

# Survivors recount damaged lives, hopes

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There is a large group of individuals with head injuries who have been all but ignored by the public. These are the uncared-for thousands who seemingly recover from their injuries but still suffer subtle intellectual and behavioral effects that may seriously impair their ability to work and interact normally with other people. Some never lost consciousness and others never even suffered a direct blow to the head, yet brain dam-

age occurred.

"Personal Health" by Jane Brody

Kathy McEvilly was hurt in a dune buggy accident during the summer of 1973. At the time, she was a 16-year-old cheerleader entering her sophomore year at St. Agatha High School in Redford. Richard Nixon was president, embroiled in the Watergate scandal.

By the time she left the hospital nearly a year later, the United States had a new president, Gerald Ford

Her recovery continued through Jimmy Carter's term in the White House and when Ronald Reagan campaigned for a second term as president, McEvilly simultaneously attained a remarkable goal.

She graduated with a degree in social work from Michigan State University, the culmination of a "long, long road back" from severe physical disability at a time when rehabilitation services and facilities for the brain injured were virtually non-existent.

"I'm real grateful I don't have

cognitive problems. They're very minimal." Still, "I had to relearn everything, but I'm one of those rare people with a real great memory."

Her problems are primarily physical, diminished speech, impaired motor coordination and poor balance. She walks awkwardly with the aid of elbow crutches. Frequent falls during the winter have severely damaged both knees.

"If this never happened, I'd really be a different person. But I'm happy with the person I've become."

She now lives in an Oakland Coun-

ty support facility.

Nearly all brain-injured people have problems with concentration and memory. Many complain that they think more slowly than before their injury. They often have difficulty reasoning and solving problems. Academic skills also suffer. A former college student may be unable to read a newspaper, write a letter or balance a checkbook. IQ's usually decline, but the scores are not very revealing. One person with an IQ of 85 may be able to carry on an

HEAD



INJURY

intelligent conversation. Another with the same IQ may be unable to follow even simple instructions.

"Psychology Today"

Next, a look at families and friends coping with loved ones changed forever as the result of head injury.

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\*These may have been intermediate prices with a few items on some items new to this clearance sale. Limited sales floor available.

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Friday 11-23	8 a.m.-9:30 p.m.	*1000
Saturday 11-24	10 a.m.-9 p.m.	*500
Sunday 11-25	Store Hours	
	11 a.m.-7 p.m.	
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