

"Life is a brief, brilliant flame—and the body is the candle, burning steadily down to make its light possible." – Lennie Soo, 2008

The Night My Neck Snapped, and My Life Unfolded

November 12, 2006. A date etched into my being. It was just before midnight, an ordinary moment that became the hinge upon which my life swung.

I was sitting on a Pilates ball when, without warning, it rolled backward. What happened next is a memory suspended in a strange, slow-motion clarity. I had all the time in the world, it seemed, to roll to the side or catch myself. But I didn't. The back of my head struck the cupboard door at a precise, brutal angle, and the inertia of the ball forced my full body weight onto my neck.

I heard it and felt it—a dry, sickening snap, like a twig underfoot.

A cold numbness began to spread through my limbs. In that moment of sheer terror, my training took over. I immediately induced a self-hypnotic state, creating a catalepsy in my neck—a rigid, trance-like lock that I believe, to this day, saved me from paralysis or death right there on the floor. With my husband's help, I managed to walk down three flights of stairs, get into the car, and direct him to the hospital, all while holding my shattered neck in a cage of my own mind.

By the time we reached the emergency entrance, I could no longer move parts of my body. A sour, unpleasant feeling radiated from my neck, and the sensation that my head was about to fall off was overwhelming. Yet, wrapped in the calm of my trance, I must have appeared deceptively composed. The staff wheeled me in without a hard brace, and as they did, the world began to flicker. I felt myself drifting in and out of consciousness, my thoughts fragmenting. I remember a single, clear fear: *I don't want to be paralyzed. Is this the end?*

My next memory is of being laid on a cold, hard surface for an X-ray. And then, I was told, I died.

What I experienced next defies earthly language, but I will try to share it. There was a great spark, and then a release. I felt my soul—my consciousness—leave my body. I

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saw myself, small and still, on the table below. Then, I was flying, soaring through a tunnel towards a magnificent, loving light.

Time and space ceased to exist. I was immersed in a state of unlimited awareness, where the past, present, and future merged into one. I felt connected to the entire universe; all knowledge and wisdom was within me, a part of me. I finally entered the light and found myself moving towards a massive, womb-like structure. I had become a filament of light, and all around me were billions of others, swirling like gentle stars.

I understood, without being told, that these were souls who had passed. For the first time, I realized, "I must be dead." There was no judgment here, no heaven or hell. Only a profound, unconditional love and acceptance. It felt like a healing station, a place of rest for souls of all kinds—the saintly and the so-called evil—before they continued their journey.

Then, a voice, not from outside but from within everything, simply said, "Go back."

Go back? Go back where? My human life felt like a distant, vague dream. The pull of this loving unity was immense. I had a sudden quick thought of vague unfinished business. Just like that...

In an instant, I was back. The heaviness of Earth's gravity was a shocking, physical weight. I could hear the frantic sounds of the doctors and nurses. I had been gone for less than five minutes, but I would carry the heaviness of my body for months afterward.

What followed was a long, grueling journey of surgeries, physiotherapy, and occupational therapy. The lesson from my near-death experience was clear: life is an experience for the soul, death is not to be feared, and the greatest loss is what dies inside us while we still live. I carried this truth with me, but my body continued to struggle.

For years, I lived with daily, debilitating pain and stiffness. There were mornings the pain was so severe I couldn't get out of bed. It wasn't until 2011 that I received the

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answer: a diagnosis of Ankylosing Spondylitis, a chronic autoimmune disease that fuses the spinal joints into a rigid, bamboo-like structure. The lower part of my spine had already fused, and the trauma to my neck had accelerated the same process there.

Living with this condition is a nightly bargain with pain. Each morning brings a fresh wave of stiffness and spasms—excruciating, slow-torture cramps that grip my body for minutes that feel like hours. There were times I wished for the peace of that luminous womb rather than endure another spasm. I tried powerful biologic medications like Humira, which helped initially, until the side effects began their own assault.

I made the difficult decision to stop and focus instead on treating my mind, body, and spirit as one. This path led me to a painful but vital realization: the siloed, specialist perspective of modern medicine had failed me. The brilliant orthopaedic and neurosurgeons who reconstructed my neck had fixed the acute injury but never asked the crucial question: *Why did it break so easily? Why did the bone shatter?* They were excellent at their specific job, but the system did not encourage them to look at the whole person.

As a specialist myself, I understood this. We are trained to ignore what falls outside our scope. But this fragmented approach had left me in years of unexplained agony. It almost killed me, not through malice, but through a fundamental disconnect.

This journey has fundamentally reshaped my life and my work. I am now a fierce advocate for an integrated, holistic approach to healing. We cannot separate the mental from the physical, the emotional from the spiritual. True wellness demands that we see the person as a complete, interconnected system.

My goal now is simple, if not always easy: to repay my karmic debts in this lifetime. I don't know if karma is a universal law or a beautiful illusion, but the intention gives my days purpose. It helps me move forward, one step at a time, performing small acts of kindness and service, seeking to bring a fragment of that unconditional love I once knew back into this raw, punishing, heavy, and yet beautiful, earthly world.

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X-Rays of neck 1



X-Rays of neck 2



Head and body traction - Unconscious



Head and body traction –
Unconscious



Neck surgery and stitches (back)

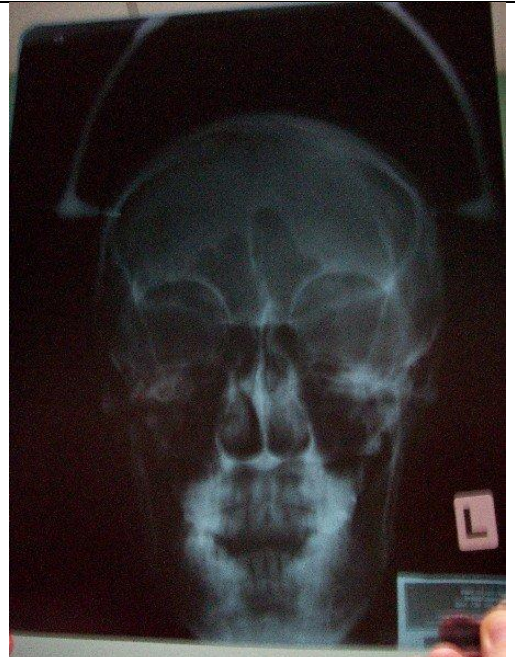


Neck surgery and stitches (front)

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Hip scar after removing a piece of bone to replace my C4.



X-Ray of skull in traction



Able to sit for the 1st time



Able to stand for the 1st time

"Pain is mandatory, suffering is optional"