



A Message From SSEEO President Phyllis Weiss...

Happy Holidays to you and your family!

This holiday season, please consider a year-end donation to SSEEO. For over 12 years, SSEEO's grassroots efforts have reached thousands of stroke survivors, caregivers and their families. SSEEO's volunteers have donated countless hours contacting stroke patients and their families after being discharged, presenting to local businesses and giving their talents and strategic direction as Board Members. Thank you in advance for your generosity and support.

[DONATE HERE](#)

SSEEO is a 501 (C) (3) nonprofit organization



Wanna Give? This Is Your Brain on a 'Helper's High' Studies document how giving affects your body

We all know giving helps others, whether we volunteer for organizations, offer emotional support to those around us or donate to charities. But studies show that giving is also good for the giver - boosting physical and mental health.

Studies find these health benefits associated with giving:

- Lower blood pressure
- Increased self-esteem
- Less depression
- Lower stress levels
- Longer life
- Greater happiness



Living Longer:

According to a University of California, Berkeley, study, people who were 55 and older who volunteered for two or more organizations were 44 percent less likely to die over a five-year period than those who didn't volunteer - even accounting for many other factors including age, exercise, general health and negative habits like smoking.

A researcher found similar numbers in a University of Michigan study of elderly people who gave help to friends, relatives and neighbors, or who gave emotional support to their spouses versus those who didn't.

Feeling Happier:

Biologically, giving can create a "warm glow," activating regions in the brain associated with pleasure, connection with other people and trust.

There is evidence that, during gift-giving behaviors, humans secrete "feel good" chemicals in our brains, such as serotonin (a mood-mediating chemical), dopamine (a feel-good chemical) and oxytocin (a compassion and bonding chemical).

When researchers from the National Institutes of Health looked at the functional MRIs of subjects who gave to various charities, they found that giving stimulates the mesolimbic pathway, which is the reward center in the brain - releasing endorphins and creating what is known as the "helper's high." And like other highs, this one is addictive, too.

November 15, 2016 / By Brain and Spine Team

<https://health.clevelandclinic.org/author/brainteam>

Roll Call Chicagoland

In honor of Veteran's Day and World Stroke Day, SSEEO presented to Roll Call Chicagoland. Charu Nagar, MD shared the warning signs and risk factors of stroke and Brian Herbst, SSEEO volunteer shared his personal stroke story to over 60 veterans and business leaders on Tuesday, November 7 at the Primo Restaurant in Gurnee, IL.



Roll Call Chicagoland's mission is to provide informal gatherings of transitioning veterans, established veteran professionals and dedicated businesses and veteran advocate partners to share camaraderie, professional development and practical strategies in seeking meaningful employment.

Their vision is to connect the right people with the right champions to inspire more meaningful military-to-civilian career paths and the professional growth needed to enrich the leader in all of us. They are committed to providing a best-in-class platform dedicated to those that dedicated everything to our country. For more information on Roll Call Chicagoland visit their website at rollcallchicagoland.org.

Survivor Story - Never Ignore the Warning Signs of a Stroke

Jim Geminer, SSEEO Stroke Survivor to Survivor (SS2S) volunteer

On Thanksgiving morning, 2011 I had a stroke. I was getting ready to put the turkey in the oven when something didn't feel right. It was hard to get the turkey in the oven. I went to the bathroom and didn't shut the light off when leaving (this was out of character for me). I couldn't operate the mouse or keys on my laptop. I immediately told my wife who thought this needed medical attention. Since it was Thanksgiving, we decided urgent care would be fine. Little did we know that I was having a stroke and needed to be immediately transferred to Advocate Sherman Hospital's Primary Stroke Center where I was evaluated and treated with tPA.



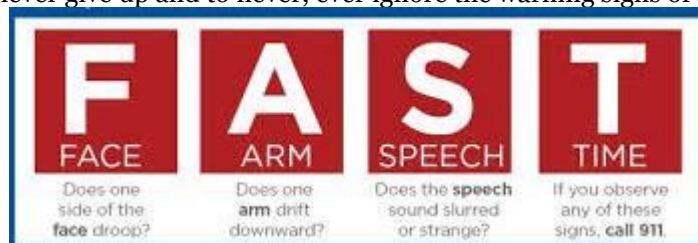
Jim Geminer, SSEEO
SS2S volunteer
Advocate Sherman Hospital,
daughter Cecelia and wife Katy

For a few prior weeks prior to my stroke, I had not been acting like myself. Customers at work commented on my behavior and how I wasn't making sense when speaking. It felt like my tongue was frozen. One afternoon, I had to sit down with a customer at work because my leg went numb. I shared these symptoms with my wife and she thought maybe I had mini-stroke. It never occurred to us that this was serious and needed immediate medical attention until I actually had the stroke.

After two weeks in the ICU, I was told I needed physical, occupational and most importantly speech therapy. As a former Army Veteran, I thought how hard could this be? It was difficult and took a lot of hard work and dedication. I spent months in therapy with most of my time in speech therapy. I faithfully did my homework every night, reading the newspaper out loud to my family while struggling to get the words out. After three months, I was encouraged to go back to work to practice my speech with my customers and get back to my new normal.

After a few years of work, I retired and thought I need to do something to help other stroke survivors. That is when I decided to be a volunteer for SSEEO and was trained as a Stroke Survivor2Survivor volunteer. Along with another volunteer, we make monthly calls to stroke survivors and their families after hospital or rehabilitation discharge. The calls made a big impact and many of those we called started attending the Advocate Sherman Hospital brain injury support group. This was great but I felt the hospital needed a support group specifically for stroke survivors. So with the help of the hospital stroke coordinator and chaplain, I now lead a stroke support group at the hospital. We started in June and in just a few short months our attendance has grown to over 20.

My message is to never give up and to never, ever ignore the warning signs of a stroke. ACT FAST!



Special Thanks



Bryan Herbst, SSEE
volunteer with
SSEE president
Phyllis Weiss

Brian Herbst is a young stroke survivor and SSEE volunteer. He shares his stroke story with local businesses through SSEE's *Stroke Can Happen at ANY Age* educational program. This program consists of a panel of young stroke survivors sharing their journey along with a stroke coordinator and neurologist to answer questions. During the October Roll Call Chicago event Brian was presented with an award for his dedication and service to SSEE and the stroke community.

Thank you Brian for always being a stroke champion.

Book Recommendation

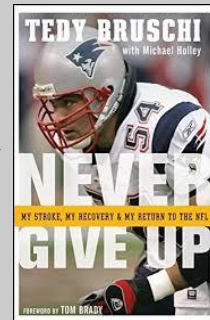
Never Give Up: My Stroke, My Recovery & My Return to the NFL

by Tedy Bruschi, Michael Holley

Tedy gives you something to believe in. Whether we're winning or losing, he holds his head high, and he knows himself and handles himself so well, others can't help but follow him. The way he practices and plays forces you to become a better teammate; the way he demands hustle and toughness forces you to become a better leader; and the way he carries himself inspires you to become a better person.

This made his return to playing on October 30 against Buffalo all the more electrifying. The stadium was louder that night than the nights we had raised our Super Bowl banners. Our captain, our leader, our inspiration was back on the field doing what he loved to do. Tedy had spent months rehabbing, had countless doctor visits, and had undergone hundreds of tests trying to play again. Just eight months after our victory in Super Bowl XXXIX, here we were celebrating a much bigger victory on our home field. Sure it was great to win the game, but that night we were celebrating Tedy's return as he showed us teammates, fans, family, and friends what it takes to become victorious in life.

"You might be coming to this book as a fan of Tedy's football skills and, don't get me wrong, gaining the insights of one of the best defenders in Patriots history is worth the price of admission, but that's just part of the story. There are a lot of reasons to look up to him, and I promise you will finish this book with an admiration for him on a much deeper level."-Tom Brady



SSEE

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make a difference.

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