

Meet the Farmers:

<https://youtu.be/S-L91C8PKSM>

Stephen Gilson: And so it really has been an evolutionary process, because it really has been discovering new things that we wanted to do, figuring out how we needed to modify our lives, modify the equipment, and modify the technology to be able to do that. And figuring out what we can do that was affordable, and really, it has been a learning lesson from everything from figuring out how we get from our garage to our barn – which at one point in time, some 20 years ago, was not attached. And then once we brought horses home, well, we really needed to get out here, not just in the summer time, but 12 months, and so we began at that point by building a walkway from our garage out to here, so that we can get out to our barn, take care of our barn, 12 months of the year, regardless of the weather, regardless of the time of day, because its lighted – so we can do it in the evening morning, snowy, rain and in the middle of the summer

Liz DePoy: So, you probably want to know something about our bodies, right?
(Laughing)

Richard Brzozowski: Sure. There's a reason. There's a reason why you wanted to adapt, or needed to adapt.

Liz DePoy: Yeah, so I'm turning 67 in October, and I have been a mobility-impaired person for almost my entire life. And about 20 years ago, on top of a spinal cord injury, I got encephalitis and that basically impaired my balance, my vision, my hearing, my motor planning. And so a 67 year old person with oh-my-god-my-back-hurts, and you know (laughing), so I've got, you know, the typical back stuff that everybody else has at this age along with the sequela of encephalitis and what it left me with, um, but I have to say that this farm has healed me, as well.

Stephen Gilson: Well and I'm also 67, and -

Liz DePoy: God you're old (laughing)

Stephen Gilson: I know but, about 37 years ago I had an accident, where – a skiing accident - where I basically blew away my pelvis, my acetabulum and femur, so I don't have a hip joint on my left hip, so its completely fused, and my left leg is shorter, and it points out to the left and all of those types of things. So it really makes moving through space, picking up, uh, putting stuff down, uh, problematic. It also means in terms of the potential for me tripping and falling. So a number of the things we have done on the barn, or on our farm, really have been to address those needs. How do I lift something? Since I can't typically – as you may know, most people when they lift, they bend both knees and lift. Well I cant do that because I don't have any flexion, at all, in my left side. So, how I move stuff, how I ride my ATV, which I use for-

Liz DePoy: How you ride your horse (laughing).

Stephen Gilson: How I ride my horse, all those things are effected, or influenced, by that mobility issue and of course, being 67, like many folks who are growing older, I also have the other - arthritis and all those things we that acquire as we move through space and time.

Richard Brzozowski: Sure. So today, what we're going to do is, have several different tools and pieces of equipment we're going to feature. And we'll talk about why you chose them, how you use them and maybe some pros and cons - and you know, drawbacks and advantages of those tools. So as we take a look at those - we'll - you as a viewer will understand, sort of the situations, cause you may have situations on your farm, or in your life or workspace where you need to adapt something so you can keep accomplishing a task that needs to be accomplished.

Liz DePoy: Yeah, so I mean, this may not work, you know each of the strategies may not work for everybody who uses them. But the problem solving: what do I need to do? How do I fit my body to that- what I need to do. And, you know, are there simple strategies? Like, we'll show you to be able to do something easily and comfortably and safely.

Stephen Gilson: And part of it all has been a learning curve as well. Because there were clearly would be things we would try and we 'd think, boy this is the greatest idea since sliced bread - and it fell flat. And so that didn't work. And / or we did something, and that's working but we needed to modify it or adapt it a little bit more. Fortunately, we've been in the position to be able to have people help us do that - in terms of, make some of those modifications. So some of been minor modifications with equipment, others have been really seeking off the shelf, off the rack types of things, that might be used for another purpose, but fit us for how we operate our farm, um, in terms of our mobility, or our freak issues, and that stuff.

Richard Brzozowski: Great. Thank you. (Music)