



PATIENT HIGHLIGHT

SANDY JOHNSON

BROOKS
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LOVE CAN CONQUER ALL, EVEN A STROKE

Love is a commitment to each other, through good times and in bad, in sickness and in health. With little to no memory of the events that took place during Sandy Johnson's stroke, her husband Bob was the champion she leaned on when times seemed bleak.

On October 6, 2015, Sandy went to Naples Community Hospital's emergency room after several days of intense headaches. Luckily for her, she was at the right place at the right time.

"When we arrived at the hospital, she had a seizure and collapsed," her husband, Bob Johnson, recalls. They rushed her in, and we discovered that she had a small bleed in her brain. Dr. Mazen Abuawad, an interventional radiologist, performed a coil clip to stop the bleeding.

She spent three weeks in the Naples ICU followed by two weeks in their neuro unit.

"She was a vegetable, couldn't move her arms, legs, or even feed herself," Bob stated.

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Sandy and Bob traveled 400 miles to get the best rehabilitative care in the region and came to Brooks Rehabilitation Hospital. After spending two weeks at Brooks with minimal progress, she was referred to Mayo Clinic for additional testing. Neurosurgeon Dr. Tawk operated and put a shunt in her head to take pressure off her brain.

It was the first time since her stroke that Sandy recognized her husband. It was also the first time she spoke. "I let Bob tell my story, because I can't remember most of it," said Sandy.

After the surgery at Mayo, things started turning around for Sandy. She was transferred back to Brooks to continue her rehabilitation.

"Sandy was the best hostess. She always tried to make us feel comfortable in her room. She had the best sense of humor. Quick and witty. They both made us, the care team, feel like a million bucks! All around they were always a joy to be around, and just great people," said Monica Diak, Sandy's speech therapist.

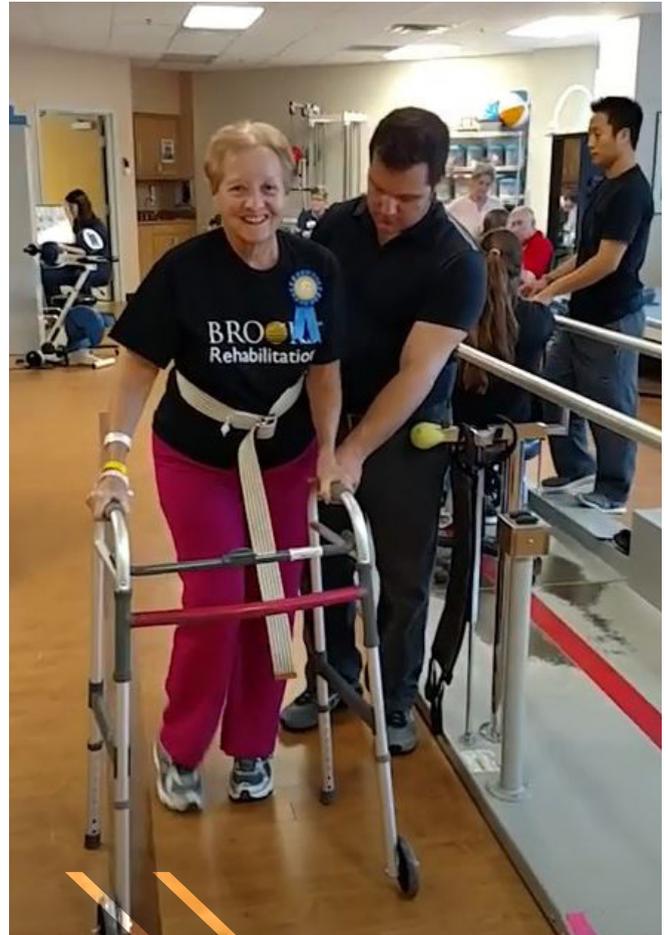
"Bob was a total help. He was the best person to be an advocate for her," recalls Nate Matthews, PTA. "He is a determined man and would always tell us, 'She is going to walk out of here!'"

And sure enough she did. With the assistance of a walker, Sandy Johnson walked out of the Brooks Rehabilitation Hospital, alongside her proud husband.

"I was nothing and Brooks helped me walk again," she said.

After 53 years of marriage, the love that Bob and Sandy share is one to be admired. They have created a beautiful life together along with their two sons, and four grandchildren. They are the proud business owners of Yankee Marketers, and travel from Boston, Massachusetts to their second home in Naples, Florida during the cold winters.

They frequently visit Brooks Rehabilitation to say thank you for the care they received here. It's beautiful to see the interactions between them; it's a true testament of their love and commitment to each other.



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