

FINDING JOY IN EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES AFTER BEING DIAGNOSED WITH HEART FAILURE

Bryan's Story



A dedicated father of three sons and a driver for a shipping company, Bryan was 52 years old when he underwent a quadruple bypass procedure following three heart attacks and was diagnosed with heart failure. At that time, Bryan's life changed. Since his diagnosis, Bryan has found a new passion volunteering

for The Mended Hearts Inc. (MHI) and supporting others living with heart failure. Bryan shares his story of being diagnosed with heart failure and how his diagnosis has motivated him to find joy in everyday activities and give back to the community.

How did you feel when you found out you had heart failure?

When I was diagnosed with heart failure, I couldn't believe it. But my cardiologist was able to explain the diagnosis in such a way that I could understand how it would impact my life.

What steps have you taken since you were diagnosed?

Since I was diagnosed with heart failure, I have relied on the support of my close friends and family. My sons, who live close to me, are my biggest advocates. Having family nearby has been beneficial in more ways than I can count. My sons are extremely involved as caregivers, and I'm so grateful for that. They help me stay on a healthy diet, join me on walks, and remind me to take my medications. They always look out for me with the best of intentions, and they inspire me to continue looking forward to each day, even when some days are tougher than others.

I also have established a trusting relationship with my doctor. I continuously monitor my health, which allows me to feel like a partner in my care. All the steps I'm taking in my daily life help me to find joy in the simplest activities. In the future, I want to be able to watch my two grandchildren grow up, because family is everything to me.

What advice would you give to others who are living with heart failure?

I would emphasize the importance of creating a close partnership with your doctor or care team so you can understand your heart failure diagnosis. I would encourage people with heart failure to maintain a healthy lifestyle, including incorporating a diet of heart-healthy foods and following a consistent exercise plan. Also, be sure to reach out for support from your family and friends.

I learned that things can change in the blink of an eye, and it's important to take life by the reins and enjoy it for all it's worth. Living with heart failure is a wake-up call to start living your life and find your purpose.

What impact has volunteering with MHI had on you?

MHI has been one of the biggest blessings to me. I joined my local chapter and was an active member and was then elected president of my chapter. Giving back to my community and helping others through their own unique experiences with heart failure helps me. Also, knowing that there are others in the community who have experienced similar challenges motivates me to keep going.

At the Heart of the Matter: Moving forward after your heart failure hospitalization

is a program sponsored by Merck in collaboration with The Mended Hearts, Inc. to help support people living with heart failure better understand their condition and take a more proactive role in their care.



Moving Forward After Your
Heart Failure Hospitalization