Anosognosia
Linda was sitting at home when she had a stroke. When she woke up she was in the hospital, but she didn’t understand why. The doctor told her that his name was Dr. Jones and that she had a stroke and her right arm was temporarily paralyzed. He also said that she would need to stay in her room for the night. Linda was so confused she was fine. All that happened was that she fell asleep, and her arm was completely normal. Couldn't the doctor see her moving it? Linda tried to tell him that she was ok and that she didn't need help, but Dr. Jones just repeated what he had already said. Linda’s reply was “What do you mean? Watch and I'll move my arm.” She said she was moving it, but Dr. Jones couldn't see. He said there was no way she was moving it and that she would need to stay in her room over night for test. Linda pleaded to leave, but the doctor knew it was not safe. Finally, after some arguing, Linda agreed to stay but she still did not understand why. She thought her doctor must have been crazy and demanded a different one. But when the new doctor came in she said the same thing as Dr. Jones.
What happened to Linda was a rare disease called anosognosia. Anosognosia means unawareness of disease. For instance in Linda's case her arm was paralyzed but because she had anosognosia she had no idea and truly believed that her arm was fine and she didn't need help. But in reality she did.

A lot of people mistake anosognosia for denial, which is a belief that something is false when deep down you know that it's true. But anosognosia is acutely not knowing about it at all.

Anosognosia is normally caused by a injury to the right frontal lobe of the brain. Although sometimes anosognosia just shows up. There is no known cure for it, but it does tend to go away on its own.

Anosognosia is also related a lot with bipolar and schizophrenia. This is especially dangerous because the patients thinking that there is nothing wrong will not take their medicine.

Quiz!

Was Linda lying when she said she could move her arm?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. She wasn’t sure
Anosognosia could affect anyone no matter their health and is very serious.

In the case of Linda, her anosognosia went away in a month and only then did she realize what happened.

THE END

citation:

Doty, L. (2007). “Anosognosia (Unawareness of Decline or Difficulties).” Partially supported by the Florida Department of Elder Affairs Alzheimer's Disease Initiative. (2007)