

“My Journey: Life After a Spinal Cord Injury”
Joseph English, QuadRebuild
International Disability Rights Affirmation Conference 2023
November 10

[2023/11/10 06:52] Carolyn Carillon: Hello everyone.

Today's presentation is being transcribed so those without audio or who require text only can participate in real time.

Some speakers may be using a text teleprompter tool for some or all of their presentation. Transcriptionists will fill in any gaps and support the Question & Answer section at the end. A little explanation about this service.

Voice-to-text transcriptionists provide a translation of the key ideas discussed, NOT a word for word transcription.

Voice-to-text services provide an in-the-moment snapshot of ideas and concepts, so that those who are unable to hear or to understand the audio program are able to participate in real-time.

You will see the transcription in local chat.

Transcription is provided by Virtual Ability, Inc.

The transcriptionists are:

Carolyn Carillon

Elektra Panthar

The speakers will be identified by initials as they speak.

The following initials in the transcription record will identify the speakers:

JE: Joseph English / JOEQR

[2023/11/10 06:56] Carolyn Carillon: <<transcription begins>>

[2023/11/10 06:56] Marcus Llewellyn: YouTube LiveStream is started! Watch it at:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uu8gk_Wl1d8

[2023/11/10 07:02] Pecos Kidd: Good morning everyone, and welcome to the 12th annual International Disability Rights Affirmation Conference, hosted by Virtual Ability, Inc.

My name is Pecos Kidd, and I'm doing an emergency fill-in for Gentle Heron who is having technical difficulties at the moment.

I am a vice president at Virtual Ability, and we are so glad you are with us this morning.

Virtual Ability is a non-profit company with a mission to enable people with a wide range of disabilities by providing a supporting environment for them to enter and thrive in online virtual worlds.

We sponsor two conferences per year, the Mental Health Symposium in the spring, and this IDRAC conference in the fall.

Our theme this year is "Do, Create, Live." We have an amazing set of presenters from different parts of the world who will share what they are able to do, create, and live when their rights are respected

So let's get started!

Our first presenter this morning is Joseph English. Introducing him will be Moose Maine. Moose - the stage is yours!

[2023/11/10 07:05] Moose Maine: Hello and welcome to Virtual Ability's 2023 International Disability Rights Affirmation Conference.

I'm Moose Maine and I have a stroke, Aphasia and epilepsy about 10 years ago.

I have been in Second Life for about 17 years

I really love dances and going to live music concerts.

In RL I'm a Network engineer and I am in Maine USA

Today I'd like to introduce Joseph English he was a successful entrepreneur and an award-winning stone carver when his life changed dramatically in an instant. A car wreck left him fighting for his life. He was given only 24 hours to live by the doctors who initially treated him, but now he lives as a quadriplegic, 6 years later.

Audience, please hold your questions and comments to the end, so as not to interrupt our presenter, who is new to Second Life.

Welcome, Mr English, the floor is yours.

[2023/11/10 07:08] Carolyn Carillon: JE: hello everyone

Can you hear me?

Brief introduction to myself- this is my first virtual presentation so please go easy on me, explain what I will be talking about in this presentation:

- a. The Accident
- b. Rehab
- c. Quad-Rebuild and future goals
- d. A little bit about my story
- e. Our book

Some of you may know more about spinal injuries than others in the UK, so here are some facts on the screen for you. We are only a small charity, but we have huge ambitions to help the estimated 2,500 people that are injured or diagnosed with a spinal injury in the UK each year. There are so many people out there waiting for the chance to rebuild their lives, and with support, we can reach those people.

Growing up I always tended to take things apart and rebuild them. Prior to my accident, and following in my dad's footsteps, I built a successful construction company. I had a formidable work ethic instilled in me from a young age and found a real passion in construction. I was a perfectionist, and always tried to be the best at what I did. I believe that this carried forward after my injury and in my mind, I started to contemplate how I could help other patients in the spinal unit rebuild their lives and accept their image.

Moving on to the accident.

The accident

1. Fell asleep against passenger door without seatbelt.
2. My brother also fell asleep and veered off into a tree which flipped the van onto its side and left me unable to breathe.
3. A fire engine was on its way to another accident, which was very lucky for me as they managed to get me out of the van in a matter of minutes.
4. With darkness upon us on a winter's day all emergency services pulled together to intubate me at the scene.
5. I was then airlifted to LGI. [= Leeds General Infirmary]
6. I cannot thank the emergency services enough for saving my life as I do not think I would be here today if it was not for their quick actions.
7. It was around 2 weeks that I was in a coma, and in this time my family were informed that I would be paralysed for the rest of my life and have no ability to speak, eat or drink for myself.
8. At this stage my family were asked if they wanted to keep my life support machine on.
9. Here I am now, extremely grateful for the decisions my family made.

<<transcription of Joe English video>>

Emergency Services Attending Joe's Accident (Quad-Rebuild)

<https://youtu.be/Fss3RtNtQ0Y?si=qm0-67w92wemxFxe>

Presenter:

Team leader Tony and the rest of the Heart Medics will prepare Joe to be taken to hospital immediately after he's anesthetized.

Medic:

Got pelvic splint as well and we'll do it at the same time as we scoop him.

What we've got is a van that's overturned. As for the reason or the cause that the van overturned, we don't know yet because it looks like a single vehicle that's been involved. Two people inside, one walked off and got into an ambulance by himself.

The other gentleman has got head injury um along with some other injuries we're not quite sure about just now. So there's a doctor on scene from Heli Med and he's chosen to do the rapid sequence induction so he's going to intubate the patient.

So to do it safely we're going to set up for car RSI and then assist in ventilating to secure his airway.

They're setting it up just where the trolley is now. They're going to do it so his head is up road, so the one is sitting on his right hand side, to our left hand side as you're going up the road

All right.

Okay you can see sorry

Can I just pinch you for a second, just to hold this in place, all right

Presenter:

Time is of the essence. Medics fear Joe has a significant bleed on the brain. There's a danger it's creating pressure inside his head. It can kill in minutes.

Medic:

Right. Then and there, very very quickly. I'll just pop that one up there.

Presenter:

An anesthetic will slow the bleeding down and could be the difference between life and death.

Medic:

At this time, a single vehicle traveling towards Halifax. He's in collision with the central reservation, appears to flip over, hitting tree and then pushing another car into a further tree.

Presenter:

Whatever the cause, the impact of the crash has left Joe fighting for his life.

Medic:

He's had a prehospital anesthetic which they'll maintain all the way to the major Trauma Center, uh, believe he's going to Leeds at this time, um, so they'll keep him in in in an anesthetized state, um, to manage, um, predominantly his head injury.

Uh, so his intracranial pressure and his CO2 that they'll they'll manage through ventilation, uh, once he gets into hospital, then obviously he'll go off for the the most appropriate scans. Um, try and figure out exactly what's going on and obviously if it's appropriate he'll then go off and have surgery.

Presenter:

Joe has suffered catastrophic injuries. The trauma team is standing by at Leeds General Infirmary and will do all they can to save his life.

<<transcription of video ends, return to live presentation>>

[2023/11/10 07:16] Elektra Panthar: JE: Rehab and Quad-Rebuild Intro

Rehab and Quad-Rebuild Intro

1. It was a traumatic experience being a long-term patient in intensive care, as most people either move on to a different ward or sadly pass away.

I was there for 7 weeks

2. Moving on to Princess Royal Spinal Injury Unit was a very difficult transition for me, moving from one-to-one care over to a spinal injury ward was extremely physically and mentally challenging. How does a person go from being in control of their whole life, to then

feeling helpless and dependent on everyone else? Despite this, those closest to me refused to give up on me.

Thanks to them I had the resilience to get to today

3. Seeing this lit a fire within me, I realised that my experience could transform from a personal battle to a source of inspiration for those with spinal injuries. I believe that my story and that of Quad-Rebuild is not a story of my survival, but one of hope and resilience for anyone fighting through adversity.

4. Therefore, with myself and fellow inpatients struggling to understand our new way of life, I was inspired to develop the 4 key mottos for Quad-Rebuild.

5. They are: Rebuilding Lives, Rebuilding Homes, Rebuilding Your Image to Rebuild Your Future.

Rebuilding My Life

1. The hospital became a comfort blanket; at first it is difficult to get used to, then you become so used to it that leaving is a terrifying thought. I owe huge appreciation to the hospital staff, my family and the care team who pulled together to help me leave the comfort zone I felt protected in.

2. Andy, from Spinal Injury Association in the UK, was my support coordinator and an essential part of my rehabilitation.

3. I also wanted to better my education and continue my own personal growth. I enrolled on a master's degree in business administration, which I successfully graduated from in September 2021.

4. During this time, and with great support from my trustees, we successfully obtained our charity number in June 2021.

5. I still attend SIA meetings, and it is my hope that Quad-Rebuild can fill the gaps between the amazing support offered by SIA and other Spinal Injury charities.

Quad-Rebuilds Work

1. My personal journey has taken some time and there have been many struggles. I now feel accomplished and ready to grow Quad-Rebuild into the source of hope and inspiration that I believe it can be.

2. The four mottos created start with tailored support plans. Our goal is to liberate individuals from constraints and establish a lifelong mental health support resource. Life presents various triggers, and we aim to be a constant guide and coach, providing a lifeline of support at any juncture.

3. Home adaptations demand significant financial resources, a facet our charity is actively developing. In the immediate future, we're focusing on vital adaptations like ramps, wet rooms, and kitchen modifications for clients with spinal injuries, crucial for enhancing their home mobility.

4. Embracing self-acceptance, self-image, and self-confidence varies from person to person. Personally, I refrained from looking in the mirror for the first 3 months. We aim to empower individuals by offering hairstylists and beauty therapists to restore their confidence and mental well-being post SCI. Negative outlooks can be transformed into positive mindsets through acceptance of your new self with support from our charity.

5. "Rebuilding Your Future" unites our other mottos, extending community support post-rehabilitation. We foster social connections among quadriplegic and paraplegic individuals.

Supporting people in public settings such as food shopping, medical appointments, dining out, and breaks away. We aim to alleviate the challenges faced and restore the confidence to carry out everyday activities often taken for granted in day-to-day life.

6. With this targeted and wholistic approach, we can help people to rebuild people's futures. We've recently begun providing this range of support for our first set of clients, the first of many people that Quad-Rebuild will assist in rebuilding their lives.

The Book

Regardless of my situation, I live every day to its absolute fullest and genuinely believe the accident has changed my purpose in life. No matter the level of a person's ability, we are here to remind them of their value, and show them their potential.

It would be great for you to check out our book, the link to which you can find by clicking the box at my feet. Here is the reason why I feel my book stands out:

The book is a more in-depth, detailed look at my story, accident and the events that led to the founding of Quad-Rebuild. The book tells a story of lived experience from myself at each stage of my journey but also gives accounts from everyone involved in my life from the moment of the accident right through to the present day.

Thank You

Please see our media pages and website on the screen.

Again, if you click the box at my feet, you can find links to our website and Social Media pages. I would like to say that we are not here to duplicate any support provided by other spinal injury charities. Our motto was developed by identifying vital support requirements in the spinal unit, from that of inpatients and my own personal journey. Thank you for taking the time to listen to us.

[2023/11/10 07:25] Itico Spectre: Awesome!

Thank you so much.

[2023/11/10 07:25] ♡ Andee ♡ (Andee Cooper): claps

[2023/11/10 07:26] Lorin Tone: Thank you, great presentation!

[2023/11/10 07:26] Lilmesican Resident: What a great story!

[2023/11/10 07:26] Attica Bekkers: thank you

[2023/11/10 07:26] Gingerjoy (Joycie String): Thank you

[2023/11/10 07:26] Thomas Meriwether Swift (GMMSilverstar Resident): This was inspiring! Thank you

[2023/11/10 07:27] Elektra Panthar: Great job, Joseph, that was fantastic

[2023/11/10 07:27] Thomas Meriwether Swift (GMMSilverstar Resident): And welcome to Second Life and VAI!

[2023/11/10 07:26] LV (LoriVonne Lustre): Living with a Spinal Cord Injury: My life as a Quadriplegic

by Joseph English

Available at:

https://www.amazon.com/Living-Spinal-Cord-Injury-Quadriplegic-ebook/dp/B0CDMXHWWC/ref=sr_1_1?qid=1699375852&refinements=p_n_date%3A1249101011&s=digital-text&sr=1-1

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Living-Spinal-Cord-Injury-Quadriplegic/dp/103255441X>

https://www.routledge.com/Living-with-a-Spinal-Cord-Injury-My-life-as-a-Quadriplegic/English/p/book/9781032554402?gclid=CjwKCAiA3aeqBhBzEiwAxFiOBpTnZEiklN8PqdIPUdpqOTfOnZ6S4C4FzqTyTxCoDPuALyrwkcqHixoCATIQAvD_BwE

Follow Joseph's journey on:
Facebook.com/Quadrebuild
Instagram.com/Quadrebuild18

Check out the QuadRebuild website at:
<https://www.quad-rebuild.co.uk>

[2023/11/10 07:27] Elektra Panthar: JE: Happy to answer any question
Thank you

[2023/11/10 07:27] Pecos Kidd: Thank you Joseph, for sharing your story! What an amazing perspective you have and bring to others. Great job presenting, and thank you again for being here in the virtual world to inform and inspire us!
Do we have any questions for Joseph?

[2023/11/10 07:28] Rhiannon Chatnoir: QUESTION are you thinking of expanding your charity work into virtual spaces like Second Life or other platforms to reach more people?

[2023/11/10 07:29] Elektra Panthar: JE: we're not 100% sure yet
We want to provide tailored support

We start from a framework, then ask questions to tailor help to their needs. For now it needs to be for people in the UK

[2023/11/10 07:30] Rhiannon Chatnoir: thank you
yes

[2023/11/10 07:30] Elektra Panthar: <<transcription ends>>