

HIT BY A TRAIN AND SURVIVED

BY ADRIAN HARRIS

I was hit by a train on the 24th January 2004. I had finished my shift as a train driver and took a short cut across the track when it happened. A train hit me at 42 miles per hour and broke almost every bone in my body and damaged my head. I didn't fly up in the air, or go under the train, but after the impact, was whisked along with it. I should have died, but I didn't.

The paramedics took me to Whitechapel Hospital where I lay in a coma for 7 weeks. In hospital the doctors said I would probably never walk again, but I am.

After my accident I felt I had aged 40 years, and had a lot of anger and aggression which I found hard to control. I hated everyone including myself. Every time I looked in the mirror I hated myself, now I look and think I get better looking each day!

Headway has helped me control my anger and my communication with people has really improved. I have quietened down a lot and go about my life quietly now, it's better that way.

Before my accident I was a powerful man, a black sash at Kung-Fu. Afterwards I felt like a shambling heap with a disabled badge. How do you get through that? You go to Headway, that's how!

My parents found out about Headway for me, and I haven't looked back since. I have been going there for about a year now. I had got my physical strength back, but not my mind, and Headway is helping with that.

My brain injury really affected my short-term memory, I would drink about six cups of tea before I remembered I had just had one. The Headway Drama Therapy

Group has been so stimulating and through introducing yourselves in the group, I am remembering names which helps improve my memory no end and my confidence has grown enormously. I have also got involved with Headway social activities outside the day centre which has been great.

One of the most powerful things is how much I have benefited from sharing my experiences and interacting with other people who have had a brain injury. It is good to talk to people and being with people who have had various accidents or strokes, makes me realise how lucky I am. I feel now that the shackles of my mind are being set free, I am a better person. I draw my strength and driving force to overcome all this from my 7 year old daughter. I want to get as fit as possible and be around for her for years to come.

The chances of anyone surviving being hit by a train must be six million to one. I am getting on with my life, because it wasn't my time to die, I guess my number wasn't up.

