

## Personal Information

I wanted to be a doctor since childhood. I learned early on that with hard work I could reach the goals I set for myself. I received my medical degree in 1983 from Michigan State University's College of Human Medicine then worked as a family physician in Michigan and Colorado. I sustained a brain injury in 2002, at which point I spent months attending outpatient neurological rehabilitation, followed by 10 months of an unsuccessful return to work trial. It was very difficult to accept, though obvious even to me, I could no longer practice as a Family Physician. Through this period, and ultimately for about 5 years, I dealt with the process of accepting who I had become after my TBI and letting go of the person I had been before. I learned that working hard wasn't enough to make my brain work as it had before, just like working hard can't make a blind person see or a deaf person hear.

In 1997 I had lost my mother to a TBI caused by a fall in her home. In 2005 my Dad fell, fracturing his neck and sustaining a life-changing TBI. Along with my own injury, these experiences raised my awareness about the need for education of the public as well as health care professionals concerning BI.

I was part of the team organized by the Brain Injury Association of Colorado that developed BI 101, a 3-part series consisting of *BI Basics*, *Cognitive Tools* and *BI Resources*. I had been presenting *BI Basics* and *Cognitive Tools* in the community prior to BI 101 and continued presenting them in the 3-apart program. Until 2009 I helped present this program throughout Colorado to community groups, government agencies, community care providers, hospital rehab departments, Independent Living Center staff and to staff and troops at Fort Carson Military Post. In 2007 I authored the book, *Brain Injury Survival Kit; 365 Tips, Tools and Tricks to Deal with Cognitive Function Loss* published the following year.

I have since moved to western North Carolina. I continue to have a passion to present on topics related to brain injury to the general public, medical providers and military staff and troops, including groups of families and survivors, professionals dealing with patients with brain injury as well as college and graduate students planning on entering related fields.

I have recently implemented my goal to present to the senior population, both about brain injury, which is a high risk for them, and about brain fitness, a significant concern for aging people.

I hope that with raising awareness about brain injury, those of us dealing with the consequences of BI, as well as our families and supporters, will have more information and support available to us, both in the community and from our health care providers. I do not seek any remuneration for these presentations, only reimbursement for travel expenses when appropriate.

To learn more about me, my book or the work I do, visit my website at [www.tbijourney.com](http://www.tbijourney.com). I can be contacted by e-mail, [cherylesullivan@yahoo.com](mailto:cherylesullivan@yahoo.com) for more information or to arrange a presentation.