



So, I remember just being, upside down in the car. My seatbelt was on luckily, I think had I not had it on, I probably wouldn't be alive today.

I just remember hanging upside down and looking out of the window and seeing all of the cars passing by me and not knowing if it would be like a Hollywood film where my car would catch fire or if somebody else would crash in to me. I wasn't sure what was going to happen but I had a pretty good feeling that I wouldn't make it out of the car alive. Luckily my airbag did not deploy and I saw a clear path from where my driver seat window had burst out and all the glass had crashed out and from where I was hanging upside down.



Note: Story is a transcript from recorded version

So, I unclicked my seat belt and I put my arms over my head before I fell to the roof of the ceiling and I remember crawling out of the window and being on the side of the road. Everything was a little foggy at this point but I felt my whole body was in shock and emotionally I was in shock. I didn't understand what had just happened. I just remember swarms of people rushing towards me and making sure that I was okay and being really helpful. And somebody called the ambulance and somebody else had their arms wrapped around my head to keep it secure.

And I didn't understand what all the fuss was being made about, because I had to go to work. I had a one o'clock appointment later that day. But of course, that wasn't first priority. I had to go to the hospital. And I didn't realize until later what had happened to my body.

So, they rushed me to the hospital and I remember feeling vulnerable and scared and curious and confused and a whirlwind of emotions. But I just remember not fully understanding what had happened. And all of the doctors and nurses were around me, probably a group of ten. And they're poking me with IVs and drawing blood. And later on, I found out that as a result of the car crash, my lower spine had been knocked out of alignment. I had Chondromalacia or bruising in my knee and I'd had a mild concussion which caused throbbing headaches in my temple and also cause me to forget sometimes which I was not use to.



The fatigue that I felt in my body after the accident was an unusual sensation for me. I was used to being a 23 - 24 year old student in grad school, working full time, volunteering, having a good relationship with friends and family and even the slightest activities would exhaust me. It would cause pain in my back and in my legs and in my arms. And no one could describe that type of pain to you, it's something that you can only experience.

Luckily I had a really good medical team and really good support system of friends and family who really helped me when I was weak and vulnerable, and helped me to get stronger. But I didn't quite understand the amount of time it would take to heal properly. I was presented with the decision to either get back surgery or to live the rest of my life managing my pain with pain medication and those were options that I didn't like. I didn't like those options at all.

I felt like this would be the end for me. This would be the end of the life as I knew it, the life of being a daredevil trying new adventures. I felt anxious and scared to go out on the roads, to go out on the freeways but this wasn't how I wanted to live the rest of my life.

So, I knew that I had to take more of an empowered standpoint from this experience so that I could share my story and tell people look these are the repercussions that happen when people are distracted, when they drink and drive, when they do drugs and drive, you are careless on the road.

I didn't want anyone to go through what I went through. So I became a crash survivor advocate and fully committed my time and energy towards becoming an advocate for auto and highway safety. I was able to share my story through my pageant platform of being Miss Downtown Honolulu and competing for Miss Hawaii USA to allow people to see what I've done and how I've grown from this experience.

I can make a difference in my story. I can inspire others to value and respect each other on the road so that we can be safe going to and from where we need to go to.

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