

**TITLE: STILL ME****AUTHOR: CHRISTOPHER REEVE****Do you think the author's identity effected the way it was written and how?**

I think the author's identity was effected by the way the author related about his personal experiences in the sporting activities, his acting, about his spinal cord disability, his memories of education and about his life as a whole. He has done this by the use of descriptions, tone and use of words.

**Summary**

Christopher Reeve was a person that led an active life in being involved in sports like Horse Back riding. One of his experiences in horse back riding that was good was that he had a pretty good ride, and at the end of the dressage was put in fourth place out of twenty-seven. On the other hand, the whole world held its breath when Christopher Reeve struggled for life on Memorial Day, 1995. On the third jump of a riding competition, Reeve fell a few feet, but shattered his first cervical vertebra as he landed on the top rail of his jump. The second vertebra was also broken, but not so badly. Then he was fighting for air like a drowning person. He also twisted his head and fought for air the shards of his first vertebra and the broken part of the second vertebra were cutting and damaging nerves in the spinal cord. This resulted him being a quadriplegic.

After the accident, assistive technology played a vital role in Christopher Reeve's life; the assistive technology that he used was the wheelchair. The wheelchair was attached with a mouthpiece, which assisted him with his breathing. This was done by taking a breath through the mouthpiece, and then turned to the sip-and-puff on the chair and tries to drive it. The idea was to gradually reduce dependence on the ventilator.

During rehabilitation he used these devices such as bicycle, StimMaster and tilt table which assisted him in the mentally and physically recovery. The bicycle has allowed him to maintain the strength and mass of his leg muscles while giving a cardiovascular workout. The benefit of this bike is tremendous, and it should be available to anyone with a spinal cord injury. Next, StimMaster was used for getting back his dimensions of the thighs and calves, which were almost the same as before the injury. It also helped him to work the abdominal muscles and the arms, two areas that can easily atrophy. Finally, the tilt table is a device that allows him to stand with his legs and feet supporting his full body weight.

Hence, the spinal cord injury that Christopher Reeve faced was a devastating one. After reading his book, I have learnt that he endured many obstacles in his lifetime as a result of the spinal cord injury yet he fought back to get back on his feet with the determination of accomplishing his goals. The spinal cord injury led him to the confinements of the wheelchair. He

had a difficult time using the wheelchair for instance at the beginning he held terrors. Then he became so accustomed to the chair now it's like a part of his body. When he was put into the wheelchair, he had to be lifted out of the bed and then lowered into the chair in a three-man lift. Three aides would disconnect his vent from the bed, carried lying straight out, put him in the chair, then reconnect him to the vent on the chair. I thought that this ordeal was a frightening one and there were many traumatizing experiences that he had faced but one of them was bad like pulling the old trach out, cleaning the site thoroughly, and putting a new trach in. He never forgot the first trach change, attempted by two pulmonologists a week after he came home. He was given a mild anesthetic; the doctors pulled the trach out, cleared away some granulation (healing) tissue in his throat then couldn't get the new trach to go in. As a result of this, he could not breathe because the air that he took in through his mouth escaped through the open hole in his throat instead of getting to his lungs.

Therefore, I think this book has inspired and moved me. After reading this book, it changed my perception of people with disabilities such as the spinal cord injury that occurred to Christopher Reeve. Also, I have learnt that individuals with disabilities can contribute a lot about their condition so as to help others with this condition to get better treatment. These contributions that he has put forth towards the spinal cord disability is a great accomplishment that he has made in his lifetime, which has helped many persons with this sort of condition. He has done this by visiting scientists in their laboratories and hears about the progress in research months before the results are published in scientific journals. In addition to that, he has appeared all over the country, sharing his experiences and creating more awareness about the disabled at rehab centers where he talks about the experiences learnt about other spinal cord patients. He has spent much of his time planning events to raise money for the Christopher Reeve Foundation.

In conclusion, Christopher Reeve is one great person with a strong, positive and inspiring personality that led an active life in being involved in sporting activities, acting and being engaged in disability events despite the fluctuations in his health condition that occurred due to the spinal cord injury for which he has been hospitalized eleven times.

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