

# 7 Ways to Treat Stroke Recovery like a Beautiful Fresh Start

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When your brain is affected by stroke, it creates the opportunity for a fresh start. It's not the way anyone would prefer their fresh start, but as stroke survivor Jill Bolte Taylor put it in her book *My Stroke of Insight*:

***“What a wonderful gift this stroke has been in permitting me to pick and choose who and how I want to be in the world.*”**

*Before the stroke, I believed I was a product of this brain and that I had minimal say about how I felt or what I thought. Since the hemorrhage, my eyes have been opened to how much choice I actually have about what goes on between my ears.”*

Ahhhh yes. She's talking about stroke recovery and neuroplasticity in relation to *becoming a better person*.

We love it!

And that's exactly why stroke survivors become stronger after stroke: because of the *personal growth* that rehab requires.

## Personal Growth vs. Stroke Recovery

So, how can you make the most of your fresh start?

**By choosing to grow yourself – not just your abilities – which is the essence of personal growth.**

Because while you're working on your abilities, you're focusing on *neuroplasticity*. But *neuroplasticity* is good for far more than regaining movement in your body.

*Neuroplasticity* can help you become a better person.

Because the mind becomes skillful at whatever we repeatedly practice. And by repeatedly practicing *perseverance, discipline, growth, love, and personal empowerment*, for example, you become better at all those things.

**It's a long, hard process, but you will absolutely, without a doubt, become a stronger version of yourself because of it.**

So, without further ado, here are 7 ways to make to maximize your personal growth during stroke recovery.

### 1. Develop a Growth Mindset to Set Yourself Up for Success

Ah yes. The growth mindset.

**Nothing will propel you into success – in life and during stroke recovery – faster than a growth mindset.** To understand what a growth mindset is, let's first discuss what a fixed mindset is.

Someone with a fixed mindset holds on tight to their limiting beliefs. A fixed mindset is stubborn. And because of this stubbornness, they don't believe that their situation can change, which causes them to avoid even trying because it's seen as a waste of effort.

On the other hand, someone with a growth mindset may have limiting beliefs, but they're willing to reconsider them and **replace them with better ones**. People with growth mindsets see their potential and, although they know that change can be difficult, they try anyway.

As you can see, a growth mindset will serve you well during stroke recovery because it will help you lean into the challenge of rehab instead of moving away from it.

Then, after stroke recovery, you will learn to challenge yourself in all other areas of life – which will help you become an even stronger person.

## 2. Practice Visualization for Physical Healing

The original purpose of visualization for personal growth is to *motivate action*.

For example, if you want to get yourself to go to the gym but have a hard time getting around to it, then we encourage you to visualize yourself going to the gym first. This will make you comfortable with the idea and ingrain it into your mind, which will increase the likelihood that you will follow through.

The purpose of visualization for stroke recovery is to both motivate action and *improve motor function*.

For example, if you want to regain the ability to walk but don't have enough movement to practice walking yet, then we encourage you to visualize yourself walking first. **This will trigger neuroplasticity in the brain the same way that physical practice does.** And eventually you can regain enough movement to start some passive or assisted walking.

Whatever goal you have in rehab and in life – visualization can help get you there.

## 3. Use Affirmations for Emotional Healing

Someone pursuing personal growth may recite affirmations in order to restructure their belief system. Someone pursuing stroke recovery may recite the same affirmations for the same reason.

Affirmations are one of those 'airy fairy' tactics that often get brushed aside because of the lack of science behind it. And we're happy to report that there is actually SOLID science behind the personal growth practice.

Affirmations are sentences or phrases aimed at training the subconscious mind into believing something that you may not believe yet.

Remember those limiting beliefs that can keep you stuck in a fixed mindset?

Affirmations are a great way to reprogram better beliefs.

Affirmations are powerful tools for stroke recovery because they rely on neuroplasticity in order to take effect. So the more you repeat an affirmation, the stronger those connections in your brain become.

Check out our 3-step process for using affirmations to boost stroke recovery.