

**Buchanan
Ingersoll &
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Collide: Life Lessons Learned on the Road to Recovery from a Traumatic Brain Injury

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FDCC member and Florida Bar Board Certified Civil Trial Lawyer, Miranda L. Soto, was given the gift of clarity to re-write her story after suffering a traumatic brain injury from a horrific car accident in 2017. Miranda will discuss all of the life lessons learned on her road to recover about keeping things in perspective, simplicity, organization, patience, healing, gratitude, accountability, happiness, and purpose.



Introduction:
Collide

Introduction

- December 26, 2017 accident ... your life can change in 5 seconds flat.
- Injuries sustained
- Recovery process from suffering a traumatic brain injury
- Changing your mindset ... changes your life

Statistics

- It is estimated that more than three-fourths of all doctor's visits are related to stress and that stress costs America more than \$300 billion annually¹⁻².
- An estimated 50% of persons 55 years and older have some form of sleep problem, including initiating and maintaining sleep³.
- Moderate sleep disturbances in older adults are often associated with deficits in daytime functioning including elevated levels of fatigue; disturbed mood, such as depressive symptoms; and reduced quality of life and lead to the onset of clinical insomnia³.

1. Avey H, Matheny KB, Robbins A, Jacobson TA. Health care providers' training, perceptions, and practices regarding stress and health outcomes. *J Natl Med Assoc.* 2003;95:833, 836-845.

2. American Institute of Stress. Workplace stress. <http://www.stress.org/workplace-stress>. Accessed July 17, 2019.

3. *JAMA Intern Med.* 2015;175(4):494-501. doi:10.1001/jamainternmed.2014.8081

Statistics

- The landmark 2016 American Bar Association and Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation study found:
 - 28% of licensed, employed lawyers suffer with depression.
 - 19% of lawyers have symptoms of anxiety.
 - 21% are problem drinkers.
 - Lawyers are 3.6 times as likely to be depressed as people in other jobs.
 - The study found that younger attorneys in the first 10 years of practice exhibit the highest incidence of these problems.

https://www.abajournal.com/voice/article/lawyers_weigh_in_why_is_there_a_depression_epidemic_in_the_profession

<https://www.hazeldenbettyford.org/about-us/news-media/press-release/2016-aba-hazelden-release-first-study-attorney-substance-use>

Meditation

- Meditation can improve wellbeing and quality of life.
- Recent studies have offered promising results about the impact of meditation in reducing blood pressure. There is also evidence that it can help people manage insomnia, depression and anxiety.
- Some research suggests that meditation physically changes the brain and could help:
 - increase ability to process information
 - slow the cognitive effects of aging
 - reduce inflammation
 - support the immune system
 - reduce symptoms of menopause
 - control the brain's response to pain
 - improve sleep

<https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-lifestyle/mental-health-and-wellbeing/meditation-to-boost-health-and-wellbeing>

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

- Mindfulness itself teaches attitudes of nonjudgment, non-striving, acknowledgement of what is happening, patience, self-reliance, and a beginner's mindset. It is different from meditation practice because it is not concentrative as much as a practice of keeping an open field of awareness that is kind, accepting, self-compassionate, and present¹.
- Research shows that mindfulness alters attention systems, increases resilience, improves self-esteem, and increases well-being and can be used to treat a variety of disorders¹.
- It can also lead to lasting reductions in both physical and psychological symptoms related to inflammation, pain, anxiety, depression, and addiction¹.

1. Grossman P, Niemann L, Schmidt S, Walach H. Mindfulness-based stress reduction and health benefits: a meta-analysis. *J Psychosom Res.* 2004;57:35-43.

Lessons Learned Through Meditation and Mindfulness

Perspective

- Perspective: One's perspective is one's reality ... when things are taken away, you realize the things that matter the most. [5 minutes]
 - 3 Things I learned about Perspective:
 - The value and importance of rest and sleep.
 - Calendar everything like your life depends on it and fiercely guard your time. Write down your most important tasks and review throughout your day. Review your schedule 2 weeks in advance for days that are “over scheduled.” Move appointments around so that you create “margin time” for thinking, planning, and strategizing.
 - Think about things that you can do right now to make your life a little bit easier and a little bit better. Make a list of those things and implement an “action plan” for each goal.

Simplicity

- Simplicity: Keep It Simple Stupid (KISS) ... no need to make things this complicated.
- 3 Things I learned about Simplicity:
 - 1. Practice Mono-tasking.
 - 2. Create a deadline system at work and home.
 - 3. Don't put off until tomorrow the things that you can do today.

Organization

- Organization: The #1 weapon in my survival toolkit.
- 3 Things I learned about Organization:
 - 1. Create a simple “success course” in your home and office.
 - 2. Find your own personal uniform for work and play.
 - 3. Plan and follow through with one organizational project a week to reduce stress.

Patience

- Patience: There is such peace and power in patience.
- 3 Things I learned about Patience:
 - 1. There are very few “real” emergencies in life.
 - 2. Use empathy and compassion in lieu of being judgmental of others. Don’t be so quick to judge ... that person may be doing their absolute best.
 - 3. I learned the importance of the word “pause.” Take a pause. Take a long pause.

Healing

- Healing: Means kindness towards yourself, self-care, and self-love.
 - 3 Things I learned about Healing:
 - 1. Give yourself time to heal.
 - 2. The healing power of meditation, mindfulness, and affirmations.
 - 3. Take a course or seek out an author that moves you ... read, study, and apply positivity into your life as a daily practice.

Gratitude

- Gratitude: I am grateful to be alive.
- 3 Things I learned about Gratitude:
 - Keep a gratitude journal or a gratitude jar and write down 3 things that you are grateful for that day. When you are feeling down, grab a card out of the jar as a simple reminder of all of the amazing things you have in your life.
 - Create a “habit tracker” and make gratitude one of your daily habits.
 - Tell people how grateful you are to have them in your life every day. It costs you absolutely nothing but can change the trajectory of your life and theirs.

Accountability

- Accountability: You cannot be a victim and be accountable at the same time.
- 3 Things I learned about Accountability:
 - I learned how to take extreme personal responsibility and ownership over my decisions, choices, and consequences of those choices.
 - I learned how to assess whether something was or was not within my locus of control.
 - There is no such thing as a problem ... only a solution.

Happiness

- Happiness: Finding your “happy place” ... it’s not a destination. It is a place within yourself.
 - 3 Things I learned about Happiness:
 - No one can create your happiness. It’s a decision that you, and only you, make every day.
 - Just because I was unhappy, hurt, and in pain ... didn’t give me the right steal someone else’s joy.
 - You cannot give something away that you do not possess yourself. Find something ... a hobby, passion, or purpose to fill your happiness cup until it runneth over.

Purpose

- Purpose: The confusion between passion vs. purpose.
- 3 Things I learned about Purpose:
 - Purpose is not contingent upon anyone, anything, or any outcome.
 - If your “life’s purpose” is not something within your locust of control ... you are setting yourself up for failure, disappointment, and frustration.
 - Finding purpose created peace, serenity, and calm in my life.

Questions