“Every morning I look forward to just waking up…”

ON THE KLINE GALLAND ROAD TO RECOVERY.

The care at Kline Galland helped me each and every step of the way. They were there every step of the way. They were always there because they knew how to help with my recovery and help with my comfort during that difficult time. It was very frustrating at first. Over time, however, I could see the progress that we were making, and it was fun to see.

Then I was walking down the hall holding the rail without a walker. It helped me to start to get back to normal daily life. It didn’t mention that I was one of the youngest in the inpatient rehab. That made it fun.

THE NEW AGE OF REHABILITATION.

Look around. The world of health care is changing in practices and particulars that, even years ago, seemed impossible. Kline Galland is working with them; helping to make our lives easier and more comforting.

GOING FORWARD?

TM: My short term memory has recovered quite significantly, but it’s probably not exactly what it was before the accident. I’m more patient and empathetic, and I have more interest in family. I got married March 22, 2014. My daughter Etta was born May 7, 2016. Every morning I look forward to just waking up and seeing my daughter and having her smile at me.

Life with my family is absolutely great. I’m actually doing CrossFit, which is fun, and I’m told that I’m one of the fittest boys in there. It’s just the next step in what happened. It’s just the next step in what happened.

I just couldn’t make my body do it.

When I was finally discharged from the hospital, I got to go where I could have more involvement and their advocacy for me. I couldn’t have seen it going any other way. I was one of the youngest in the inpatient rehab? That made it fun.

A Profile of Courage

FORMER KLINE GALLAND REHAB PATIENT - TODD ERICKSON

I’m a former USAF helicopter rescue engineer by training. I flew the H-3 “Sea King” in the 411th Rescue Squadron, 18th Rescue Group at Kadena, Okinawa, Japan. I was deployed to Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. There were many challenges in the course of my years of service in the military.

I became involved in the rehabilitation community at Kline Galland in 1991, because of my daughter’s school. I was very interested in the research and the work that they were doing.

The care that I received at Kline Galland helped me each and every step of the way.

AND AFTER THAT?

I was totally discharged from the hospital, I got to go to rehab where I could have more involvement with my rehab. I remember my mom told me, “Todd, you’re going to Kline Galland now. It’s going to be much better – you’ll have more freedom and choice, and in rehab you can make your own decisions.”

WHAT SHAPED YOU IN?

When I get to Kline Galland, I couldn’t get out of bed. I didn’t think I could sit up or even roll over. I was on a feeding tube. I could only drink thickened liquids, otherwise I might choke and aspirate. I had to reschedule everything I love about being a military helicopter rescue engineer.

I broke seven vertebrae in my back; they’re now fused with titanium rods. I had seven vertebrae removed, they replaced the skull plates to stop the bleeding. I had to learn to eat, to talk, to walk, to see the bathroom. I don’t think I could ever be written as if it’s kind of weird, because I know my head till now, and I know how hard it is to walk and to eat and how to write – but I just couldn’t make my body do it.

ONE STEP AT A TIME, CORRECT?

TE: Kline Galland, they really take an interest in you as a person. The therapists worked with me and my specific needs to make my experience a good one. They really tailored and personalized therapies in ways that would provide both help with my recovery, and help with my comfort during that difficult time. It was very frustrating at first. Over time, however, I could see the progress that we were making, and it was fun to see.

Tell us about the accident.

TE: It was in the spring of 2012. I had flown back from a conference in Washington, D.C. The next morning I had training at the Boeing plant in Everett. I headed out north, I was turning onto highway 522 and something happened. Just to you know, this isn’t meant to be, this is where I’ve been since I became separated from my wife. It’s the尼克, it actually made it to the median and was pretty much fine, but now I was on a car at the right lane. I was 21 at the time.

YIKES!

TE: I was rushed to the hospital in Everett, where I was stabilized and had my treatment. That was a pretty difficult time. When I arrived at the hospital, I broke five vertebrae in my back. I had a traumatic brain injury. When that happens, they remove the skull plates so your brain has room to move. In my case, the skull plates actually went bad in storage, so I now have artificial skull plates. The other things with that was I couldn’t properly process the cerebrospinal fluid in my body. You can get something called hydrocephalus which means you have too much fluid in your brain.

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