

# Falling off a cliff

How  
getting involved  
helped the climb back  
to a full life

Margaret Cheng



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# Disclosure statement

There are no  
conflicts of interest  
to declare





Multiple falls = multiple climbs

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# The New Reality

Before

After

Still me, but  
somehow  
not 'me'  
at all



# The wakeup call



Family Safety Net

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What I did

Qi gong  
Different Strokes  
group

Back to work Training

Fatigue management

Neuropsychologist led  
Stroke Group

Cognitive testing

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The effort  
paid off

Skills based  
volunteering

Charity Trustee



**Stroke**  
Association



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# The leap of faith



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What I did  
next

**NICE** National Institute for  
Health and Care Excellence

**NIHR** | National Institute for  
Health and Care Research

**NHS**  
Health Research  
Authority

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The joy  
of being  
involved in  
new  
research



**e-OPTIMISM**

Developing a Remote Psychoeducational  
Programme Following TIA and Minor Stroke



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So, what  
have I  
learned?

- Recovery after stroke is not a straight line
- We each need to find our own path
- Involvement has much to recommend it

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And what  
would I say  
to fellow  
stroke  
survivors?

- Our voices are important and need to be heard
- Ask for whatever support you need
- Value your time and experience
- Enjoy having a voice!

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And for  
researchers,  
health  
practitioners,  
public health  
bodies and  
clinicians

- This is a Win-Win situation
- Don't just tick the boxes
- Involve us and support us from the start
- It can't be done without us!

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To all the  
organisations  
mentioned,  
and to my  
family and  
friends

Thank you!

