

MEDIA RELEASE

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One Woman's Full Recovery From Multiple Sclerosis Paralysis and How Magic Can Be Used as Therapy – First Episode of New Series

A young Melbourne woman who recovered from Multiple Sclerosis which left her paralysed and illusionist Jack Daniels, who uses magic as therapy through David Copperfield's Project Magic, used in over 1000 hospitals around the world, including Nepean Hospital in Western Sydney, are two inspiring stories shared in a new healthcare series Recover/Me airing this Thursday.

In each episode of the new five-part series, viewers are taken on an inspiring, and at times devastating, journey through the personal road to recovering with the help and support of first responders, healthcare professionals, the community, family and even spirituality.

Amanda Campbell, 37, who worked in the fashion industry and later became a sport kinesiologist and motivational speaker, from Melbourne, went from a 50/50 chance she'd ever walk again to running in six weeks.

"I was told said there's no guarantee you'll get movement again. You haven't responded to treatment, it's a waiting game now. You might never walk again, you might never wash or feed yourself again," says Campbell, who was 24 when she was diagnosed with MS.

"The first words that came out of my mouth were, 'can I have a family'. I didn't even realise it was important to me. Then I excused myself and had a big, big cry,"

"It's amazing how everything can change in one moment."

"I felt like my life was over, like I wasn't going to be able to achieve my dreams or even just normal things like being able to put on a pair of heels and go out to dinner."

"So, I was out to enjoy life and experience as much as I could. I didn't know what my future held. I wasn't looking after my body as a result."

Everything finally came crashing down after a severe episode lasting 10 days left her completely paralysed. "My face literally dropped, my arm twisted – it looked like I'd had a stroke. Washing and feeding myself became the most difficult part of my day. Then my muscles started to slowly twist. It was painful. I was scared."

"Being alone, when everything becomes dark is when you find your inner strength, your light and what you're really capable of. It's when I realised my inner strength."

Together with a new form of treatment, a team of specialists, the support of her family, in particular her twin sister, and friends – as well as a bucket-load of personal determination, she beat all the odds.

“I was a woman on a mission. I was first in at the physio and last to leave.”

Also in the episode illusionist Jack Daniels talks about how he uses magic to transform the lives of people with a disability, suffering low self-esteem, spinal cord injuries and even the elderly in nursing homes.

“Project Magic boosts their esteem by giving them a skill that able-bodied people don’t have,” says Daniels.

The program was developed by legendary illusionist David Copperfield in 1981 and with wide-spread success, it’s now in 1000 hospitals, across 30 countries, including Nepean Hospital, in Western Sydney.

“You can’t imagine what it feels like for a person with a disability, who is not able to feed themselves or dress themselves, all of a sudden you can show them something that you, an able-bodied person can’t do.”

“It’s also a conditioning tool that brings the patient one step closer to their therapeutic goal. Magic motivates people to use their weakened physical skills because they want to achieve the trick.”

In this episode, he shows how he motivates patients to regain their dexterity by learning slight-of-hand – and performs one of his most popular illusions, using a rubber band.

Series Executive Producer, Hardeep Girn, came up with the concept of a series on health recoveries that inspire, also went through a tragic twist in health five years ago when his wife almost died after contracting fungal meningitis.

“The high level of care we received – from medical and clinical care to the support provided by family and community, were part of the inspiration behind this series,” he says.

“There’s nothing out there like this that’s produced in Australia – the closest thing is probably those American doctor shows like Dr Oz.”

“One in five people in Australia have some form of disability – for a large part of everyday life, people are not under the NDIS for full time support. There are therapies out there that can be worthwhile trialling.”

“The Amanda Campbell story on MS and Project Magic in movement rehabilitation is our focus for the first episode.”

The series is hosted by the stunning Dr Ann-Maree Kurzydlo. Upcoming episodes will focus on diabetes and sugar, meningitis and brain health, burns, mental health and technology in disability.

Recover/Me episode 1 will be released this Thursday, through social media at www.facebook.com/RecoverMeShow

A 60-second promo can be viewed at www.knowmyhealth.com.au/recoverme

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Interviews, images and extra footage available

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