

I Took a Blind Leap and It Worked

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I am a mother to 4 beautiful girls. In March of 2011, my youngest daughter Teagan, who was 4 years old at the time, suffered severe brain damage from a prolonged seizure. The seizure was subclinical after 2.5 hours, meaning her body had stopped convulsing but her brain continued to seize. The doctors did not realize this until the next morning because of the enormous amount of drugs she was given to stop the seizure. She was unconscious. The seizure lasted over 24 hours. The damage left her blind, unable to communicate, and Teagan had lost complete control of her entire body although she was still aware of what was going on around her.

The doctors and therapists at the hospital did not give me much hope. They offered very little to help Teagan other than heavy amounts of seizure drugs and basic living aids. Yes, she was provided an occupational therapist, a speech therapist, and a physical therapist but as I watched and participated in Teagan's therapy five days a week, I could tell even they did not hold much hope for her. Her therapy sessions consisted of playing with switch toys for hours. Teagan often fell asleep during her therapy sessions (I almost did, too).

I was desperate to find someone to help my daughter. I was not even close to giving up on her and I knew there had to be someone or something that could help her regain her normal body functions. I searched and searched daily, tried several unconventional therapies for which I was chastised and cautioned against by Teagan's doctors. Teagan did start to show signs of improvements because of these therapies. Her eyesight was the first to come back through light therapy. She was now at least seeing people and toys in front of her. Several rides in the Gyro Stem helped her to slowly regain the use of her right arm and hand. Her muscles started to strengthen but she was barely able to sit up for more than an hour at a time.

After almost a year of intense therapy, Teagan's homeschool teacher told me about MNRI® therapy and how she was able to rehabilitate her father who had suffered from a stroke. I was a little skeptical because everyone I spoke to had an opinion about what I should try. I did not look into MNRI® therapy immediately. I waited and tried to find information about it online. It was difficult to understand the material online, but out of desper-



Teagan in late 2010, before her seizure.



Teagan in June of 2011.

tion and the fact that two other people I know recommended I try MNRI®, I took a blind leap.

I registered Teagan for an eight day Family Conference in San Diego, California. I honestly had absolutely no idea what to expect. My family and friends feverishly helped us fundraise to get there even though they, too, were skeptical about this therapy.

The first day I arrived in San Diego I met several families who had been participating in MNRI® with Dr. Masgutova and I could not believe the stories I was hearing! A man with a brain injury was recovering from his injuries after being bedridden for almost 40 years, a child with cerebral palsy was running around, another boy came in with a walker and left without it. For the first time since Teagan's injury, I had hope. Teagan underwent 6 hours of therapy each day and I waited. I was given eight days of hands-on training myself. Dr. Masgutova's therapists were wonderful. I was extremely impressed with their knowledge, far out weighing that of the therapists at home. They were working on Teagan like it meant something. They knew this would work even if I didn't, yet. She was being pushed, twisted, lifted on her knees and encouraged to participate. I was impressed because this was what I was looking for. Let's get her up and show her what she can do! I didn't see one switch toy! There was even a respiratory therapist there who amazed me! She straightened out Teagan's twisted rib cage and had her breathing correctly in a couple hours. Her color returned to normal! She no longer had purple fingers and toes. This first conference was very overwhelming; I had to absorb a lot of information and was exhausted from the trip.

I returned home with a wealth of knowledge still not really knowing what to expect but I was determined. I did my best to stick with Dr. Masgutova's Home Program schedule. As people visited they were impressed, too, saying things like, "She is so much more aware!" Teagan was now starting to make eye contact with people, something she did not like to do at all before. Her posture was improving, people started to notice how much straighter she was sitting in her wheelchair. Months went on and I continued to do MNRI® that I had been taught. Now the home therapists were noticing, too. One said to me, "You are an inspiration Barb, I don't know what you are doing but keep it up!" I knew it was the MNRI®.

We were fortunate enough to return to see Dr. Masgutova in California, six months later for another eight day Family Conference and this time Dr. Masgutova was impressed! She did Teagan's Assessment on day two and she said Teagan's brain was learning at a very fast pace. That was music to my ears. One of the fathers who was returning for another conference for his son said, "She looks like a completely different child!" Teagan underwent another eight days of therapy with Dr. Masgutova's therapists and I just can't say enough.

This time I started seeing improvements immediately. Teagan was 100% tube fed when we arrived. Yes, her oral feeding had slowly been improving but not enough to reduce her tube feeds. She was eating chips, french fries, and little bits of things like chicken and pizza, but never enough to sustain her caloric intake. A couple days into the therapy we went out for dinner and Teagan ate two whole chicken strips and wanted more. I was surprised. Next time out I ordered her pasta and she ate a bunch of that, too. This was a huge improvement in the volume she was eating. When we got home I met with Teagan's Home Nutrition team and Teagan ate a whole bowl of pasta with steak in front of them. Yes, I think it was safe to say they were surprised, too. Teagan's tube feeds have now been reduced dramatically. We saw other improvements, too.

Her eye tracking improved quite a bit and so did the strength in her back muscles which helped stabilize her core. She is able to reach and twist about while sitting, grabbing, and reaching now, something she was very hesitant to do. Her balance has improved quite a bit too; she is much more stable on her feet.

I am working hard at fundraising so I can bring Teagan back to Dr. Masgutova and her team. I am convinced with time and work my little girl will walk and talk again, thanks to God and Team Masgutova!



Teagan in 2014.



We congratulate and thank Teagan for her success and your motivation, and your whole family for their care, support, and great enthusiasm, and trust in Teagan's development. We wish you good health and many achievements. – The USA & Canadian MNRI® Specialist Team