

The Power of Belief

Category: Emergencies

written by Matthew Zwerling | November 3, 2022

At 3:00 a.m. one morning, my wife collapsed in our small bathroom with a crash. She was, it turned out, having her first epileptic grand-mal seizure at age 48. Out of the blue! I was able to get her back to bed and then watched her have another nine seizures before calling the ambulance company. Shortly afterward, a fire truck, a paramedic truck, and an ambulance arrived, along with seven first-responders.

While we waited for them to arrive, my wife asked for support from her wisdom guides. The one who showed up she referred to as David. Well, the paramedic who carried her out to the gurney (the room being too small for the gurney) was named David. And then the ER physician who attended her—also David. And as we waited for an MRI, another ER doc passed by, saw us, and came in—yet another David, who had done hypnotherapy training with my wife. Finally, the radiologist who'd read the MRI came in to give us the result—David. His pronouncement about the MRI reading: "There is nothing remarkable about your brain!" (He didn't know a thing or two about my wife!) A subsequent EEG was also normal, so she was not either put on drugs or restricted from driving.

About a year later, she had her second major seizure episode. Knowing that there was not an organic reason for the seizures, we both felt more comfortable this time just waiting them out, keeping her safe from harm. In between her seven seizures that day, I read, for the first time, Sylvia Boorstein's lovely small book, *Don't Just Do Something, Sit There: A Mindfulness Retreat*. And that's what I did—just sat and waited.

When faced with an emergency, we are often (almost always?) motivated to do something, to act, to react. There is, however, a time and place to stop, look, and listen, to breath, to ask for guidance. It takes just a moment but may have a profound impact on the outcome, whether for the patient or for someone else in the room. My teacher and dear friend Rachel Naomi Remen would, perhaps, in a similar situation, just say, "I am enough."

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