



## Understanding Long-Term Recovery

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## a family member's point of view ...

**"Doctors have no clue about what happens  
after someone gets out of the hospital,  
and we've got to let them know."**

from the VA statewide community based needs assessment



## an injured person's point of view ...

**"In my accident three things were damaged:  
the utility pole, the car, and me.  
They knew what to do with the utility pole and the car.  
They didn't know what to do with me, and they still don't"**

from the VA statewide community based needs assessment



## an injured person's point of view ...

**"I lost my friends because they didn't  
know how to deal with my injury.  
Neither did I."**

from the VA statewide community based needs assessment



## a family member's point of view ...

**"Survivors don't get well  
and they still need services  
10 or 15 years later."**

from the VA statewide community based needs assessment

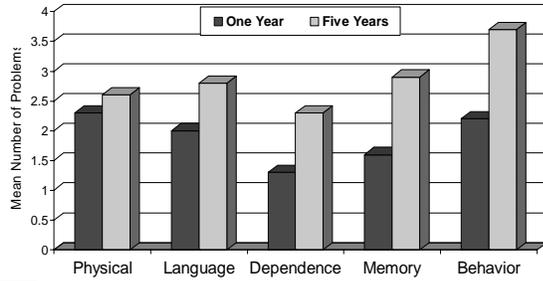


## a family member's point of view ...

**"Although my son is only six now, I won't  
be here forever. What will happen  
to him when my husband and I are gone?"**

from the VA statewide community based needs assessment

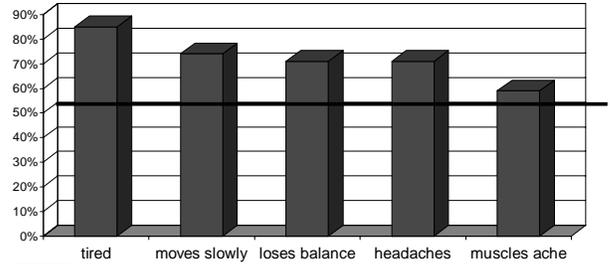
### Long-Term Neurobehavioral Problems Reported at One and Five Years Postinjury



Brooks

VCU Health System

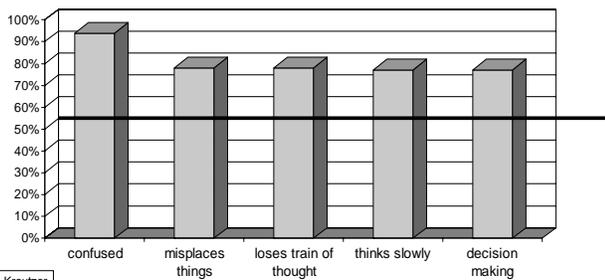
### Long-Term Somatic Problems Most Commonly Reported by Relatives 4 Years Postinjury



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### Long-Term Cognitive Problems Most Commonly Reported by Relatives 4 Years Postinjury

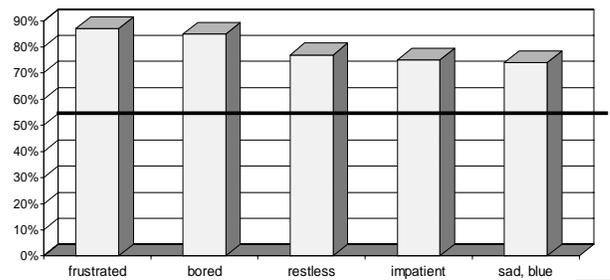
Most Commonly Reported by Relatives 4 Years Postinjury



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### Long-Term Behavioral Problems Most Commonly Reported by Relatives 4 Years Postinjury

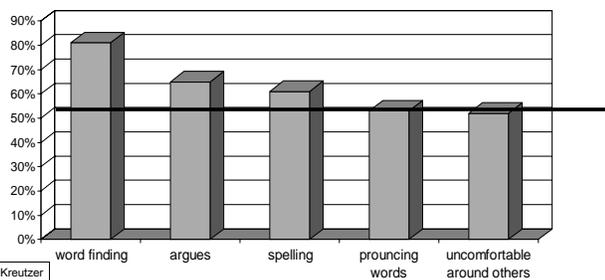
Most Commonly Reported by Relatives 4 Years Postinjury



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### Communication and Social Problems Most Commonly Reported by Relatives 4 Years Postinjury

Most Commonly Reported by Relatives 4 Years Postinjury

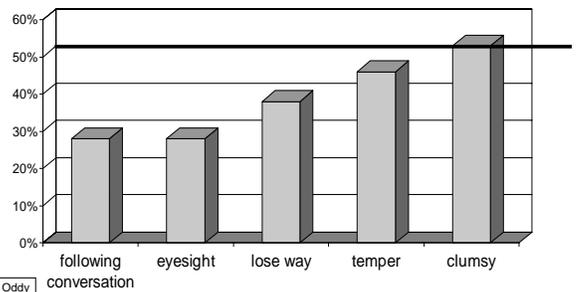


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### Long-Term Neurobehavioral Problems Most Commonly Reported by Survivors 7 Years Postinjury

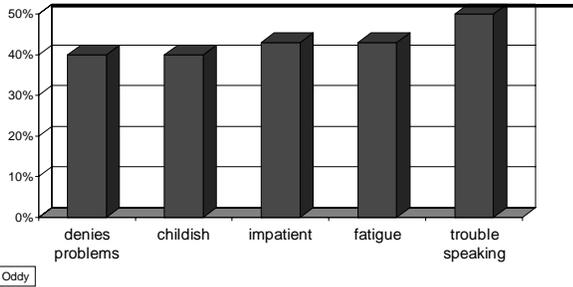
Most Commonly Reported by Survivors 7 Years Postinjury



Oddy

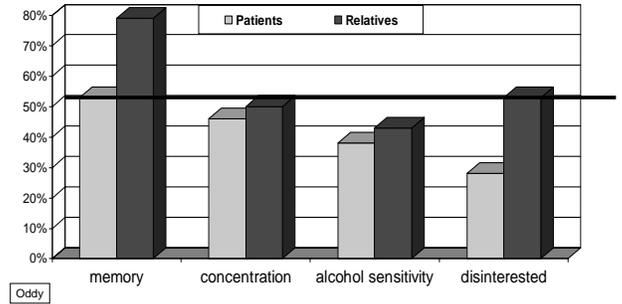
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### Long-Term Neurobehavioral Problems Most Commonly Reported by Relatives 7 Years Postinjury



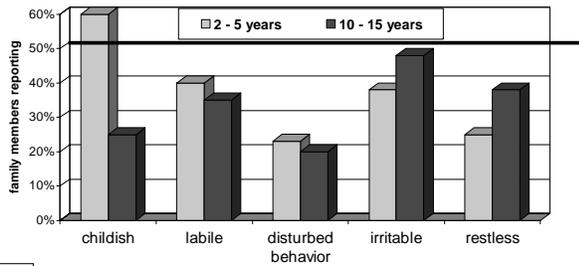
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### Long-Term Neurobehavioral Problems Relatives and Survivors Reporting 7 Years Postinjury



Oddy

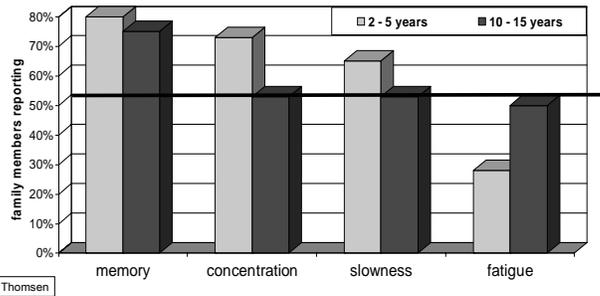
### Long-Term Neurobehavioral Problems Personality and Emotional Changes



Thomsen

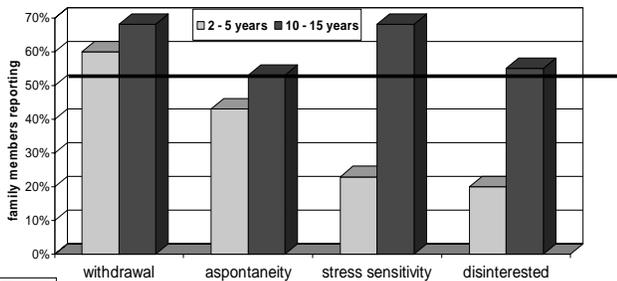
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### Long-Term Neurobehavioral Problems Neuropsychological and Neurological Changes



Thomsen

### Long-Term Neurobehavioral Problems Psychosocial Changes



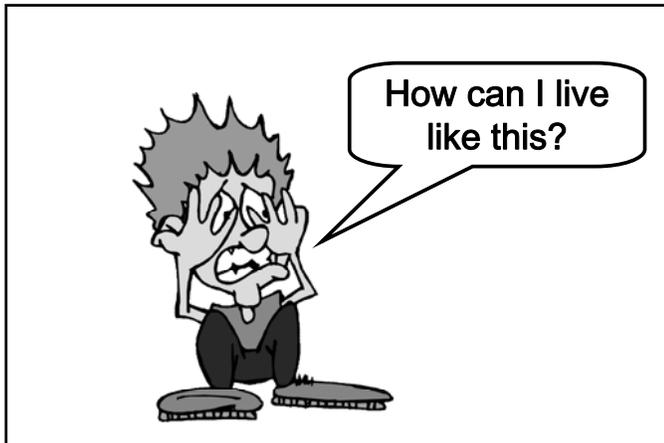
Thomsen



an injured person's  
point of view ...

"If someone had told me what the next  
four years would be like,  
I would have laid down and died."

from the VA statewide community based needs assessment



## Important Notice

Brain injury is an unexpected, catastrophic event, often affecting survivors and family members' lives for many years.



## Important Notice

Learning about the normal effects of injury, adjusting expectations, learning from experience, and developing new skills helps make life better.



## Understanding Recovery

- ▶ People differ greatly from one another
- ▶ Even professionals have a hard time predicting what will happen
- ▶ Disappointment comes when people are left with problems after six months
- ▶ Some people fear they'll never get better



## Basic Recovery Extension Principles

- ▶ Everyone has the ability to learn, do things better and more efficiently
- ▶ Mental and physical exercise helps you get better with practice and training
- ▶ Learn when and how to ask people for help



## Recovery Extension Principles

- ▶ Develop more effective strategies for doing things
- ▶ Stop doing things that don't work
- ▶ Focus on primary goals, monitor progress, stick with plans that work
- ▶ Figure out works for others and what doesn't



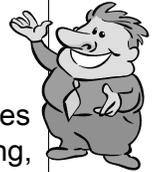
## Recovery Extension Principles

- ▶ Listen to other people's ideas
- ▶ Exercise your body and mind
- ▶ Learn from mistakes
- ▶ Ask people that care about you to give feedback



## Well Adjusted Long-Term Survivors

- ▶ Focus more on what they have and less on what other people have
- ▶ Readily acknowledge personal limitations
- ▶ Learn to appreciate unpaid activities such as visiting, cooking, gardening, housekeeping, and hobbies



## The National Resource Center for Traumatic Brain Injury

[www.neuro.pmr.vcu.edu](http://www.neuro.pmr.vcu.edu)



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