

Mike Greyell | Discover Stories Episode 60

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Noah Stolte 0:42

Hello. And welcome to discover stories today. VAMS volunteer Jasper Chu is interviewing Mike Greyell. Mike is a stroke survivor attending BCIT, and he has found fun ways to stay active amidst his recovery. Thanks for listening. Hope you enjoy this episode.

Mike Greyell 1:03

Hey Jasper.

Jasper Chu 1:04

Hey Mike, I want to thank you so much for agreeing to do this interview by call. I know it's a bit sudden. I know it's a bit of a change, since we can't do it on Zoom, but again, thank you so much.

Mike Greyell 1:16

Yeah, of course.

Jasper Chu 1:17

So when we first met you said you were attending BCIT right now. If you don't mind sharing with us how that's going for you.

Mike Greyell 1:28

I'm actually there right now during this interview, it's been a slow start. I'll be honest. Very slow. I'm currently looking at options, but when I switch my program to potentially, I was thinking about opening a small business, centralized-ran CBD and the other benefits, and there's more cannabis offers you, because I actually used to use CBD when I was probably

no more than two years post-stroke, I believe it's made a world of difference for my recovery. So I wanted to share the benefits with other people.

Jasper Chu 2:06

I see and you don't mind sharing more with us about what you have in mind for such a business.

Mike Greyell 2:13

Well, back in probably my first, first year university, post my accident, I thought the name of neuronics, but I mean, I've kind of realized, if I took an entrepreneurship course, I've realized that a huge benefit would be, like a recurring energy is the female beauty industry for being kind of wrapping around something just high into that. So maybe, like rejuvenating baseball or something, look into all the benefits CBD offers your skin, you know, all forms of CBD.

Jasper Chu 2:59

Interesting.

Mike Greyell 3:00

I've got a few different, a few different plans based on that business idea, but I mean that starts the part, so we'll see how that progresses.

Jasper Chu 3:11

Awesome. So, if we could go a little bit back into your past, when we first met, you said that you were in a motorcycle accident, if I'm correct, that led to you after you coming back from a party, and you ended up crashing, leading to a stroke. If I'm getting that correct.

Mike Greyell 3:32

Yeah, I fractured my skull without a helmet on. And then I guess the way that I must have influenced stroke, so then I was kind of laying in a coma open it, I guess, and then was in a coma for about a month after that, so.

Jasper Chu 3:51

Could you share some of the challenges you faced while you were recovering?

Mike Greyell 3:55

Some of the challenge was, that's a difficult question, because there's the obvious, like you saw when walking is still not all that it could be right? But also a stroke is a

neurological brain injury. So there are a huge amount of things that are different about me, neurologically like not just my very often deficit in my memory, but there are a few ways. I mean, walking is a big challenge, obviously, walking and certain physical aspects that stroke challenges, right? But I mean, again, like this is a neurological brain injury has affected me in many ways, hard to put my finger on. I've never had a stroke before, so it's kind of a new survey, even though I'm nine years in, right? So.

Jasper Chu 4:45

Is it okay if I can ask, what are some ways you've been looking to cope with some the obstacles you currently face, especially with, with the paralysis, especially in in your walking and in your brain? If that's okay?

Mike Greyell 4:45

More, yeah, no, that's the funny thing, because you see me, it looks like I'm struggling, right? But I can actually get through life pretty much uninterrupted, like there's nothing I really need to stop and get a hand with. So no, sorry. Can you repeat the question? As you see, my memory is a bit of an issue.

Jasper Chu 5:25

Oh, it's okay. Well, I asked, what were some obstacles? How you how you cope with the obstacles you face, especially with the paralysis on one side of your body, but you answered it perfectly. So moving on. How would you say that incident and the recovery process changed you as a person?

Mike Greyell 5:53

Well it definitely grows you up pretty quick, I can tell you that much. I mean I had mine soon after I turned 20 years old. So, you know, I'm 29 now, so the best years of my life are all pretty much laying almost all that. So it definitely grows you up pretty quickly.

Jasper Chu 6:15

So for our audience, if you wouldn't mind sharing how your parents helped you through recovery.

Mike Greyell 6:21

Oh, god, my parents are very senior. Like, I'm 29 and my dad is turning 83 in November. So like, my parents are quite senior. They have been nothing but support for this whole time. Like, I'm pretty sure they were part of the reason I actually got into years for recovery,

because my family came in. They visited me pretty much all day every day, showed me nothing but support through this whole thing, which has been really great.

Jasper Chu 6:54

Well, you're while you were recovering. Was there one experience with your parents while they were by your side that really stood out to you?

Mike Greyell 7:06

Honestly, not I can really remember, but I know when I was at GF Strong, so in a wheelchair, me and my dad used to go for a long walk, because he used to live in that neighbourhood. So he took me around and showed me the baseball standings they used to hang around a lot. So just the amount of support they show me next, and then, I mean, it made a world of difference to like, I don't know where I would have been without them.

Jasper Chu 7:39

It's amazing. And moving on outside of your parents, what were some other experience that you would say actually managed to help you move past the incident and overcome the obstacles you faced while recovering?

Mike Greyell 7:54

Well? I mean, a big part of it was just planning, because you know, I have a recumbent bike, right? So I mean finding activities that you can do, like regardless your deficits, is kind of key, finding ways to still get out and, you know, it's my exercise and just enjoy life. You know, that's kind of key.

Jasper Chu 8:22

You don't mind getting into a little more detail about how you got into recumbent biking?

Mike Greyell 8:28

Yeah, it's funny, because I actually never used to cycle before my accident, so I just kind of were thinking, well, how can I still get out and get some fresh air and enjoy life. So I thought, hey, recumbent bike. Little did I know I went for the, probably the least efficient model of recumbent bike. Take it off, or like two, two chain links to reach the front crank to the back. You go probably a third of the speed.

Jasper Chu 8:58

What are some memorable experiences you have recumbent biking? Like, are there any particular biking routes that you favour very strongly?

Mike Greyell 9:07

Well, along Adnac, because I used to live in East Van, so Adnac goes all the way out to Science World. I used to go on average, quite a bit. There's a lot of craft beer, a lot of breweries on the queue, so I stopped at Bomber Brewery, a lot of the breweries along there.

Jasper Chu 9:28

That's awesome.

Mike Greyell 9:30

Yeah, it's great.

Jasper Chu 9:31

So how would you say recumbent biking over time has improved your quality of life?

Mike Greyell 9:39

Oh, God, just 100% like, as I said, I chose the most inefficient model of recumbent bike, but it has given me the ability to control when each leg pushes and pulls like even my affected side, even my left affected side, I actually have control of when my leg pushes and pulls back. It's kind of the precursor to walking, right? So like, if you ask me, I feel like I'm running down the sidewalk. People pass me all the time to make sure I realize I was slow. [Laughs]

Jasper Chu 10:12

And speaking mentally. How do you think recumbent biking has also helped you recover?

Mike Greyell 10:21

Well, I'm sure just getting out and getting some fresh air and like being able to go outside and go on has all the benefits right there, rather than sitting inside and watching TV or playing video games or something, I can get out and get some physical activity, like I work, I exercise my abs in a huge amount my early recovery, and now I just stay there enough so you can actually see them.

Jasper Chu 10:48

Have you gone out recumbent biking with anyone else before? Or is it just you?

Mike Greyell 10:52

It's just me, because I'm going probably 1/3 speed of everyone else. So, like, I've taken up Cypress but I'm going probably, going up I was going no more than 10km but coming down, going 75km.

Jasper Chu 11:16

You managed to bike up Cypress mountain.

Mike Greyell 11:19

I did, last August 5, actually, it's the day after my birthday, and last day before a big storm came in.

Jasper Chu 11:29

Wow, if you don't mind sharing with me and my audience, what that experience was like? You know, managing to bike all the way up to Cypress mountain.

Mike Greyell 11:43

It was, yeah, just grand determination, honestly, like I was doubting myself, right? And telling off to the baseline the gas station. I was okay. Well, here it is, like, man up, right? Put up a shot up, in a sense, right? So it did take some determination and persistence.

Jasper Chu 12:07

Wow, that is honestly amazing you're able to actually bike all the way up Cypress mountain, right? Or, yeah, thank

Mike Greyell 12:18

Thank you. It was over from East Van and then up Cypress Mountain, so.

Jasper Chu 12:23

Wow that is amazing. To be honest, it's really amazing

Mike Greyell 12:29

Thank you

Jasper Chu 12:31

So you and I have both attended BCIT. I'm an alumni, but you're still going. What course are you currently looking to change to?

Mike Greyell 12:47

Well, that's where it gets. I was taking human resources, but I kind of realized that wasn't the right career path for me. So I'm in business administration right now, but, I mean, I'm still trying to find the right program for me, because I honestly, I didn't know what I wanted to do. I just kind of had a stroke, and then thought, hey, I'll go to universities, taking the random courses. In a sense.

Jasper Chu 13:17

Where do you feel your hobbies or your passions are leading you in regards to choosing a course or program?

Mike Greyell 13:27

Well, next semester, I'm registered for entrepreneurial management and small business management, and then I've been in contact with a cannabis consulting firm based out of Toronto called the Center cannabis consulting, and my consultant, Marie Sweeney, was telling me, when you're ready to go forward with this, I sent her my huge, big story. I read up, and she's really interested in helping to turn into successful business. So I know I want to produce some medicinal like oils and tinctures and bud. But then I want to focus around kind of female beauty products, like, look into the benefits CBD has for your skin and different ways it can be absorbed. And then separation products. I've already looked into a few companies, like, there's one based out of Vancouver. So after I, like, harvest all the buds in my plants, I can cut down the cannabis biomass, and they'll actually press into, like, high quality features all swimming, and I can temperature certain products, see if I can get absorbed at the skin. I'm gonna go. I've been thinking about going some of the coastal islands, going to find someone to make soap for me to make them CBD soap bars. Number of products. They'll give me a broad range of products I could produce with their oils.

Jasper Chu 14:58

That's amazing. If you don't mind just explaining a little more how you got into cultivating CBD for medicinal purposes, and how it how it inspired you or motivated you to want to go into that business.

Mike Greyell 15:14

Yeah, that's actually a cool story. Um, so I've always had insomnia, but since my stroke, they sent me to the UBC sleep clinic, actually, even they couldn't find a pill to get me to sleep. So my, like, way back in the day, I think my physio was the first person to say, "Oh, I

tried, like, medicinal, this and that." So I started getting to CBD. And then, I mean, I used to not sleep for like, a week at a time before I crash. And then with CBD, I started sleeping every night, like without a problem. And during recovery they tell me, like, "Listen, if you want to get the most of your recovery, you have to fix your sleep. You have to, like your brain recovers so much when you sleep." So I just, I feel like I used it probably two years post-stroke, right? And I feel like my recovery would have been nothing, nothing similar, if I didn't have it. So I wanted the chance to share all the benefits. Well, I know I understand being a stroke victim who's still in his 20s is very unusual, but I wanted to share, share the benefits that I often see with you or other people, and we're in similar situations for me.

Jasper Chu 16:42

One last question before I wrap up this interview, do you have any other plan, any other career, like life plans going forward after you're done at BCIT?

Mike Greyell 16:58

That's a good question. Honestly, I'm looking, I'm even looking at going back to CapU right now, to this figure what the heck I want to do? Stuck on playing, like I thought take Business Administration, because, like, out of stroke, I was like, What the hell do I do now? I guess I go to university, right? So one of the first course I chose. I'm so lucky at all since I'll say that.

Jasper Chu 17:25

Alright. Well, Mike Greyell, I want to thank you so much for volunteering your time to do this interview for Re-Imagine Radio. I wish you the best of luck going forward. I hope to see you again soon.

Mike Greyell 17:36

Thank you so much for having me. Take care.

Jasper Chu 17:39

You too. Thanks.

Outro 17:43

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