

AM I STILL ME?

2nd Edition



A Group of Words
With Fundamental Questions for Those Struggling to Recover Themselves

Angela Hunt

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Dedication

Dedicated to MaryPat Parker,
My speech therapist,
Who gave me the inspiration
And the impetus
To put it into words.



Introduction

According to the Brain Injury Association of Minnesota*, over one million new concussions, brain and spinal cord injuries occur every year. My traumatic brain injury (diagnosed mild to medium) occurred February 14, 2005. A simple fall changed my world. It prompted 7 months of physical therapy, knee surgery and more therapy.

But more life-changing than the broken nose and fractured ocular (eye) bone, was a frontal lobe closed head injury that needed big chunks of sleep, 14 months of speech therapy 2-3 times per week for addressing aphasia (word retrieval) and regaining reading skills, plus 2 more years of re-forming additional abilities and memories. Some symptoms were loss of abstract thinking and attention span, continence, and motor skills—like driving and typing. I could no longer understand the nuances of humor.

For loved ones observing a person with a concussion, watch for changes over the first month after the injury. Each person's deficit is unique. For example, after the accident, my fund of knowledge was hidden from me. I had poor facial expression and expressive gestures. I was unable to see color for about 10 days after the fall, and had to be reintroduced to family, friends and locations.

Although sometimes the metaphors are mixed because a brain injured person conceived them, these poems are in minimalist language to address the needs and thought processes of the newly injured.

*<http://www.braininjurymn.org>



Am I Still Me?

Am I still me?

Is this the way things ought to be?

Is it I in here smiling back

At someone in the mirror,

Or is it someone I have never met

Smiling at me?

She seems nice enough.

I'll bet

She was a good friend of mine

In that other life

Or

The friend

Of a good friend.

That must be it.

So.
 It begins.
 The alphabet is only a string of letters.
 All I have to do is arrange them.

Somehow.

xbDpQueoWZFHJKmgANRSctViLy

xb**D**p**Q**UeO **W** *z* FH *g* **K** *mg* **A** *N* **R** **S** *ct* **V** *i* **L** **y**



ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Abc**D**eFgHi*g* **K**_L*m* *N*Op**Q**_R **S**tUV **W**_{xy} *z*

One word at a time:

Bewilderment...

Recovery...

Disorientation...

Confusion...

Fearfulness...

Sigh. That's quite enough for today.

Note: definitions on page 56.



**Perhaps it is the words
That are faulty—
Not the effort,
Not the doing.**

So I will choose new words:



One word at a time:

Faith...

Hope...

Strength...

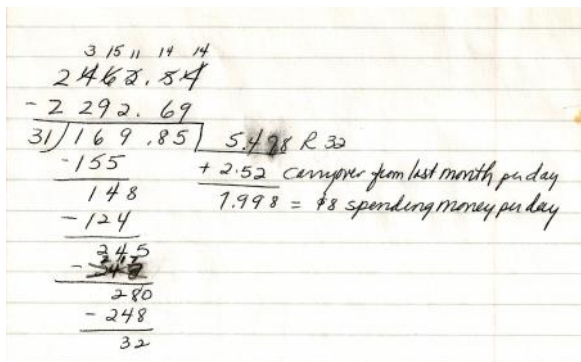
Courage...

Love...

That's just enough for today!

Numbers are a tangled mess.
Do I need a hairbrush...

...or a calculator?



Yess! Success.



$$\begin{array}{r}
 \$ 3 \\
 8 \\
 + 5 \\
 \hline
 \$ 16
 \end{array}$$

I balanced the checkbook!
It's on the same precipice,
But it's balancing nicely there
Just the same.



Elmer's Lament

**Here I am.
 But who is this "I" that is still here?
 It is Me.**

**Yes, well, at least most of the shell
 And part of the stuffing.**



**If "I" am what is sitting in this chair,
 What's to become of what's elsewhere?**

**"I" am here
 Trying like everything
 To stay glued together
 Long enough
 To have a pleasant conversation**

**Long enough
 To convince you
 I am normal**

**Or would have been—
 given enough time
 enough words
 enough syllables.**

“I” am not Myself right now.

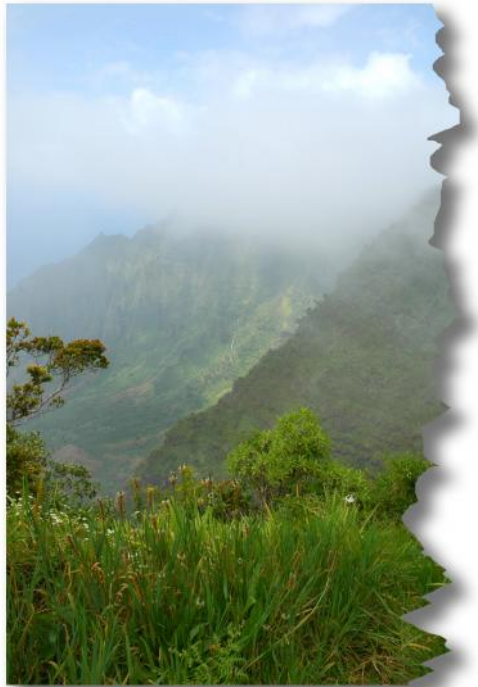
**And Myself
Is not in the room at the moment, either.**

**I’ll go get Her.
Please wait for Me to come back,**



**Though I can’t promise
I will only be a minute.**

**It's only been a month or two
So pardon Me,
I'm shaking hands with life again.**



Miss Communication: Milady's Malady

**My emotions came back to roost this morning
To the bare windows that were my two eyes.
I came off half-cocked
And made a bloody mess of your ego.**

**These emotions of mine show their plumage one minute,
And hide under a bush the next.**



**They prompt me to offer a comment innocent enough
To pass for a fluffy chick,
But it falls flat against its intended target
Like a chicken pot pie in the face.**

**My emotions paint a cock-a-doo-dle ca-COPH-o-ny¹
With a rainbow tail
Then open a sarcophagus² suitcase of cruel tricks
—After all, they will only have a short flight—**

**Making me cackle
Until I embarrass myself
Too long,
Too long.**



**These emotions pump tears that water doubt
To sprout the seeds of insecurity.**

**Times like these,
all I want to do
is go outside
to scratch
for a worm.**

¹cacophony: harsh discord; dissonance

²sarcophagus: stone coffin

The Palm

You've had some bark knocked off, too.
 it appears some of your leaves
 have gotten ragged
 from years of neglect,

And there have been one too many birthed coconuts
 or anniversary rings
 or blustery hurricanes
 or brown rats nesting in your hair

I'm not sure which—mostly all of the above.

I understand your girth
 And your sighs
 I understand your pain
 —and did I mention girth?

And one too many children
 or birthdays
 or jobs
 or bathrooms to clean



Or—maybe *that's* the whole problem—
 There really ARE brown rats nesting up there

I'm not sure which—mostly all of the above.



Friends and Acquaintances

**You come to me
And act as though
We've known each other for years
Maybe we have, maybe not.**

**I am intent on picking up clues:
A name, a place, an event
To help me put together
The puzzle of who you are
And maybe find myself
Under the biggest piece.**





**You've not introduced yourself
So that tells me you are a familiar face
To the person I was
Just a month ago or two—I forget.**

**Keep talking
I just need a few more details to decide
Whether you are
 my neighbor,
 my co-worker,

 or my daughter.**





The Fern Grotto

Once used for intimate sacrifices
Now used for intimate weddings
Makes me wonder,
 Enveloped in the cocoon of leaf and frond
 As a waterfall blesses the path,
Would I be considered worth the trouble now
For either celebration?





A Quiet Earth

**Breathy fog whispers
To brainy convolutions
Of terra firma and verdant flora
In the wettest place on earth.**

**Fog flexes its fingers and
Softens stiff ridges
Calms angry peaks
Soothes jagged edges
Covers me with the palm of its hand.**

**We stare at each other face to face,
The canyon and I,
Both mute in the mist of silence
Grateful
We do not demand
Words of each other.**



Christmas Cactus

How beautiful do I have to be
For you to allow me to hang on
For dear life?

How wonderful do I have to have been
In the life I call "my former"
To forego the symbiotic right now
And just be a parasite?



Waimea Canyon

Ridge, we're a lot alike, you and I.
Time, events, circumstances
Have exposed
Our tender underbellies to the elements,
Revealed the Secret
That we are not solid rock inside,
But clay.

We are wearing down, actually
Starting to look our age.
Your wrinkles add to your beauty.
Do mine?





**Canyon, thanks for allowing yourself tears, too.
Thanks for telling me
I can take what life dishes out,
Then stand here as a testimony that it's true.**

**Thanks for acting as if it's all normal,
This fickle life of ours,
For showing me I can take
Windy storms on the chin.**

**You have softened there, too,
So I know / stand a chance.**

Jeremiah 18:6: "Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in Mine hand...says the Lord."





Old Goats

We have been
Trying to climb impossible, uneven hills
All our lives.
Up 'til now it's been a choice
Why and how and where we've lived
Never taking the smooth path
Or breezy meadow,
But forging our way past ample pasture
To that solitary green blade
At the edge of the cliff
Just because it is a sensation so sweet
Between cheek and tooth
Which so few have ever tasted.

**Goat,
I've never been afraid of high hill
Strong wind
Big job
Or succulent paperwork before,
So why is it I have to test every sidewalk crack
With my eyes now?**

**Goat,
You and I have never been interested
In safe pens
Being hand fed
Or the security of collar and bell,
So why am I sticking so close to the barn now?**

**Are my days of rock to rill past,
Or can I regain the strength
To jump cliffs again?**

**A question begs to echo
Across the canyon,
"What do I have to prove?"**



**Quietly, thankfully, it echoes,
"Do I have to prove anything?"**

**And quieter still,
"To whom?"**

Nanny, as you skip across the rocks, I see
That there is a trajectory for overcoming my fear of failure
And I can trace its vector with your hoof prints.

Goat, I hear there is open season on you now.
I'm afraid of being shot down, too.
The help I need most
Is to help others see
They must make the adjustment just now
When *my* day is out of focus.

Can you let them know
They should bring me back
Into the picture, focused*
When my crosshairs are level again?

*locus: a center of activity or concentration





On the Rock

Words don't need to come from me
To be the ones I need.
That one steady Rock
Who provides my every need,
He brings forth the words I lack,
Only asking I open my mouth
And He will fill it.

Most times those words seem surprisingly simple:
How? What? Why?
But are fraught with the profound lesson
Of listening
To someone else
Doing the telling.

Using those small steps:

Whom?

Where?

When?

**As a scaffold to paint a picture for me
Of a way, al fresco,
To see the world.**

**Sometimes the words prepared by Him
Are for His ears only
Uttered deep within
My own shifting sand
Given back to me as encouragement,
Offered back to Him as love.**

I can lean upon this Rock – this one steady Rock

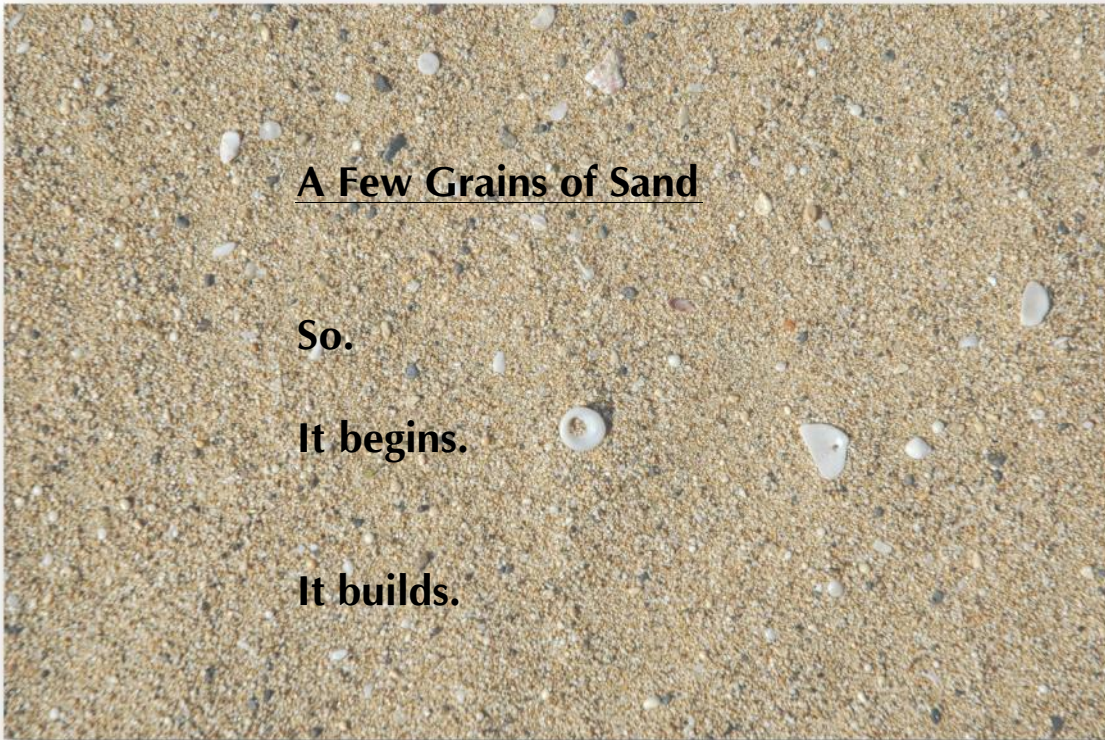
**Who provides my every need;
I can crawl upon these Arms
This Place
Even with my gimpy leg.**



Psalm 61:2,3: "From the end of the earth will I cry unto Thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For Thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower..."

1Corinthians 10:4b: "...for they (Israelites) drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ."





**And before you know it
Those few grains become a pile,
Then a mound,**

They take shape...





**Then a whole beach of
experiences
remembrances
words
emotions
abilities
Tumble in,
One wave after another
Just waiting to wriggle your toes into
And help you tell your own story
—to
your
self.**



Enjoy the telling.

As many times as it takes.

The beginning.

Again.

“But David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.” –1 Samuel 30:6



How to Benefit Most From This Book Questions for Discussion/Questions to Ask Myself

Am I Still Me? - page 1-2

What about me has changed?

What patient persons can I ask to help me name people and things that were once familiar?

Could they:

- help me hang signs on objects in my home for word prompts?
- bring out photo albums and name family members and friends?
- drive me around town to help me make sense of surroundings?

So. It Begins - page 3-4

What are the personal challenges from which I most want to recover?

Whom can I ask to help me make and reach those goals?

What recovery goal will I work on today?

Who is on my recovery team today?

Do I have an advocate to help me voice concerns at the doctor's office and get the help I need?

Activity: Enlarge and photocopy page 3 from this book. Cut the top alphabet into individual letters and practice putting it in order. See the answers on page 4. Use the letters to practice forming sounds, spelling words. Then advance to using the multi-font alphabet on the bottom of page 3, cut into individual letters, to help decode handwriting. Can you match the two alphabets in proper order?

One Word at a Time: Bewilderment - page 5-6

Activity: Decoding and pronunciation practice. Take a pencil and draw syllable divisions to help with pronunciation (Be/wil/der/ment). Take as long a time to think about what the word means as to pronounce it, which will aid understanding and recall.

Word Definitions:

Be/wil/der/ment: to lose one's bearings; to be confused by a complexity of objects or things to think about

Re/cov/er/y: an upturn; to get back, regain; to bring back to normal

Dis/or/i/en/ta/tion: to lose sense of time, place or identity; displace from normal

Con/fu/sion: to make embarrassed, bewilder, make indistinct; blur, jumble, mix

Fear/ful/ness: to cause alarm, be concerned about danger; apprehensive, afraid

What words will I choose *not* to use?

Whom can I ask to remind me not to use overwhelming words or entertain discouraging thoughts?

One Word at a Time: Faith - page 7-8

What words will I select to encourage myself for the work of recovery in the months ahead?

What words of encouragement will I place around me like solid foundational rocks I can build on during my recovery?

Who will I choose to help surround me with those good words?

Should I tell myself my efforts are “good enough” for what I am facing today?

Relearning takes energy. Am I getting enough rest? Good food? Am I using several shorter sessions a day, instead of pushing too hard, getting too tired, and letting discouragement in?

Checkbook: Balanced on a Precipice - 9-10

Am I able to draw on my sense of humor when things seem overwhelming? Do I find ways to get a hearty laugh three times a day?

“A merry heart doeth good like a medicine.”—Proverbs 17:22

Gather and name the tools I need for a job. If numbers aren't cooperating, have someone else reconcile the checkbook or check your addition and subtraction for awhile. Ask for lessons on the calculator, telephone, or computer to regain skills. If technology is too confusing, do things the way you learned as a child. The longer you have known how to do something, the more quickly the skill will be regained.

Elmer's Lament - page 11-12

Feeling like you have lost part of yourself can be very disconcerting. Sometimes just acknowledging that parts “feel missing” and talking with someone about that loss helps. Can you name what truly feels changed—besides what might seem obvious to others—so they can better empathize with your loss? Thought processes can feel shattered by a fall or a stroke. Broken bones are no fun, either. It is OK to mourn the loss of your “whole self” that seems in broken pieces right now. Set a timer; don't stay there too long.

Remember: there is both *“A time to mourn”* and *“A time to heal”*.—Ecclesiastes 3:1-13.

I Am Not Myself - page 13-14

Social situations can be very stressful. With a limited vocabulary it is hard to come up with things to say to people or in places you do not know well. Plan ahead. Take the pressure off having to develop a conversation by thinking about some interesting questions to ask. Write them out before you arrive, if needed. Then ask one question at a time and let them do the talking. Everyone loves a good listener! Structure your inquiries carefully. Asking, “Who are your children?” might just leave you with a bunch of names to remember. Instead, add interest and significance: “Who

do you hope your children grow up to become?”, meaning, “What character traits are you instilling in your children, and why?”

Try: How _____ What _____ Why _____ When _____ Where _____ Whom _____.

Talk to men about work, family, hobbies, car, sports teams. Ask women about children, home, interests, hobbies, books and job. Ask a teen about extracurricular activities, sports, job, upcoming projects, friends, computer favorites, fashions, technology, goals and values. Children like to talk about friends, toys, activities, school, what they want to be when they grow up, favorite foods and pets. It's OK to not do all the talking.

It's Only Been a Month or Two - page 15-16

For the brain injured, time can be a problem. Hours and minutes, days and months can be miscalculated and confusing. Set a timer for appointments, then write a note to yourself about what the bell means you need to do. X days off the calendar. Say aloud several times a day, “It is Monday, the third of March. Today I need to _____ at 4:00 P.M.”

Get help making your closet more simple. Pack away prints, checks and stripes and limit the number of solid colors you use, so everything goes together. Remove accessories to reduce confusing decisions, or slip them in a bag over the hanger for an outfit. Make a few casual, dressy and everyday outfits—for both cool and warm weather—and then label the hangers, telling where they are appropriate to wear. Temporarily remove everything else from the rack that is confusing to button, out of season, too snug, etc.

Reduce stress in the freezer and on the shelf, too. Here are some ideas:

1. Start with only heat-and-serve meals, then work up to easy-to-prepare boxed items that only need 1-2 added ingredients.
2. Ask someone to help you put entire meal fixings together. Use a big clear bag for each meal and little bags inside for ingredients, if that helps.
3. Read through the recipe. Gather ingredients and review cooking symbols (T, t, cup) and terms (mix, stir, large bowl, whisk, roll out). Then before starting, take a nap. Come back to your prepared project, review, and cook. Keep radio and TV noise off to improve concentration.
4. When baking cookies, bake one pan at a time, or set a timer for each pan if they are not going in at exactly the same time. Put a note out to remind you what the buzzer is for, especially if your sense of smell is impaired.

Defer long-term decisions right now if possible. If it is urgent:

- go to a doctor or an advisor with someone who can take notes.
- use a sheet of paper divided into two sides “Pro/Con” or “Do Because/Don't Do Because” for each aspect of a potential plan. If you forget what you decided, or wonder why you made the decision you did, you can look back at the process and congratulate yourself on the right course you chose at the time with the information you had.

Miss Communication: Milady's Malady - page 17-19

The poem speaks of both unreliable emotions, and difficulty with muscle control that seems more like slapstick comedy than the ability to get anything meaningful done. How can I clue my loved ones in to my emotional state when those emotions change so rapidly? Learn hand signals during low-stress times to show needs when frustrations

flare. Make paper signs that can be pointed to when emotionally-laden words won't come, or fatigue clouds word-formation and retrieval. Could soothing music or movement help? Could singing a response bring words out?

These Emotions - page 20

What discourages you most? What helps?

When is depression most likely to appear? What can I do to prepare for those times? Have someone help you organize cards and letters you've received into a scrapbook to page through as encouragement when you feel down. Try to do simple repetitive tasks rather than trying to solve high-stress or complex tasks right now.

Do something you feel confident will end in success for you today. If you used to knit, crochet, or work jigsaw puzzles, try a scaled down version. There is calm in the familiar.

The Palm - page 21-22

What compassions will I choose to show to myself and others?

What life experiences do I have in common with others?

Activity: Draw a picture of a palm tree. Add a story entitled, "A Deep Difficulty and What I Learned From It."

Practice sentence construction, putting the events in order. You may choose to dictate it and have someone else write it down for posterity.

Friends and Acquaintances - pages 23-26

What disconcerting events are you experiencing? Is there someone you can talk to about that? Try using triggers like smells, textures, common phrases, photos, favorite foods to help re-establish connections to memories and people. Ask people to introduce themselves to you until names become familiar again.

"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever." –Hebrews 13:8

Fern Grotto - page 27-28

Sacrifices traditionally require a flawless offering. Weddings are an offering of one's own best and most beautiful self. An object of affection seems to need a special presentation. Doesn't the struggle and effort coming forth from an injured self count for something?

What wonderful things about you have NOT changed? Say them out loud to yourself.

A Quiet Earth - page 29-30

Give your mind and body plenty of time for restorative sleep. It is nice to find a soothing place where one's guard can come down, not having to struggle to relearn anything at that moment. Where is that place for you?

Christmas Cactus - page 31-32

Photo: a Christmas cactus has imbedded itself into the bark of a Kaua'i tree for shelter, shade, and a better chance of getting rain funneled right to its roots.

Do I have someone I can rely on through thick and thin? Have I told the person I need him or her, and asked them to hang in there with me? Do I thank the person often? How could I show my appreciation today?

Remember: “[Jesus] is a friend that sticks closer than a brother.”—Proverbs 18:24.

Waimea Canyon - page 33-36

How is resilience being cultivated in me? In what ways is acceptance of my injury helpful to my recovery?

I can change what I acknowledge, and I can also accept and come to be at peace with what has changed beyond my control.

Old Goats - page 37-42

What comparisons do I tend to make between my abilities and my disabilities?

What losses do I mourn?

What are my biggest fears?

How can I help others understand my fears?

What triggers a “bad day”?

What is most likely to help me regain perspective when I am feeling overwhelmed and discouraged?

Everybody: “I want to be where the action is, I want to be included, but don’t put pressure on me to perform.”

“... That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I already have obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on, in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Jesus Christ...” —Philippians 3:10-14

That is, Jesus grabbed me from “a sinking ship”/from an accident/from a death by stroke—for a purpose.

“...that I may press on. Forgetting the past, I reach forward to what lies ahead that I may look toward the goal—which is trust in God.”

Forget the past? 😊 No problem. I can come to realize others are going through stuff, too. We can help each other. Look into this situation for the purpose God has for me.

On the Rock - page 43-46

When they realize you need practice with conversation skills, most people are willing to give you practice. Choose times at the pharmacy when there are no long waiting lines to ask a question that is difficult for you to manage. It helps to let the person know about your hidden disability with a small preprinted card to maintain confidentiality. (Examples: "I have had a stroke and I need time to speak." or "I have had a recent brain injury that affects short term memory. Could you write directions down for me?")

Start with a script. Let them help you fill in the blanks if words won't come. If communication fails, use pencil and paper, cue cards, come back when you are rested, or with an advocate who can help fill in the details of your request.

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."—Psalm 46:1

Activity: Try a point-to book that can be printed out at <http://librariesandautism.org>. Click on "Use These Resources", select "Library Special Needs Communication Guide". Put it in a notebook to carry on errands and add your own picture-based information. (Example: cut out of the newspaper or print what you are looking for in the store you intend to visit.)

"Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it."—Psalm 81:10.

A Few Grains of Sand - page 47-50

What is the hardest thing about your new situation? Can you break the effort or problem into smaller tasks? Do I look at each day as a new opportunity for improvement? What will I do to encourage myself to work at recovery? Whom can I count on to both challenge and encourage me? What will I practice until my "waves of remembrance" start to come in?

It Begs to be Written - page 51-53

Why is it important to tell my story? If collecting and remembering details are a problem, retelling can strengthen bridges to past information and provide mnemonic devices to trigger recall.

Examples of mnemonic devices:

1. Use music. Lyrics are easier to recall, for example: Remember "The Alphabet Song", A-B-C-D-E-F-G...? Use a familiar melody to sing: "I-am-going-to-the-store. Here's-what-I-am-going-for...."
2. Rename your fingers to remind you of a list: bread, milk, eggs, bread, lettuce.
3. Make a list into a name. "Roy G. Biv is the list of colors of the rainbow in order. (red, orange, yellow...)
4. Use rhyme to recall details "30 days hath September, April, June and November..."
5. Use a note or outline strategy to help recall. Try writing down the main ideas on the left margin on the paper, and add the details about each step on the right side.
6. Develop an image in your mind. How about using a corny joke? Picture 2 numismatists having dinner for "old dime's sake." Cornography makes it easy to remember a numismatist is someone who collects coins.

7. Map out your errands in town, to make your route efficient.
8. Write your shopping list in order of your path around the store.
9. Connection mnemonics: Lines that run **n**orth and south along the globe are **l**ongitude. Latitude must run east and west because there is no **N** in latitude.
10. A spelling mnemonic: A **p**ri**n**ci**p**al at a school is your **p**al, and a **p**ri**n**ci**p**le you believe or follow is a **r**ule.

See <https://www.learningassistance.com/2006/january/mnemonics.html> for more examples and an exercise to help you develop your own.

How will I tell my story?

- Will I tell it to 1 person to help me form word pronunciation and practice sequencing events or adding detail?
- Will I type it, or use pencil and paper to regain small motor skills?
- Audio record it to practice word retrieval, flow of thought, and transitions?
- Make a video as a chronicle of my progress, or to plan and test a script to order my thinking?
- Share it with a group to adjust eye contact, add vocal timbre; relearn audience cues and respond with proper pacing, volume and story length.

Who could help me start?

Who should hear my story?

Why?

Websites for More Help and Information:

<http://www.TLCRehab.org> “Specializing solely in post-acute brain injury rehab since 1982.” Free educational resources. 1-800-TLCGROW.

<http://www.braininjurymn.org> Brain Injury Association of Minnesota. Services include information and referral, training, education, support-group training and assistance, legislative advocacy. 612-238-3245

<http://www.pacer.org> Pacer Center, “Champions for children and young adults with disabilities”. 1-800-537-2237

Photo Credits

All Photographs, unless otherwise noted, are by Jim Hunt, taken at Kaua'i, Hawai'i:

Cover and page 11 - "Me, Myself, and I", Bivalve scallop shells by Gary Carlson and Angela Hunt
Page 1 - Angela Hunt with Ficus Elastica lei, Hale Lani Bed and Breakfast, Waimea Valley
Page 4 - Rocky River, end of Waimea Road at Wailua Reservoir
Page 6 - Rubble pond, Hale Lani Bed & Breakfast
Page 8 - Anole (in the chameleon family) on Plum volcanic rock wall, Hale Lani B&B
Page 9 - Shefflera, sword fern, and ti plant, at Allerton Botanical Garden
Page 10 - Albino tree fern at Allerton Botanical Garden
Page 14 - Scarred Ficus Benjamina, and sword fern at Fern Grotto
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Page 24 and 25 - Wailua Canyon
Page 27 - Hanging ferns, orchids and Dracena at Fern Grotto

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Page 35 - One of many waterfalls, Wailua Canyon
Page 37 - Feral goat, North Wailua Canyon
Page 40 - Mountain goat, www.istockphoto.com
Page 42 - Feral goat by Poomau Stream, North Wailua Canyon
Page 43 and 46 - Anole on a rock at Allerton Botanical Garden
Page 47 - Shells and sand, north of Kekaha Beach near Barking Sands Beach
Page 48 - Poipu Bay Beach
Page 49 - Beach south of Koloa
Page 52 - The photographer, on a beach south of Barking Sands
Page 53 - Lydgate State Park Beach, south of Koloa
Back cover - Author and Photographer, overlooking Wailua Canyon

What others are saying about *Am I Still Me?*

“Real poetry for people going through real stuff.”

—**Dr. James Thomson**, Ph.D., L.P., Neuropsychologist at Miland E. Knapp Rehabilitation Center, HCMC, Minneapolis, MN.

“The poems touched me at a deeply personal level. I think they would speak not only to the brain injured, but to any patient who is facing a difficult recovery process.”

—**Tammy Robinson**, Mayo Clinic Health System at Red Wing, MN; Laboratory Clerical, recovering brain injury patient.

“There is a need for these simple, meaningful materials available in a quick, clear format that can minister to harried caregivers, providing them a connection to what their loved one is experiencing.”

—**Joan Knuesel**, FamilyMeans Caregiver Support Program, Stillwater, MN. <http://www.familymeans.org>

“I keep it on my breakfast table and read one poem every day. No kidding. It motivates *me* to be my best today.”

—**Dr. Bryce Young**, Sport Psychologist, NAIA National Tennis Coaches President, President of Peak Performance Training, Hilton Head, SC, and mental coach for elite athletes.

“A programming Godsend. We can work on the exercises as a group or one-on-one.”

—**Dana Jenssen**, Activities Director, Olive Branch Estates, specializing in memory care.

“We went through the poems like a 30-day devotional, stopping to discuss whatever came to mind, and working diligently on the exercises in the back. It was a lifesaver during times of frustration. Knowing these were tried and true inspirational materials that Angela used through her own stroke and brain injury gave us courage to keep working at it. The suggestion to “Sing what you can’t say” was a lifesaver for my husband with opera training. It got us through. David has written 2 books since being encouraged to write his story, developed and memorized a repertoire of clean jokes, and tried a stint in Toastmasters to regain skills!”

—**Carol and Reverend David Quam**.

Books by Angela Hunt:

My Father in Verse: Working Through the End of Life

Am I Still Me? A Group of Words

Way Out on a Limb: One Mother's Journey Through Her Daughter's Rape

I Am Still Me! Hearts are Broken, Brains are Mended

Concerning War 1: A Collection of Recollections with Room for Ruminati

Concerning War 2: A Short Look at Some Foreign and Domestic Policy Topics
with Questions for Discussion

To order: www.booksbyangelahunt.com

Angela and Jim Hunt

Angela Hunt is a reference librarian who suffered a traumatic brain injury February 14, 2005, and has achieved “a full recovery”. This is her second book since her fall.

Husband **Jim Hunt** has enjoyed amateur photography and darkroom work since he was a teenager. This is his first book.

I Am Still Me! Hearts are Broken, Brains are Mended is a sequel to this book. See inside back cover for a complete list of books and ordering information.



The poetry of **Am I Still Me?** addresses the wake behind the storms of many life events that initiate significant change. If you know friends who have been in a car accident, sisters who are going through menopause, patients who have had a life-altering injury or disease, anyone who has suffered post traumatic stress, stroke and cognitive function issues; or if you have taken a dramatic spill yourself, these words just might ring true, provide understanding, and give encouragement.

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