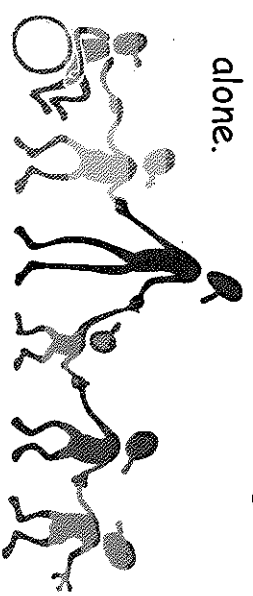


## Start with short-term goals.

To avoid being overwhelmed and afraid, focus on the most important things you need to accomplish today and tomorrow. To succeed, be sure to set reasonable expectations.

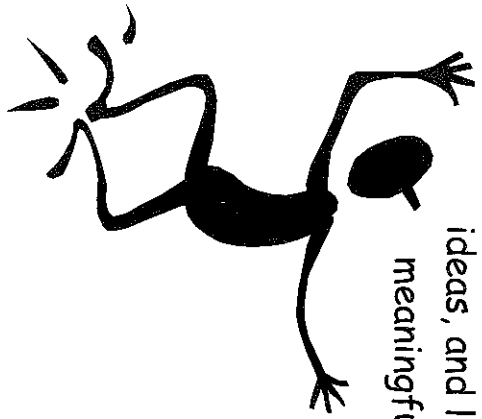
## Develop and maintain support systems.

Everyone does better with understanding and support from others. Caring, helping, and reaching out to other people is a good way to make progress and avoid feeling alone.



## Define success in your own terms.

Everyone has the right to decide how to be successful and whether or not they are. No matter what your situation, you can be caring, enjoy relationships, learn new things, improve yourself, explore new ideas, and live a meaningful life.



**National Resource Center for traumatic brain injury**  
*Tools for therapy, education, self-help, and support*  
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Layout and design — Debbie West

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03-01-02

# Fundamentals for Living Better After Brain Injury

SARAH DEMM  
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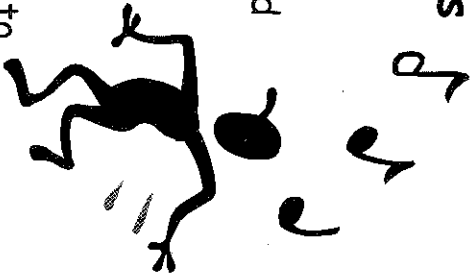


GUIDE # 1

**National Resource Center for traumatic brain injury**  
*Tools for therapy, education, self-help, and support*

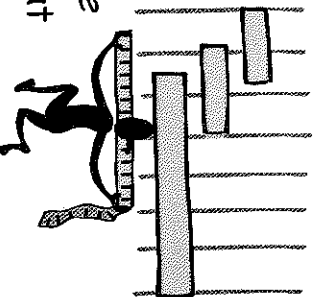
## Manage stress effectively.

Everyone faces stress. Find and master stress management techniques that work best for you. Listen to music, take a walk, see a movie, talk to someone you like, breathe slowly and deeply.



## Set priorities and focus your energy to succeed.

Make a "to do" list, number the items by priority, and work on the highest priorities first. Learn and recognize the difference between what you *have* to do and what you *want* to do.

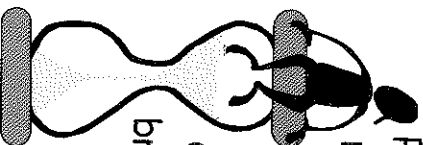


## Learn how and when to ask for help.

Recognize that everyone needs help sometimes and many people enjoy helping others. Don't let your pride get in the way of making your life easier. Seek help early on, before a problem becomes a crisis.

## Learn the art of patience.

Patience is important, but not always easy to find, and recovery is a long road with many bumps and turns. Count to ten, take slow deep breaths, or focus on accomplishments and improvements. Happier endings come with patience and persistence over time.

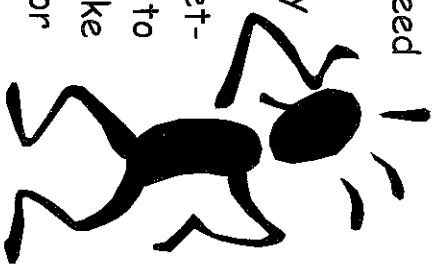


## Learn from your mistakes.

Everyone makes them. Think of your mistakes as an opportunity to learn and make the future better.

## Avoid being hard on yourself.

Facing many problems and wanting to succeed quickly, many people get angry at themselves for not doing better. Being kind to yourself will make things better for everyone.



## Be as concerned about yourself as you are about other people.

Be careful about spending your time worrying about and helping everyone else. Learn to take care of yourself. Set limits and say "no" at least sometimes. Take time out for yourself each day, even if it's just 15 minutes.

