

Putting My Life Back Together

In one day, my whole life changed. My friends and I were racing down the street to the skate park. All of a sudden, I heard a car horn and screeching brakes. I don't remember much after that.

I woke up in the hospital. The doctor told me I had been hit by a car and had surgery on my leg. The pain in my leg was so bad. My family tried to make me feel better. They brought games to play, but I just wanted to be left alone.

I couldn't walk right for a long time. I kept thinking: *This isn't fair! Why am I being punished?* I was mad at my friends — since they were off doing things that I couldn't. My physical therapist told me that a lot of kids get mad when they are in pain. We made a list of things I can do to help relax when I feel upset or angry.



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At my checkup, I panicked when my doctor told me I could skateboard again. I told her I didn't want to go near the park! She told me that a lot of kids feel nervous when they have to face reminders of their accident. She drew me a picture, explaining that most kids' fears are like a big mountain. She said I should start at the bottom to face my fears, one at a time. Once I reached the top, she said, I wouldn't feel so nervous anymore.

We filled in the levels together, including what I was worried about and what would help. Even though it was pretty easy for me to imagine getting on my skateboard again, I told her I was a little nervous about falling off my skateboard, more worried about skateboarding in traffic, and really worried about skateboarding near the park.

When I tried it at home, the first steps were easy. As the steps got harder, I used my relaxation list and help from my friends to face my biggest fears. Thanks to my friends and the chart, I'm back on my board again and hanging out with my friends!



Example list:

1. Close my eyes and pretend I'm at the beach with my family.
2. Shoot hoops with my brother.
3. Listen to my favorite music.
4. Draw, doodle, or sketch like I did when I was a kid.
5. Watch movies or play video games with friends.

What helps you relax?
Make your own list.



Fill out this mountain with your own fears and worries. What can you do to reach the top? Who can help you? Start at #1.

The fear I want to deal with...

5. I'm really worried about...Who/what can help...

4. I'm pretty worried about...Who/what can help...

3. I'm a little nervous about...Who/what can help...

2. It's pretty easy for me to...Who/what can help...

START HERE: 1. It's really easy for me to...Who/what can help...