

## *Fredrek “Owen” Lima – Walking Talking Miracle (WTM)*

The information below is a brief bio of my journey from my accident day until present. I have lived with my injury for the last 36 years. My story has many experiences and realities which I express and share during my motivational and educational talk with the student body. I will at different times stop and explain my experience and share stories appropriate to the setting and mood of the school or class about my accident. How it has changed my life and how I have dealt with it.

### *Below is my medical Diagnosis in 1976*

“Over the course of several weeks, he required to be treated with different antibiotics for his chest infections, and his neurological status remained otherwise essentially unchanged. Towards the end of October, it was noted that there had been some improvement from his deep comatose stage, in that he was lying somewhat awake, but would not respond to verbal stimuli. This is so-called ‘coma vigile’. He was not exhibiting any decerebrate spasms either. He was at a stage of being tube-fed and was tolerating this quite well.

As it seemed that Owen had reached a plateau in his neurological disease, the time came when arrangements were made for him to be transferred to the Parkland Hospital for further rehabilitation. At the time of transfer, on November 23<sup>rd</sup>, he was still in this so-called ‘coma-vigile’ state, exhibiting marked contracture deformities of the extremities, and was on Dantrolene for this, and was not obeying commands. His plantar response both remained extensor. There was also some asymmetry of his naso-labial folds.

**FINAL DIAGNOSIS:** 1. Closed head injury – Severe brainstem injury  
2. Left pneumothorax”

## **Hello my name is Owen Lima. What do you think of me so far???**

Hearing my voice you may think that this guy is drunk, talking slow, therefore his mind is slow. All is a result of my DUI while I was out having a “**Good Time**”.

I want to share my experience of what it is like living with a brain injury, which is a result of drinking and driving and how it has affected my life.

When I was 15 years old I felt like I was in control of my life with money popularity and girls ... What more does a guy need to have a “**Good Time**”. Two weeks into grade 10 a friend and I decided to skip school.

The morning of September 10<sup>th</sup>, 1976, I woke up at 6am for football practice. The night before I put my plan into action, I told my parents about my intentions to miss school to help my uncle with harvest, but the next morning dad came down to my room to tell me sternly, no missing school. I had the attitude of a typical teenager with the response “yeah OK” my mind was already made up. We had the morning to plan how to skip school but it would have been easier if my parents would have bought into my scheme to excuse me from school that day. So we had to go to plan B. We went to work on our teachers, success was achieved. We convinced our teachers that we had to help with harvest. We wanted to get a head start on our weekend. We skipped school in the afternoon; we had all the makings for a great weekend. Little did I know, that weekend would change my life forever. All for a “**Good Time**”.

December 16<sup>th</sup>, 1976 I woke up in a level four nursing home; the only place worse is a morgue. Remember I was only out to have a “**Good Time**”. Before my injury I was 5’10” 175lbs. I was all muscle and very little fat; when you loose weight you loose muscle first, Surprise! I was still 5’10” but weighing only 80lbs, after 15 weeks of being in a coma. As a result of my decision making, I had permanently altered my physical abilities to live as what most of us would consider a normal life.

While I was unconscious for 15 weeks, I suffered:

- Permanent brain stem injury
- Left lung collapse
- Two cases of double pneumonia
- Bleeding ulcer

The doctors diagnosed me as 100% permanently and entirely unable to work for the rest of my life. (A Vegetable) However my condition was improving and I was no longer a vegetable but (a fruit). All this had happened to me because of a bad decision. What more does a young man need to have a “**Good Time**”.

My first day awake I recall people talking about a kid seriously injured in a car accident. I thought poor kid; I sure wouldn’t want to be him. I slowly realized that kid they were talking about was me. I had to relearn everything over again, except one thing.

The next year I went back to High School, I failed all subjects except Geometry, with a 50%. It took me 3 years to complete my grade 10, I had completed my grade 11 and 12 in the next two years; remember, all for a **“Good Time”**.

I did graduate with a grade 12 diploma in 1981, and received an award **“In Recognition of Determination and Desire to Succeed in Life”**. I was 20 years old. I was the first ever **“Graduated Vegetable”**.

My first job during my recovery was at the Bay in Prince Albert Sask. as a stock boy. My second job was at a Kinsmen Work Shop as an assistant supervisor, I exceeded everyone's expectations. When there was an employee that had a low functioning ability to do the job required in that group. That employee would be placed in my group. The supervisors would ask me how come I was having such good results; I responded **“It takes one to know one”**.

The main reason I lived through this whole ordeal before my accident I was in top physical condition, lifting weights and running daily, if I had not been in such good physical condition I most likely would not be here today telling my story. By the way, the one thing I did not have to relearn was how to downhill ski.

The last thing I remember before my accident was attending the Prince Albert Raiders Hockey training camp; this was the weekend before school started. My attitude before my injury was, be the best, if not the best, practice until you are the best. My attitude will be tested for the rest of my life. I had to relearn everything over again and still learning to this day. **“But at least I am alive, having a great life”**.

Every person knows what is right and wrong, however not all teenagers brains are fully developed. So listen to your parents, all authority figures, stay in school, respect all people and be kind to one another.

**Don't have a “GOOD TIME”!! Have a “GREAT LIFE”!!!**

My name is Fredrek Owen Lima, this is my story. I am excited to share my life with other youth and ultimately if one person hears my story and makes a better decision about Drinking and Driving than my story was a success.

## *Below is my Medical Evaluation 1998*

“January 1998,

In summary, Mr. Lima has made a very good physical and mental recovery given the severity and nature of his head injury that he sustained 15 years ago. He is currently functioning in the average range of ability, and has only circumscribed deficits in fine motor speed and dexterity, and in learning of complex verbal material. As such, Mr. Lima has in fact adapted well to his disabilities, and appears happy stable emotionally. Mr. Lima indicated a desire to obtain training as a health care aide provider. Given his current learning difficulty, any form of higher education or vocational training will be difficult. However, if Mr. Lima is highly motivated, given appropriate tutoring and support, he will most likely succeed in obtaining some form of suitable health care training. His desire for post-secondary training should be encouraged and supported as much as possible. His positive attitude and past experiences with living with a disability is a definite asset. He is wished all the best.”

## *For Information or Booking*

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