

Orthopedic Impairment (Paralysis): Nothing Is Impossible (Non-Fiction Book) Est. Time: 2 Weeks Reading/45 Minutes Class

Objective

Develop a better understanding of some of the challenges faced by individuals with orthopedic impairments.

Overview

Legendary for his role as Superman, the late Christopher Reeve was also renowned for his tireless work promoting awareness and funding for spinal cord research. In his second book, *Nothing is Impossible*, Reeve reflects on the last seven years of his life and the accident that left him paralyzed. Composed of nine chapters, Reeve's book reflects on different facets of life: humor, parenting, advocacy, and hope, among others. Not only does he share his philosophical thoughts on each of these facets, but he also describes how the accident and his subsequent disability evolved and changed his perspective on each.

For Your Information

Quadriplegia is a condition in which all four limbs are paralyzed and is typically the result of a spinal cord injury. This condition is considered an orthopedic impairment or physical disability.

Activity

Read the following book and be prepared to discuss the questions below in class.

Title: *Nothing is Impossible: Reflections on a New Life* (2002)

Author: Christopher Reeve

Publisher: Ballantine Books • New York

Questions/Discussion Topics

1. Why was the invitation for a weekend visit with the King of Spain withdrawn?
2. How did Reeve's condition change during the seven years after his accident until the publication of his book?
3. Explain the ASIA examination and its significance to Reeve.
4. In this book, Reeve reflects on parenting.
 - a. After his accident, why was Reeve concerned about being a "real father"?
 - b. Why did he think he was a better father after the accident?

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Questions/Discussion Topics [CONT]

5. What do you think Reeve means by the following statement: “[O]ur comfort zone is defined by fear and our perception of our limitations”?
6. Imagine that you are paralyzed as a result of an accident.
 - a. How do you think your life would change? How would your daily life be affected?
 - b. Would you be able to continue with your current career?
 - c. Do you think you would accept your condition or devote much of your time to finding a treatment or cure?