

# BI-INSIDE *Magazine*

11th ISSUE: March 2024

Brain Injury Awareness



**BRAIN INJURY**<sup>TM</sup>  
**RESOURCE**  
**CENTER** of Wisconsin

## FEATURES:

*Resource Facilitation: Optimize your Health in 2024*

*SPOTS: What does Better Health mean to you?*

*Holiday Party Recap*

*Telling of the Tail: Sheri Krahn (BI Survivor)*

*AG Therapy: Where Will Your Next Journey Take You?*

This photo was taken of the Lake Michigan shoreline by Gary Rieth.

## Message from the Executive Director

Good Day Everyone!

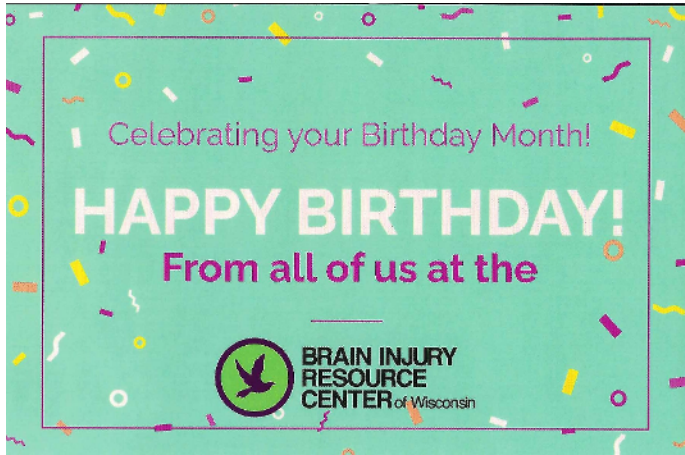
Are you a brain injury survivor? Are you on our birthday postcard list? If you are not, maybe you should be. You may be wondering “Why is getting our birthday postcard important?” Think about it this way. It is a significant expression to remember that each birthday marks another chapter in the grand story of your life. After your brain injury you need to think of it as acknowledging the milestones along your recovery path, each with its own set of highs and lows.

Birthdays are a chance to look back and appreciate how far you’ve come, celebrating growth and resilience. The Birthday Postcard is our way of saying that no matter where your journey takes you, we are here if you need us. By being a member of our Resource Facilitation program you will receive this birthday post card.

Until next time!

*Lois York-Lewis*

Lois York-Lewis



### Our Mission:

To offer assistance, provide resources and information and reassure survivors that they are not walking this journey alone.

### Who we are:

We are all volunteer and run by brain injury survivors and support persons.

We are a 501C3, Registered Charity 27-4483622, Tax Exempt Organization, and are 100% funded through the generosity of people like you!

### BI-INSIDE Magazine Team:

**Bari L. Rieth** (Co-Founder, TBI Survivor who inspired our organization, Daughter, Grand-daughter and Wife to Brain Injury Survivor, Board Secretary, Layout-Editor and Contributor)

**Lois M. York-Lewis** (Co-Founder, Mother of the TBI Survivor who inspired this organization, Mother in-law, Wife and Daughter to Brain Injury Survivors, Pres. of Board of Directors for the BIRCoFWI, and Contributor)

**Kathy Richardson, C.B.I.S.T.** (Resource Facilitator, TBI Survivor, Vice President of the Board of Directors for the BIRCoFWI and Contributor)

**Katie Marshall** (Resource Facilitation Assistant Contributor and Editor)

**Linda Scherwinski** (Mother to a Brain Injury Survivor, Board Member for the BIRCoFWI and Contributor)

**Scott Daul** (Office Assistant and Editor)

**Sheri Krahn** (Editor & Contributor)

**Sheila Lewis-Lorum** (Editor)

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## Your Donation will go a Long Way! **THANK YOU!!**

### *In Honor of...*

**Castellion, Kyle**  
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**Erickson, Renee**  
**Franke, Rick**  
**Fromader, Tony**  
**Koenig, Robert**  
**Kraemer, Noelle**  
**Krahn, Sheri**  
**Lee, Grace**  
**Marshall, Katie**  
**Rieth, Bari\*\***  
**Rieth, Gary\*\***  
**Scherwinski, Micki**  
**Schmitt, Mark\***

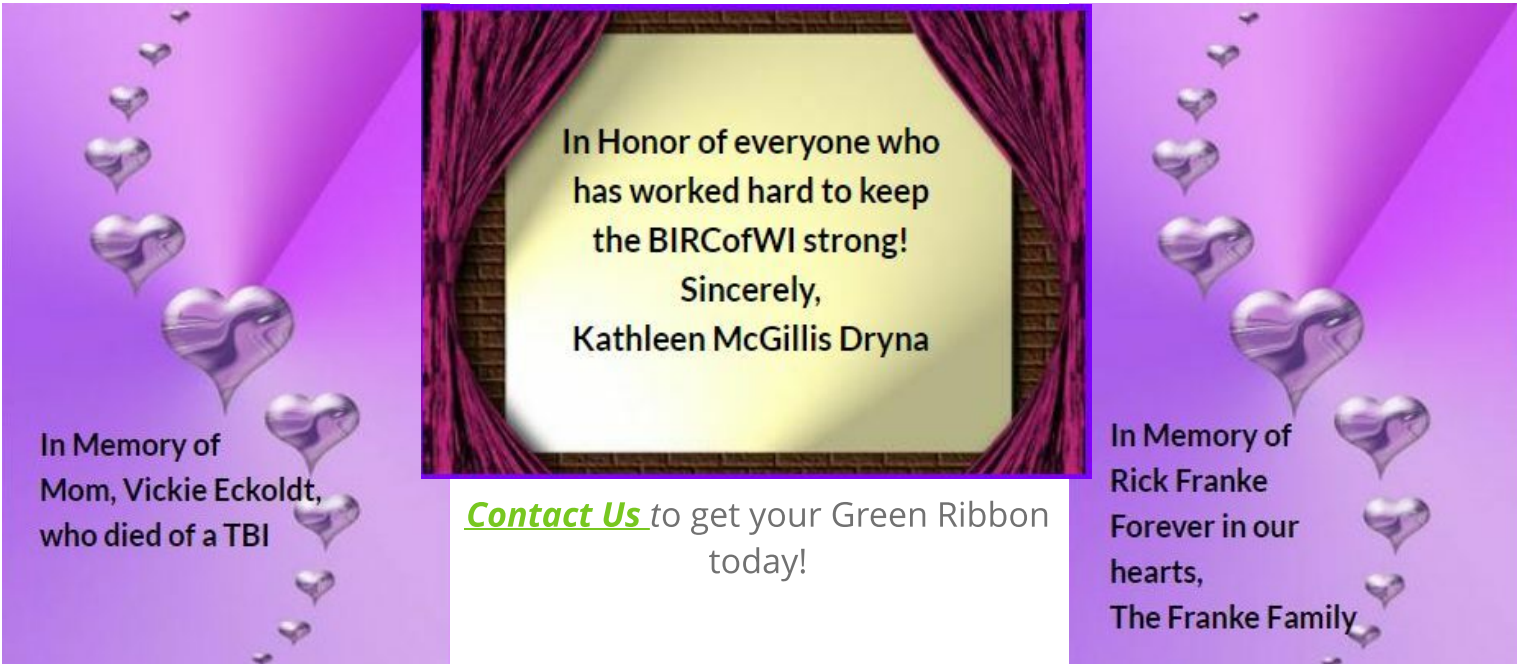
*\*Indicates additional recognition*

### *In Memory of...*

**Eckholdt, Vickie**  
**Foster, Donna**  
**Franke, Rick \*\*\***  
**Gebert, Elliot**  
**Kasprzak, Loraine**  
**Koehler, Lois(Lois Ann)**  
**Kozak, Margaret (Peggy)**  
**Malueg, Mark**  
**Niebuhr, Matthew Marvin**  
**Rieth, Bethany\***  
**Robinson, Derek\***

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In Honor of everyone who  
has worked hard to keep  
the BIRCoFWI strong!  
Sincerely,  
Kathleen McGillis Dryna

In Memory of  
Mom, Vickie Eckoldt,  
who died of a TBI

**Contact Us** to get your Green Ribbon  
today!

In Memory of  
Rick Franke  
Forever in our  
hearts,  
The Franke Family

## Resource Facilitation: What's the Buzz

### *Optimize your health by Starting with the Basics*



Kathy Richardson, BS, CBIST  
Resource Facilitator

To give your injured brain the best possible chance to generate new connections, you need to start with the basics: nutrition, sleep and exercise. It sounds simple but these three things are the basis of a good foundation that will help your brain generate new neural pathways.

What you eat and drink dramatically influences your body's ability to function well. The food and beverages you consume affect you on a cellular level and become your body, muscles, organs, skin, hair and even your moods.

Some food and beverages may not contain nutrients and are "empty" calories. Nutrients do everything

from combating infections to helping your brain function and more.

You can easily follow the Food & Drug Administration's "Choose My Plate" guidelines. A clenched fist is about 1 cup, which experts recommend for a portion of pasta, rice, cereal, vegetables, and fruit.

A meat, poultry or fish portion should be the size of your palm. One-quarter of your plate should consist of grains, one-half should have fruits and vegetables and the remaining quarter should be a serving of protein.

You should also have a cup of dairy with each meal. Eat three meals a day and have a mid-morning and mid-afternoon snack.

You should drink half your weight in fluids daily. For example, if you weigh 200 lbs., drink 100 ounces of fluids every

day.

***Most of what you drink should be water, but other liquids also count toward your goal.***

Sixty percent of brain injury survivors have insomnia, including severe, moderate, and mild brain injuries.

Insomnia increases the possibility of future accidents due to a lower ability to concentrate, reason, and problem-solve.

Physically, insomnia quickens aging, damages bone density, increases your risk of cancer, increases weight, and decreases your sex drive. To improve your chance of a good night's sleep:

- Remove all electronics from your bedroom.
- Have a bedtime routine, go to sleep, and wake up at the same time each day.
- Keep your bedroom temperature cooler.
- Keep your bedroom lighting low.

- Use a "whitenoise" machine such as a fan.
- Sleep in clothes specifically made for sleep.
- If you don't fall asleep in 15 minutes, get out of bed, and do something boring or relaxing until you feel sleepy.
- Don't eat, smoke, exercise, or drink caffeine or alcohol for a few hours before bed.

The Center for Disease Control recommends at least 30 minutes of moderate aerobic exercise five times weekly and muscle-strengthening workouts at least twice weekly. There are a few smartphone apps out

there that can help you monitor your routine (Fitness Pal, Weight Watchers, YMCA).

Exercise reduces stress, improves mood, helps you manage your weight, strengthens your heart and lungs, and improves sleep. Exercise also boosts blood flow to your brain and generates the growth of new neurons.

Here are some ideas to get you moving:

- Stretch to warm up and maintain joint flexibility.
- Join a class with a friend for more fun.
- Become a member of the YMCA or a fitness club.
- Count your steps using a pedometer. (The American

Heart Association recommends 10,000 steps a day).

- Lift weights.
- Do yoga.

Eat nutritionally, sleep well and exercise regularly to give your brain the basic things it needs to make new connections. You will feel so good knowing you are doing everything you can to help your brain function optimally!

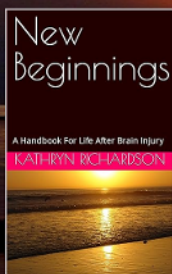
*\*The information contained within this article is general, basic, and may not be applicable to everyone.*

\*Available for purchase March 1st on Amazon

# New Beginnings

*A Handbook For Life After Brain Injury*

By: Kathryn Richardson



"Kathryn draws not only on her personal experience but also confronts real-life situations. The information in this book takes a no-nonsense approach. Kathryn's professional connection and the work she does with brain injury survivors make for the perfect blend of advice and solutions."

Lois York-Lewis

Co-Founder & President of the Brain Injury Resource Center of Wisconsin BOD

## SPOTS PIECE

### Survivors, People on the Street

Written by: Sheri Krahn and Katie Marshall

We gathered opinions of who else, but our target population we work with... brain injury survivors! Below is a question we posed to them:

The question we e-mailed brain injury survivors was: **"When you hear the words "better health," what does that mean to you?"**

**Do you think of better health in terms of physical health by exercising more, emotional health by seeking therapy, or does this mean something else to you?**

Below you will find answers to this question:

#### Laura R.

"When I hear "Better Health," I think physically. I have been dealing with continually deteriorating health physically for many years. If I could walk without a walker or wheel chair that would be fantastic! Thank you!"

#### Phil O.

"I think that when someone says better health to me, as a survivor, I tend to think mental health first, then physical health."

#### Dawn W.

"I have had many brain injuries

and to me "better health: means having less bothersome symptoms and signs. Better also means getting by using supports in everyday life too."

#### Bill S.

"Better health is me cleaning up my nutrition, exercising and reading at least one book per month. My attention span allows me for that much, maybe. Little steps to improvement..."



Katie Marshall



Sheri Krahn

#### Anonymous

"The words "better health" mean, to me, how are you doing emotionally? I am better, I have been seeing a therapist that is helping me sort through my emotions and is giving me tools for not only identifying them, but what to do when I feel a certain way."



## Staying Healthy After TBI

June 2022

<https://msktc.org/tbi/factsheets>

TBI Factsheet

This factsheet includes information about how to monitor and maintain your physical and mental health after TBI. It also includes resources to help you stay healthy after TBI.

Staying healthy after having a traumatic brain injury (TBI) can be hard. TBI can cause negative changes in your physical and mental health and change how you think and feel. These changes can make it hard to take care of yourself and to prevent or manage other health problems. This factsheet aims to help you understand how TBI can affect your health and offers tips for staying healthy throughout your life.

### Monitoring Your Health

To stay healthy, we all need to know the signs that tell us that something may be wrong. But TBI can make it hard to do this. For example, you may have a hard time noticing your body's signals or remembering what health problems to tell your doctor about during an appointment. You may also have a hard time recognizing the emotions that may signal a mental health problem. Here are some tips to help you monitor your health after a TBI:

- **Get some tools to help monitor your health at home.** Body weight, temperature, blood pressure, and waist size are important health measurements. Important tools to monitor these include a scale, a thermometer, a blood pressure cuff, and a soft tape measure. If you have problems with low or high blood sugar, you may need a glucose or blood sugar monitor. Remember that your health measurements can change for many reasons. Work with your health care provider to decide the best times to take your health measurements and how often to take them.

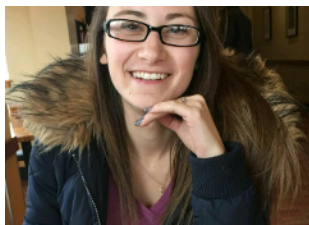


Go to:

<https://msktc.org/tbi/factsheets/staying-healthy-after-tbi>

## BIRC CHRISTMAS PARTY FUN!

December 16th brought a day full of fun! Starting off the days activities, the attendees participated in a scavenger hunt that took place throughout the Trinity Cafe, created a fun t-shirt with various other t-shirts and fabrics, they got creative and made their own ornament, socialized, ate and interacted with other brain injury survivors in the white elephant gift exchange! A big thank you to all of our volunteers for making this day great! Grant Bajurney, Christy Kudek, Angela Giangiulio and Adam Gentle, Issac and Anna Wallander.



Taylor Coloso

*If you could go back in time and tell your younger self a piece of advice that you know now, but didn't back then, what would it be?*  
**Keep in mind this question was not posed to brain injury survivors specifically.**

Just because people disregard you, doesn't mean you

## Taylor's Topic

should return with means of retaliation. After my mere twenty-five years on this earth, I've learned my fair share of information.

I'm still learning too; however, if I could go back in time to share something with my younger self, it would be the aforementioned above. All humans make mistakes.

No one is perfect except for God (I'm a true born and

raised baptized Christian). I know that religion is meant to be a taboo topic of conversation, and everyone's entitled to his or her own opinion.

One's opinion is based off of his or her life experiences, upbringing, failures, successes and life events; hence, the reason no two people are the same.

Post-accident, after coming to, I reached the self-realization that I had been blessed with a second chance at life. Not many people can say that, and over the past (coming up on six years), I've become interested in this question; *what advice would everyone give, if they, too, had a "do over"*.

It started as a simple project and migrated into inspiration for my first ever novel.

I'll share a couple of the responses I've received, then I'm going to ask you, the

reader, for your answer. I can't share them all, but I can give you examples from those I've collected:

Jesse, who's 33 years old, would tell his younger self to "never regret anything that has happened in life. It cannot be changed, undone, or forgotten; so take it as a lesson learned and move on."

My high school English Composition teacher, Judith, who is 55 years old, urged us to know that "the right choices in life may not be popular to the majority; but regardless, your true friends will continue

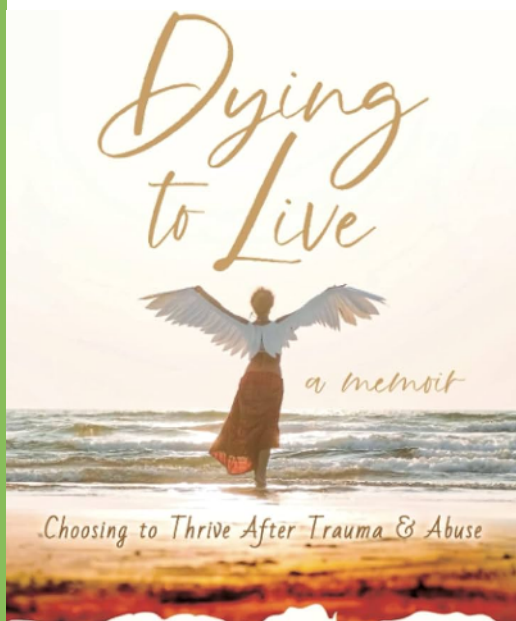
to love you."

Here is a random stranger's advice: "Every day is a blessing. Being able to wake up every morning is a miracle. The odds of you being born are 1 in 400 trillion. You are extremely lucky to be here. Waste no time."

My eldest brother, Charlie, said, "don't look at the bowl of the person next to you to see if they have more; instead just make sure they're fed."

## A Review: Dying to Live

Written by: **Bari L. Rieth: TBI Survivor**



*Dr. Kimberly Lees*

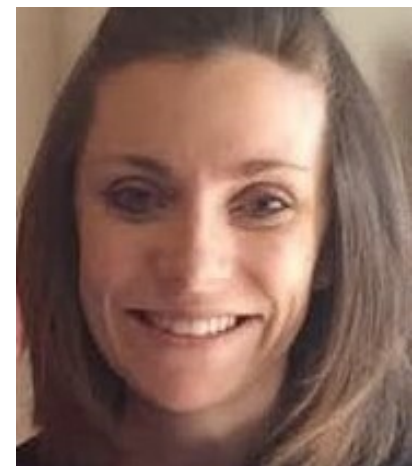
Dying to Live is the captivating tale about Dr.

Kimberly Lees. Overcoming, surviving and thriving are words I would use to describe her journey.

Included in the story, you will find information about her difficult childhood, adulthood, failed marriage, sexual abuse and detailed information from when she sustained a traumatic brain injury.

Trauma is experienced on different levels for different people and Dr. Lees describes in detail her traumas for her reader to be able to empathize and maybe even sympathize with her.

In the back of the book she lists various resources, a



letter of acknowledgment, she lists different nutritional eating plans a person could try, and the five stages for stepping into the glow, I believe glow meaning a better and happier I







## Telling of the Tale: Sheri Krahn

Edited by: Bari L. Rieth

It was Wednesday, September 24, 2008, as I was leaving work at 3:00 pm, I still had the headache from the day before, but now the headache was at the back of my head. I thought, “who gets a headache at the back of their head?”.

Driving about four blocks, I realized my headache was something more than just your everyday headache. I turned my car around and drove myself five blocks to the hospital.

When I arrived, they performed many tests. A spinal tap indicated my brain was bleeding, although I had not hit or bumped my head.

I was in and out of consciousness. I was taken to Madison by ambulance, a hospital that would have more knowledge in treating brain bleeds.

The first thing that I remember is that I was treated for my physical disabilities and no one thought my brain was injured. My brain was not working and understanding as it did before.

At the time, I felt that the hospital staff and various healthcare professionals were not working with me, they may have thought they were, but I was very confused. The nurses,

doctors, and my family were concerned with what they could see that was wrong, but all too often with brain injury you don't see it.

The second thing, is coming to realize my injury has affected my family also. I was really trying hard to be me again, but the pieces of my puzzle were not going together right.

***I feel ashamed for not knowing this was happening to them also and it wasn't just my struggle.***

Third, is understanding that I change every day. The idea of a pattern/routine can be altered by a doctor's appointment, a visit, or a phone call.

My life now is labeled with many post-it notes, dry erase boards, clipboards, and 3x5 cards.

**My phone pings all day with reminders.**

After 15 years, I still see doctors to help me stay on task and to make sure everything is stable. If my brain injury has taught me anything it is if you need help you need to seek it.

My biggest self-esteem builder has been volunteering and learning with *The Brain Injury Resource Center of Wisconsin*. Recently, I have learned how to effectively use my email, word programs and I am practicing using better social skills.

Computers can be very

useful and I am now learning how to use mine for more than games! The one-and-a-half-hour ride to get to Waukesha is definitely worth the ride!

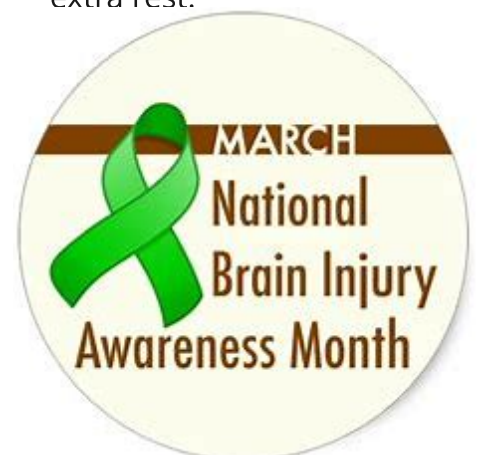
Achievements come every day and some may seem very small to many people, but to me, those accomplishments are enormous. For example, in 2022, I started cooking on the stove and using the oven.

In October 2023, I noticed I wasn't reading the labels on the bottles in the shower; I was remembering the products by the bottle colors. Since November 2023, I'm shopping by myself and with less anxiety.

I do not drive, but I have learned to accept help from others and realize that's okay.

My biggest success is to be patient with myself and my family. Remember to slow down, work smart, and take breaks.

Last but not least, sleep as long and as much as you need; your brain now needs the extra rest.



## Come and Discover where your Next Journey will take you at AG Therapy LLC

Contact Angela today to find out how she can help you!

Services & Specialties  
\*Speech & Language  
\*Voice Disorders  
\*Chewing & Swallowing Difficulties  
\*Cognitive Rehabilitation

"As a therapist, I believe compassion is the compass guiding my clients towards their goals, illuminating the path of perseverance and growth."

- Angela Giangiulio

M.S. CCC-SLP  
agtherapyllc@outlook.com  
(219) 798-6189



to collaborate with the Brain Injury Resource Center of WI, recognizing the helpful support and resources it provides to individuals and families affected by brain injury.

Through her dedication and expertise, Angela aims to improve the independence and overall quality of life for her clients at AG Therapy LLC. With a compassionate approach and a deep understanding of the challenges they face, she strives to assist those navigating the uncertain terrain of life after brain injury.

AG Therapy LLC is here to guide you on your "next" journey.

At AG Therapy LLC, Angela Giangiulio is aware of the journey that individuals with traumatic brain injury (TBI) face. With a wealth of experience and a passion for helping others, Angela has created a practice that serves as the "What's next?" step for those navigating life after a brain injury.

Having worked in an outpatient facility before establishing her own practice. Thus, AG Therapy LLC was created—a space for individuals with TBI seeking support and guidance beyond the course of traditional therapy.

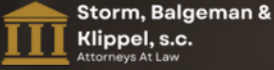
At AG Therapy LLC, Angela offers a range of services designed to meet

the unique needs of individuals with TBI. **From cognitive-communication therapy to assistance with swallowing, memory enhancement, and social skills development,** Angela strives to empower her clients as they continue their ongoing journey of recovery in day-to-day life.

A highlight of Angela's commitment to serving the brain injury community was her recent attendance at the Brain Injury Resource Center's Christmas part in January 2024. *Meeting with participants and survivors within the organization, she was deeply inspired by their resilience and determination.*

She eagerly embraces the opportunity





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Watch your mail/email for more information on upcoming events! If you are not on our mailing list, complete the information below to get started!

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City:		State:	Zip Code:
Cell # (including area code):			
Home # (including area code):			
(Choose One) Call me on this phone in case of cancellation:		<input type="checkbox"/> CELL	<input type="checkbox"/> HOME
Email:			
<input type="checkbox"/> I am a brain injury survivor and I would like to receive a birthday post card from BIRC!			

**Words of encouragement about**

**Brain Injury Resource Center of Wisconsin:**

Dear Brain Injury Resource Center (Lois & Bari Team),

Hi! I just wanted to thank all of you for simply existing! The fact this organization was created even years before my accident, which resulted in my TBI "obviously;" ignited this burning passion inside me. I keep saying oh... one day I'm going to write a book - no I'm legitimately publicly announcing the fact that I, Taylor Coloso, am going to write a book over my lifetime. I'm going to end this letter with a few significantly, powerful words relating to brain injuries:

- "Brain injuries are like snow flakes and fingerprints.

No two are the same. - Wendy Renzulla

- Brain injury is..."a puzzle, all the pieces are there, just in the wrong order." - Barbara

BETTER HEALTH WORD SCRAMBLE	
CLPUCONAOIAT	
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ACORPETE	

Stay Blessed, Taylor Coloso