in control. Speed kills. It kills drivers, passengers and animals;
2. **Distracted Driving:** When our eyes are on our phone, complicated infotainment screens, screaming kids or playful pets, they aren't on the road. When a deer leaps out in front of our car, we need every second available to stop in safety. We lose those precious seconds when we aren't watching out for what's right in front of us;
3. **Scout Ahead:** Scan the open road and anticipate where your vehicle will be in the seconds ahead. See a rock

cut up ahead? Scan for movement. See a forest access road, cottage drive or rural gravel road up ahead? Slow down and watch for wildlife. Deer, moose and critters will take the path of least resistance. They have runs or regular paths that cross our highways. They are creatures of habit. Anticipate where they may be and where they may cross your path;

4. **Signs:** Many deer crossing signs are posted on our highways. Keep a watch for those yellow signs. Slow down and be aware. Those signs save lives when drivers pay attention and respect;

5. **Ask Locals:** When you stop for gas or a bite to eat, ask the attendant in the station or your server about deer and moose in the area.

Locals know and will help. Locals know how deadly animal strikes can be. They wouldn't wish that on anyone. You wouldn't go for a swim in the ocean without first asking others on the beach about undertow and what lies beneath. Why would you drive into our woods without asking what's out there? This is particularly true when your drive places you in or near our provincial or national parks. Know that large animals call our forests

home and are on the roads. Know that flies force deer and moose onto the bare shoulder of the highways where they

“Know that flies force deer and moose onto the bare shoulder of the highways where they can catch a breeze and a break from their torment. Know that deer run together and when you see one, there are sure to be another two or three right behind.”

continues on page 4




can catch a breeze and a break from their torment. Know that deer run together and when you see one, there are sure to be another two or three right behind. When you slow for deer get your flashers on and be aware of cars traveling behind you. The whitetail deer rut and fall hunt may flush deer headlong onto our fall roads.

6. Seatbelts: Save lives. A violent collision with a large animal, or a high speed attempt to swerve that rolls you into the ditch or trees, will launch unbelted driver, passengers and pets through windshields. It is the driver's responsibility to insist that every passenger in his car buckles up and every child is appropriately strapped in a car seat. It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that every passenger arrives alive.

Our fall roads can be deadly roads. The danger continues well beyond the city limits of our busy four laners and highways. Country roads look quiet. Our forest roads and highways look sleepy and peaceful. They aren't. Don't be fooled. Deer strikes are not just accidents. The buck always stops with us drivers. Drivers make the mistakes not the animals. Drivers have the last clear chance to avoid a collision.

For more information on Martin Law Office please visit: www.injurylawyerontario.net.




It's your crashiversary

You are healing and that's worth celebrating every year! Take a moment and reflect at how far you have come today.

Never lose hope. Be proud of yourself. You are amazing!

You have survived a lot and we are thinking of you today.



SUPPORT NETWORK

Recommended Books to Read After Surviving a Motor Vehicle Crash



From TRAUMA to TRIAL
A Step-by-Step Guide to Ontario Personal Injury Law
WILLIAM J. TEGGART, ESQ.

Unthinkable
REAL ANSWERS FOR FAMILIES CONFRONTING CATASTROPHIC INJURY OR DEATH
J. KYLE BACHUS, ESQ.

Semitruck Wreck
A Guide for Victims and Their Families
David W. Craig

Talk Crash To Me
What to Expect After Surviving a Motor Vehicle Collision and How to Manage Your Recovery
S. Osmer McKel

STILL STANDING
WHEN YOU HAVE EVERY REASON TO GIVE UP, KEEP GOING
KEVIN REMPPEL

ARE YOU A CANADIAN INJURED IN THE UNITED STATES?
Claim The Damages And Insurance Coverage The Right Way
Andrew A. Sacchetti, Esq.

available at **amazon**



Thanksgiving Recovery Tips to Keep in Mind

From
the Blog
Piece

From the Crash Survivor Blog

As Canadian Thanksgiving is approaching in October and American Thanksgiving in November, it can be an overwhelming time for crash survivors. We are distracted by an unexpected life change and the constant worry about our health and finances often hide in the background while we try our best to enjoy family time. It can be a real challenge because everyone is talking at the same time, children may be running about and the television could be on full blast while you are trying to recover.

How To Make for a Good Thanksgiving While You Are Recovering:

- Have coping strategies in place in case you find yourself overwhelmed. Identify a place that you can go to decompress, and go there if needed. Find some quiet moments. Retreat to a bedroom as noise levels will be that their highest.
- Knowing how much time you will spend in advance should help to reduce anxiety. If you find that you are having fun and want to stay longer, great! If on the other hand, you don't think that you can stay the entire time, know that it is okay to slip away early. Feel good for staying as long as you did. Your recovery and health are important so don't overdue it.
- Say yes to help! Whether you are hosting this year or attending as a guest, thanksgiving can be overwhelming



and there will be people who will want to help and may offer their support. Take them up on their offers. If family members or friends aren't offering, ask. If you have always been independent like me, I found this very hard to accomplish but it is so important. Asking others to help with cooking or grocery shopping can be a big relief and can help take away some of your stress.

- Decide where you want to spend Thanksgiving. You may want to change the location especially if you travel out of town every year to celebrate with family. Ask your family members to come see you or suggest a "skype or facetime chat" if you are unable to celebrate with them this year.
- Travel in comfort. Managing pain while you travel to and from your destination is just as important as managing it during your festivities if not more. No matter how you're traveling whether by car, plane or train, try to get up and walk around every so often when it's safe to do so.
- Take advantage of your "journal time" especially if you are having a bad day throughout the weekend. I not only found this therapeutic but necessary. Writing down your thoughts and feelings can enhance your sense of well being.
- Watch the food. Food can make us feel better in the short term. Don't deprive yourself, but be careful that you do not let food become your comfort especially if you are immobile. You already have enough going on with your recovery without having to deal with a bad stomach from overeating or a sudden weight gain.
- Watch your intake of alcohol. Alcohol can become a fast friend when we are feeling anxious, stressed or simply overwhelmed. You may already be taking prescription medication for your injuries and those two substances are not a good mix.

Thanksgiving can be overwhelming and stressful. Take some time to enjoy your family and try your best to share some joy and gratitude with others but also be good to yourself. This year, I am grateful to all of our followers and supporters. I am also thankful that I have another day of healing. I am also grateful that we have the [Crash Support Network Group](#) which is an online support group that is available to crash survivors around the world where we inspire and encourage each other through our daily struggles.

Wishing everyone a safe & wonderful Thanksgiving. Don't over do it!



Crash Survivors Knew They Both Wanted to Help Others

Submitted by Seantae Jackson

We'd finally made it. After 16 years of marriage, 5 kids in 6 years (including 2 sets of twins), health challenges galore, financial hardship... life. For the first time we finally felt like things were at that 'point' that we'd always wanted to get to. During COVID quarantine, my husband Trevor got promoted to the position he'd been working towards for 5 years. I finally found how to sleep, eat and hydrate in a way that fueled my body and kept me out of the hospital. I was thriving in my personal and career life. We were co-parenting well and were excited for our oldest twins to start high school soon. Our marriage was strong as we took time to nourish it and ourselves. We were training for our first marathon and Trevor was running 8+ miles a day - up the nearby canyon and back. All of our hard work and grit was finally paying off.

"911... What's your emergency?"

I couldn't see. My vision came in and out in large waves of black to blurry, back to black. I didn't know what had happened. I couldn't process any thoughts or formulate any logic. But I knew we needed help. A lot of help. And very quickly. Just that morning Trevor and I loaded up our oldest

twins - Cameron and Owen - and my best friend Mel. We were so excited to take the boys on a backpacking trip in the backcountry. We would have to drive a boring 2 lane road for hours to get to the trailhead, but we knew Mel would keep them entertained asking them witty questions that would keep them engaged.

While we were driving, a car coming the other way attempted to pass a semi truck. They failed to see us and hit us head on at highway speeds. We just stopped. It was like hitting a brick wall at 150 miles per hour. Our bodies took an immense amount of force. Our story's 'top point' was now over. An entirely new chapter - correction - a whole new book, began being written at that moment. The injuries sustained between the 5 of us covered the span of an entire body.

New Book of Life Looked So Different

We endured seemingly never ending days of surgeries, comas and hospital stays. Our younger kids stayed with family for over a month while both their parents and 2 oldest brothers

continues on page 7



all fought for their lives and mental stability again. This new 'book' of our life looked so different from the old and polished cover we had just set up on the shelf. Yet somehow that old book had prepared us for all that was to come. We knew we could do hard things and we knew we could get through it together.

Our recoveries became a family affair. Our 8 year old daughter became the nurse - always filling up waters and bringing in fresh ice packs. Our 8 year old son gave suggestions of ways to distract from the pain. Our 13 year old son fulfilled the role as the 'man of the house'. Trevor worked through hours of intensive therapies to regain the ability to walk. Cameron crutched around and worked hard to get back to being the athlete he'd always been. I adapted to only using one arm while my other healed. Owen followed doctor's orders and minimized brain stimulation and did every therapy recommended. We all learned how to deal with PTSD.

We Both Knew We Wanted to Help Others

As we started seeking resources, we quickly realized there was little to none out there. Trevor and I had both wanted to do something positive with all of this. We both felt a strong urge to do so - within 72 hours of the accident - in the midst

of not knowing if we would live. We both knew (separately) that we wanted to help others somehow. Trevor had looked down at his wrist band while laying in the hospital bed awaiting another surgery. But it didn't say his name. Instead were the words, "Trauma, Sandal Blue".

A year after our accident we officially formed and licensed a non-profit titled (you guessed it) Sandal Blue Foundation. We are a solution-focused organization and help other accident survivors and their families through care packages, aid once they're home, resources, and most importantly connection. Owen frequently visits other brain injury patients at the Children's Hospital and we have been lucky enough to be at the bedside of many patients and families through some of their hardest moments. Sharing in raw and vulnerable times together and being there when they could have felt so alone. I am now a professional inspirational speaker and we love to spread hope and light and remind all those that are starting a new book that they are not alone and that they can do amazing things!

For more information on Sandal Blue Foundation please visit: [Sandal Blue Foundation](#).

Always Check Your Prescriptions!

Submitted by S. Dawne McKay

Post
Crash
Tip



When you receive your prescription, you should always:

- Check the label. Look for your name, the name of the medicine, the dose, and how often you should take it. If something looks unfamiliar, call your provider.
- Look at the medicine. Make sure it looks the same as what you have been taking. If it doesn't, call the pharmacist or your provider. It may look different because it is a generic version or a different brand. However, you should always check to make sure it is the same medicine before you take it.
- Take and store medicines safely. When taking medications at home, store them properly and keep them organized and out of reach of children. Following a regular medicine routine will also help make sure you get the proper dose at the right time.



MANY THANKS TO OUR 2023 SPONSORS!

We couldn't have done it without your support!



By sponsoring the *Sharing our Recovery Newsletter*, you are supporting the continued growth of this valuable free resource for crash survivors.

Would you like to be part of Sharing Our Recovery?

Articles/Stories:

We are always looking for articles or stories, and we would love to hear from you!

Want to share?

Email: info@crashsupportnetwork.com

Sponsors:

We are always looking for *Sharing Our Recovery* sponsors. Interested in sponsoring?

Information: [Crash Support Network Sponsorship](#)



Meet Dawne McKay – Founder

S. Dawne McKay is the Founder of the Crash Support Network and continues to donate countless hours to her crash survivor community by sharing resources, highly informative articles, a quarterly newsletter and a blog that allows her to share her own personal journey as a crash survivor. Dawne works hard at bringing awareness to crash survivors through CSN's social media platforms and the online support group by sharing inspirational posts with survivors from all across the world. Dawne is also the author of the book, "Talk Crash to Me - What to Expect After Surviving a Motor Vehicle Collision and How to Manage Your Recovery" which is [available on Amazon](#).

Our Mission is to raise awareness to the recovery journey that many people face after being affected by a motor vehicle crash and to provide online support and resources.



Follow us on twitter:
[@CrashSupportNet](#)



Follow us on Instagram:
[@CrashSupportNetwork](#)



Follow Us on Facebook:
[CrashSupportNet](#)



Subscribe to our YouTube Channel



Connect with us on LinkedIn:
[LinkedIn Profile](#)

All information in *Sharing Our Recovery* is not intended as medical advice or treatment. *Sharing Our Recovery* has been created for informational purposes only. Please consult with your family physician if you have concerns about your health. The views and opinions expressed in any part of this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Publisher (Crash Support Network) or any contributor. The Publisher accepts no responsibility for errors in articles, contributors' pages or advertisements.