

THE AUTHORS SHOW – Humor

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“I Think You Put My Knee In Backwards

I Keep Kicking Myself In The Butt”

Limping through the aftermath of knee replacement is like walking a tightrope without lessons. I have known for several years that I was a strong candidate for total knee replacement, but my life

Finally, there were two chooses: First, I could live with the constant pain every time I walked. My second choice was make the time to have the surgery and put everything else on hold. Like speaking engagements, interviews and going to meetings.

I am a type “A” person, get it done, do it myself and help others who need me. With that as my life style, letting someone else help me, with almost everything was out of my comprehension. Not to mention the STRESS that my mind, body and character was about to endure.

One day I just was tired of the pain and limping like an old woman and I said OK, doc let’s schedule the surgery. I had just spent a week in New York promoting my latest book “You Have To LAUGH To Keep From CRYING / How To Parent Your Parents”. I met over 65 radio, TV and media, who wanted to interview me. My thoughts were, this will me the motive to go through surgery and be back on my feet in record time.

Five days after returning from New York, I am in the hospital. It took the nurses three times to get a good IV port. I guess I can say that was better than the seven times it took several nurses in the past, which I can laugh at now. Just call me a HARD STICK.

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As I kissed my husband good bye and was wheeled to the first operating room, the sedation doctor explained that he would use an x-ray machine to find a main artery in my upper

thigh and inject a block. My understanding was this would give me three days of numbness in the surgical leg and allow healing to start without the severe pain that accompanies this surgery. But as the sedation doctor was explaining the procedure he was performing, I was on my way to LaLa Land and could have cared less what he was saying. I could not tell you anything until I woke up three hours later with a brand new titanium knee. Oh, I now get to go through a special line at the airport and get a ride to my gate when I fly. YEA!

In the recovery room I awake with no pain. You see not only did they put a block in my thigh, I had fourteen pain numbing shots around the new knee. I will call this the Honeymoon part of recovery. I was moved to my room and got to see my husband again. I found myself very energetic. My husband kept telling everyone, I was like the "Energizer Bunny on Steroids". It seems I was talking very fast, and I was in great spirits. I have learned the I can be over stimulated with drugs very easy.

The rest of the afternoon was get up and go to the bathroom, due to the volume of IV floods that they pumped into my body during surgery. I was going the bathroom every ten or fifteen minutes. The afternoon was a comedy. I was sure after surgery and not sleeping all afternoon, I was going to sleep all night. My husband wanted to spend the night in the hospital with me. He was such an angel. As the night began to progress, it was either a really bad comedy or a nightmare. When you have knee surgery, you are considered a FALL RISK. The nurses told me anytime I needed to get up I must call them. So to make sure you don't get up without calling a nurse, they have this very large sign on the ceiling above the bed.

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FALL RISK ALWAYS CALL A NURSE TO HELP YOU!

Knees surgery patients are connected to a machine that pumps ice cold water around the surgical knee and getting out of that is a trick in itself. Now logic tells me that I do not want to hurt the new knee (but little did I know that was now the strongest part of my anatomy). Call the nurse and let them assist you on the ten-foot walk to the toilet. Now, let me tell you the walk to the bathroom was not the issue. I am short and I have short legs and the toilets

have an extra five-inch raiser on the seat. For a normal person this would have been of assistance, because you would not have to bend the new knee as much. What they did not take into consideration was, I am short and every time I went to the bathroom, which was about forty- eights time that night, I was forced to get on my tip toes to sort-of sit down. Not fun at all! I am sure to an on-looker it was just part of the comedy. Needless to say, neither my husband nor I got any sleep that night. Oh, I forgot to tell you that I threw-up all over the room with a reaction to the medicine's that they had given me. The only life saving was my husband was in a recliner and it was tucked away in a corner and he missed getting hit by my vomit. I did have warning and told the nurse I was feeling sick at my stomach, but she insisted I go the bathroom before she would get me a throw-up bag. Next time I tell you I may throw-up, get me the bag then.

As the sun was coming up and my husband I were exhausted, all I wanted to do was sleep. Physical therapy came into the room and said let's go for a walk. We walked down the hall and the PT nurse said you are doing great. I explained I had been exercising unwillingly all night long. Next the doctor came in and ask if I wanted to go home and I said "NO". I need to sleep. I wanted to get at least one good night's sleep before trying to sleep at home.

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The moral of this story is stress can affect the best of us and even though I kept kicking myself in the butt, the doctor put the knee in correctly. I will be walking on stage with confidence again real soon.

Charlotte Canion

Author – Keynote Speaker