

A WINTER TBI READING LIST submitted by Margaret Halas, Administrator, “Bridges Unit”, Scenic View Castle Nursing Home.

Knowing that others have gone through the experiences similar to your own can be a great comfort and help persons dealing with the reality of a brain injury. In putting together a library for the benefit of our residents, staff, and families I have found a number of books which might be of interest to survivors and their families. These books recount personal journeys to recovery by victims of head injury and their families and friends. They may be of help to survivors and their families by providing insight into their own feelings and guidance on the path to recovery.

I found two books which give a good overview of TBI. The first is Living with Head Injury: A Guide for Families by Richard Senelick, MD and Cathy Ryan . The authors talk about the nature of head injury, it's effects on victims and families, and answers questions about symptoms, diagnosis and treatment. Confronting Traumatic Brain Injury by William Winslade explains what TBI is, treatment, coping with the effects and prevention. He uses case studies to discuss legal issues, and practical steps to prevent brain injury.

First person accounts written by family members can be very powerful. For example, Where is the Mango Princess by Cathy Crimmins is a personal account of her husband's head injury from a boating accident which she and her family witnessed while on vacation. It tells of her frustrations with doctors, insurance, and hospitals on his road to recovery. A Family's Anguish by Judy Brown is an account of a mother living through the experience of the coma and recovery of her son after a car accident. Falling Back Up by A,W, Bailey is the story of a family's struggle to deal with a teenage boy's head injury from coma and recovery through rehabilitation. It is a unique book, written in free verse, yet moving and easy to read. Listening in the Silence, Seeing in the Dark by Ruthann Johansen is an account of the aftermath of her son's TBI from a fall while on a church outing. This book is very poetic, reflecting the author's position as a professor of liberal arts and emphasizes the effects of brain injury on communication and language.

Many of you may have been fortunate enough to have heard Jackie Pflug speak at the 2002 BIAO Convention in Columbus. Her book Miles to Go Before I Sleep about her recovery from a gunshot wound to the head in airline highjacking is absolutely riveting, as was her talk. In Conquering the Darkness Deborah Quinn chronicles the obstacles she faced creating a new life for herself after a car crash which killed her husband and left her in a coma. Living with Brain Injury is by Phillip Fairclough of Devon, England, who tells of his recovery from massive head trauma after a fall from a ladder. Sol Mogerman writes about his recovery from a stroke as the result of a car accident. He details the challenges he and his family face in his book Objects in Mirror are Closer than they Appear. His rehabilitation led to his changing careers and becoming a clinical counselor specializing in brain injury.

For teens, Wendy Orr has written Peeling the Onion about a young girl, Anna, who is a karate enthusiast whose life is radically changed by a car accident. It is written in Anna's voice and explores issues important to teens like friends, identity, and what she will do with the rest of her life.

Last, but certainly not least, is John Callahan's autobiography Don't Worry He Won't Get Far on

Foot. John is a cartoonist, recovering alcoholic, and quadriplegic. His humor is, to say the least, irreverent. This book is heavy hitting, and deals head on with issues like sexuality, the welfare system, and how having a sense of humor, albeit a twisted one, has allowed him to keep faith in life and himself. He is also the author of a half dozen or so cartoon books. John Callahan's humor is not for everyone. Fellow cartoonist, Gary Larson, says "There are two basic reasons I enjoy Callahan's work so much: first, I think his cartoons are just plain funny, and second, he makes my own work look normal". But, for the brave at heart, give him a try.

All these books are available at libraries and can be ordered at bookstores or on the web. For those of you who like to purchase books, a really good source of books on the Internet is www.half.com. This site is a part of e-bay, but does not require bidding on items. Many individuals list books there, so the site is not limited to what is in bookstores. Many of the books are brand new, some are used, and the prices are phenomenal (as low as a dollar or two). Shipping is by media mail and is rarely over \$2 per item. You can call a book up by title, author or put in a search for "traumatic brain injury" and get a whole list of books with "brain injury" in the title.

I hope this list will get you started reading and finding inspiration, insight, and solace in sharing in the experiences of others.