



IMPACT

Brain Injury Canada Newsletter



IN THIS ISSUE

NEW: Journaling workbooks
for individuals with brain
injury & caregivers

From the Resource Website:
How to have a COVID-safe
holiday season

Foundations of Brain Injury
for Health Care Professionals
- English & Français

Veronique Theberge &
Christmas After Brain Injury

Happy holidays from Brain Injury Canada

2022 went by in a flash. And when we look back on our year, we see why! We redid our website to be even more user-friendly; we launched our first online course; we hosted our annual conference virtually for the second year; we participated in several events to talk about the prevalence of brain injury in Canada; and we engaged in advocacy initiatives such as Brain Injury Awareness Month and Bill C-277 to establish a national strategy on brain injury (which had its first reading in Parliament).

We can't thank you enough for your support this year of our small but mighty organization - and we look forward to all the programs to come in 2023, such as BRain Injury & TEens (BRITE), more courses, and more advocacy work.

Happy holidays!

Disclaimer

The contents of this newsletter, such as text, graphics, images, information obtained from the newsletter's licensors and/or consultants, and other material contained in the newsletter (collectively, the "Content") are for informational purposes only. The Content is not intended to be a substitute for medical, legal, or other professional advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Specifically, with regards to medical issues, always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition. Never disregard professional medical advice or delay in seeking it because of something you have read in this newsletter. If you think you may have a medical emergency, call your doctor or 911 immediately. Brain Injury Canada does not recommend or endorse any specific tests, physicians, products, procedures, opinions, or other information that may be mentioned in this newsletter. Reliance on any information provided by the newsletter is solely at your own risk.

The opinions expressed in Impact, the newsletter of Brain Injury Canada, are those of the respective authors and not necessarily those of Brain Injury Canada. Brain Injury Canada will not be liable for any damages or losses howsoever sustained, as a result of the reliance on or use by a reader or any other person of the information, opinion, or products expressed, advertised or otherwise contained here in. Where appropriate, professional advice should be sought.

Stay in touch

Do you have a question, comment, or idea you want to share? Reach out to us at info@braininjurycanada.ca.

You can also follow along and interact with us on our social media platforms



Facebook
[@braininjurycan](https://www.facebook.com/braininjurycanada)



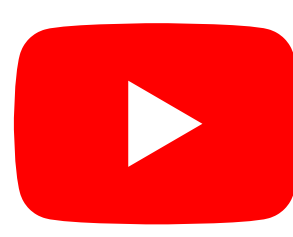
Twitter
[@braininjury_CAN](https://twitter.com/braininjury_CAN)



LinkedIn
[braininjurycan](https://www.linkedin.com/company/braininjurycanada)



Instagram
[@braininjurycanada](https://www.instagram.com/braininjurycanada)



YouTube
[Brain Injury Canada](https://www.youtube.com/BrainInjuryCanada)

NEW Journaling Workbooks

Journaling is a beneficial tool for supporting an individual's mental health. It encourages self-reflection and connection. This is especially important for people who have experienced significant changes in their lives, and may want to use tools to cope with those changes. This includes brain injury.

We have created journaling workbooks designed specifically for individuals with brain injury and caregivers of individuals with brain injury that can be viewed, downloaded, and used at your own pace.

Developed with a journaling expert, these workbooks are divided into two volumes - an introduction to journaling and a book of prompts. These can be used online, printed off, or as a guide while you use a notebook or other journaling device. Before you get started, make sure to watch the introductory videos as well!

- [Access the journaling workbooks for individuals with brain injury](#)
- [Access the caregiver journaling workbooks](#)

Brain Injury Canada's Holiday Hours

Brain Injury Canada will have the following hours over the holiday season:

December 24th, 2022 -January 2nd, 2023: CLOSED

Any messages received over our closure will be returned in January 2023. We wish everyone a lovely holiday season.

How to Have a COVID-safe Holiday



While the holidays are slowly transitioning back to the celebrations we were used to before 2020, COVID-19 is still a part of our lives. Winter is also a common time to catch a cold or a strain of the flu.

If you are concerned about COVID-19 over the holidays, the following tips can help reduce your chances of catching it:

- Avoid large unmasked gatherings
- Test yourself (or ask others to get tested) before you get together. Tests can be found in places such as public libraries and are free
- Speak with friends virtually
- Exchange gifts through the mail or by porch drop-offs
- Wash your hands and use hand sanitizer regularly

Further measures to protect yourself include masks and vaccines.

No matter how you choose to celebrate this year, remember to respect the wishes of others and ask them to respect yours in return.

[More tips for celebrating over the holidays](#)

The Foundations of Brain Injury for Health Care Professionals

Available in English & French

The Foundations of Brain Injury for Health Care Providers is the affordable self-paced course designed specifically for health care and service professionals to enhance their knowledge of brain injury, enabling improved, customized and informed care.



What you will learn

- Causes and types of brain injury;
- How injury affects the brain;
- Physical, cognitive, behavioural, and emotional effects;
- Dealing with challenging behaviours;
- Focus on person-centered care;
- Intersectionality and brain injury;
- Cultural intelligence in care;
- Supporting families;
- Self-care and preventing burnout and compassion fatigue

This course is multi-modal for the best possible self-directed learning experience, including:

- Videos from experts in the area of brain injury to provide an evidence-based, research-supported lens
- Videos from individuals sharing their personal accounts of living with the effects of brain injury, ensuring a valuable educational resource powered by lived experience
- Downloadable resources & further educational opportunities for deeper learning

Register for the Foundations of Brain Injury course

Christmas After Brain Injury

by Veronique Theberge

And just like that, festive season is already upon us. The Season's Holiday can bring extra pressures and stress as well as crowded shops and loud family gatherings. If you or your loved one has a brain injury, you will no doubt be familiar with the challenges that this may bring.

The increased hussle and bussle may trigger anxiety, sensory overload, emotional lability and additional fatigue. You may be tempted to cocoon in the comfort of your bubble, but I'd like to challenge your default go-to setting by empowering you to find ways to manage your symptoms while avoiding isolating you further during this special period of the year where you can benefit from spending quality time with family and friends.

You don't have to do it alone



I think that one of the best ways to maximise connection with special people in your life or even special places that you enjoy is to plan or determine which activity may fill your cup the best and see how others in your entourage can support you. We often forget the power of connection and the role people play in making us feel fulfilled while sharing some of the burden that can be associated with a Christmas to do list. Let's explore some ideas of how you can increase these important connections while minimising the impact on your brain.

Christmas After Brain Injury

by Veronique Theberge

- Ask a family member, a friend or carer to accompany you for your Christmas shopping.
- Invite someone over to help decorate your home.
- There is lots of thinking going into food preparation, see if someone can help you with grocery shopping and perhaps with the execution of your favourite recipe.
- If you struggle with budgeting, let someone break down your budget for you.
- If there is an activity that you'd like to do with your kids, nephews or grand kids, have a chat about how you could share responsibilities, so you all get to enjoy seeing the magic happen in their eyes.

You will notice that there are a few key words here, "ask for help". Asking for help is not a sign of weakness and I think if you approach it from the angle of spending valuable time with people that play a key role in your life, it will be a win-win for all parties involved and it may also lead to a greater understanding of the challenges that you are facing.

How to manage the multiple gatherings

Holidays are a busy period of the year full stop. It is fair to say that you aren't going to be able to control every aspect of it, but there are ways to help you manage your symptoms amongst all the craziness.

- Identify the quiet spots. If you are getting overwhelmed or need to take a break, retreat to this spot and let your loved ones know where they might find you.
- Stores can be crowded, see what you can do online and if you need to go in, plan to go on weekdays or perhaps early in the morning when it's less busy.
- Bring ear plugs or noise reducing headphones everywhere you go. If you haven't tried them already, I'd like to invite you to give this some consideration, they can honestly make a huge difference.
- If flashing lights bother you, ask if the flashing feature can be turned off.
- Take regular breaks BEFORE your symptoms increase or BEFORE the fatigue sets in.

Christmas After Brain Injury

by Veronique Theberge

Remember that it is ok to prioritise and to say no to some events or gatherings. Your energy tank isn't the same so it is okay to prioritise according to what you feel will bring you the most value. Also consider the support you may get when attending events as it may help you establish your priorities. If the setting of an event can't be adjusted to meet some of your needs, I think that you will find that people who love and care for you will understand if you decide not to attend. You can always offer to meet at another time. Remember that self-care is very much different than being selfish.

Other tips

- Make a list of what you need before going shopping, it will take the stress off having to remember all of it.
- Be mindful about your alcohol consumption as you may find that it affects you differently following your brain injury.
- Allow for periods of rest before and after attending an event so you can maximise and maintain your brain battery levels.
- Start preparing early in the month for festivities, it will alleviate last minute stress.
- If family or friends aren't close by this year, volunteering may be a great option to fill your emotional cup and get involved in your community.
- You will always be your **biggest advocate** so it's okay to respectfully let others know what works and doesn't quite work for you.

Leaving you with this last thought...one of the best ways to feel fulfilled during the season's holidays is to keep your focus on what you can do and what you enjoy. It is easy to fall into the comparison trap but know that this can lead to sadness. Give some time to reflecting about what went well and what brought you those heart-warming feelings. Those are good indicators of what you need to do more of going forward. If a particular event didn't go so well for you, see it as an opportunity to learn and re-adjust your approach for another event.

On this note, I am wishing you all the best for the upcoming Season's Holiday!

[Thank you Veronique for sharing this article from your blog](#)

Find your brain injury association

You can find more information about your local brain injury association at braininjurycanada.ca/brain-injury-associations

Alberta

- Southern Alberta Brain Injury Society
- Brain Care Centre
- Association for the Rehabilitation of the Brain Injured

British Columbia

- British Columbia Brain Injury Association
- Braintrust Canada
- Fraser Valley Brain Injury Association
- Comox Valley Head Injury Association
- Cowichan Brain Injury Society
- Kamloops Brain Injury Association
- Nanaimo Brain Injury Association
- Northern Brain Injury Association of BC
- Powell River Brain Injury Association
- Prince George Brain Injured Group Society
- South Okanagan Similkameen Brain Injury Society
- West Kootenay Brain Injury Association
- Vancouver Brain Injury Association
- Victoria Brain Injury Association

Manitoba

- Manitoba Brain Injury Association

Newfoundland & Labrador

- Newfoundland & Labrador Brain Injury Association
- Neuropsychiatric Patients' Association

Nova Scotia

- Brain Injury Association of Nova Scotia

Ontario

- Ontario Brain Injury Association
- Brain Injury Association of Quinte District
- Brain Injury Association of Fort Erie
- New Beginnings - Chatham-Kent
- Brain Injury Association of Durham Region
- Hamilton Brain Injury Association
- Brain Injury Association of London and Region
- Brain Injury Association of Niagara
- Brain Injury Association of North Bay and Area
- Brain Injury Association of the Ottawa Valley
- Brain Injury Association of Peel Halton
- Brain Injury Association of Peterborough Region
- Brain Injury Association of Sarnia Lambton
- Brain Injury Association of Sault Ste Marie
- Brain Injury Association of Thunder Bay & Area
- Brain Injury Association of Sudbury
- Brain Injury Association of Toronto
- Brain Injury Association of Waterloo/Wellington
- Brain Injury Association of Windsor Essex
- Brain Injury Association of York Region
- Seizure & Brain Injury Centre

Prince Edward Island

- Brain Injury Association of Prince Edward Island

Find your brain injury association

Quebec

- CONNEXION - Regroupement des Associations des Personnes TCC du Québec
- Association des personnes ACVA-TCC du Bas-Saint-Laurent
- Association des traumatisés crâniens de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue
- Association des handicapés adultes Côte-Nord
- Association des accidentés cérébro-vasculaires et traumatisés crâniens de l'Estrie
- Association des TCC et ACV de la Gaspésie et des Îles-de-la-Madeleine
- Association des personnes handicapées physiques et sensorielles du secteur Joliette
- Centre d'aide personnes traumatisées crâniennes et handicapées physiques Laurentides
- Association des traumatisés cranio-cérébraux Mauricie-Centre-du-Québec
- Association des Traumatisés cranio-cérébraux de la Montérégie
- Association québécoise des traumatisés crâniens
- Association des neurotraumatisés - Outaouais
- Association des TCC des deux rives
- Association Renaissance des personnes traumatisées crâniennes du Saguenay/Lac-Saint-Jean

Saskatchewan

- Saskatchewan Brain Injury Association
- Lloydminster and Area Brain Injury Society

Connect with resources you need

Brain Injury Canada Connect is designed to help people find the resources they need in their area - from rehabilitation to speech language therapy to home supports to advocacy.

Check back often as our directory continues to grow - new resources are being added regularly.

www.braininjurycanadaconnect.ca

