

HealthyWoman

A story of survival: One woman's journey

In the fall of 1995, a piercing headache clouded Valerie Greene's usually sharp mind. The young executive returned home, but lost her equilibrium and passed out. Tests performed at a local hospital were inconclusive.

For six months, Valerie continued to display signs of a stroke—dizziness, blurred vision and difficulty speaking. When she returned to the hospital with slurred speech, even the CT scan revealed nothing. But Valerie refused to leave.

Two days later, she woke in the Intensive Care Unit paralyzed and unable to speak. "You suffered a massive stroke," the physician explained. "What?" she screamed in her mind. "Strokes are for 95-year-olds. I'm only 31!" She described it saying, "It's like being buried alive."

"A friend referred me to Ira Goodman,

MD, a top neurologist at Orlando Regional Healthcare. Dr. Goodman has always been there for me," she says. Valerie began therapy at Orlando Regional Healthcare's Brain Injury Rehabilitation Center, where she relearned how to button her blouse, fix

her hair and pick up small items.

She spent hours in speech therapy learning how to speak again. Focusing on projection, her therapist placed books on her diaphragm and said, "One day you will be a motivational speaker." Valerie whispered back, "I just want to order a pizza."

Nearly 10 years later, she says, "My stroke became a gift."

The therapist's prediction came true. Today, Valerie is a motivational speaker and author challenging people to accomplish amazing goals. She reminds everyone a stroke can happen to anyone, at any age, at any time. 🙏



Stroke survivor
Valerie Greene