Michael Marceau - Jan 26 2020

**SPEAKERS**

Molly Joyce, Michael Marceau

**Molly Joyce** 00:01

The first question is, what is access for you?

**Michael Marceau** 00:18

What is access for me, that's being able to do anything that a normally abled person can do. And because of my injury, which is just a paralyzed left hand and arm, that does not affect my mobility. For walk, I can walk, I can ride a bicycle, I learned how to ride a motorcycle shortly after my injury and play a musical instrument. So, I'm not nearly as limited as some other folks with disabilities.

**Molly Joyce** 00:51

What is care to you?

**Michael Marceau** 00:54

What is care to me just being aware of what my body is trying to tell me. I mean, I've been told by various medical people that I'm very body aware, maybe that's the result of the injury or not. But the one thing that I do have to be very careful of about my injuries is that my left hand, and arm and arm, get very sensitive to cold weathr because of the nerve damage in that part of my body. So I tell people, I was wearing one glove long before, before Michael Jackson ever came up with the idea. But somehow he made money off of because his glove was on the right hand. And I was on my left hand, I think that that made the difference. And I was ahead of the curve, but not in the right spot.

**Molly Joyce** 01:39

Yeah. What is control for you?

**Michael Marceau** 01:44

What is control for me, probably just being able to do pretty much what I want. Again, because of the nature of my injury that just affects one area of my body, I can pretty much do anything anyone else can. Although with my lung injury, I'm missing about half of my left lung. So that does affect my endurance type situation. I mean, Lance Armstrong is no good here for me, but I've read a bicycle anyway. So I just just try to slow down and let my body recover myself to some degree.

**Molly Joyce** 02:26

What is weakness to you?

**Michael Marceau** 02:30

Weakness to me is giving up before I try something I mean, I've heard heard the term years ago we are...we are not disabled people, we are differently abled people. And shortly after I get home from from Vietnam, I had to wear an arm brace on my left hand. And I had played a little bit of guitar just kind of chord and folk singing Peter ball, Marian, Bob Dylan, that type of stuff from those late 60s. So with my injury, I could not cord with my left hand. So I took this cheap guitar restricted left handed and tried to take a pic to the brace that I had in my left hand so I could strum the guitar that way and make the cords with my right hand. That was ultimately ultimately unsuccessful, I could not get get to pick this down and ended the brace I tried glue and several other things and it was not working. I finally ended up switching to electric bass, which you only play one string at a time and of course with your left hand so I could play that as a normal right hander type person with us. My technique is called grip and grin. with my left hand on the neck of the instrument in my right hand does plucking one string at a time I was able to get by I tell people I have risen to the highest level of mediocrity to attain but it was enough to get me in bands and play for fun for the last 40 years. That's I do enjoy doing that today.

**Molly Joyce** 04:15

What is strength for you?

**Michael Marceau** 04:17

What is strength, kind of same thing, just not being able to be deterred when life throws obstacles in my way. So I've tried different things and just, again, not afraid to try new things and fail. And sometimes the lessons from failure are the ones who remember the most.

**Molly Joyce** 04:46

So make sure to stop recording before so I want to make sure it's... what is cure to you?

**Michael Marceau** 04:55

Cure. Well, I don't think I can ever be cured. The nature of my injury was basically a nerve bruise. The official diagnosis was brachial plexus contusion. And what that means in English is that there's three nerves trunks that come from your spinal cord to each arm. And then through the up in the shoulder area, this three nerves are wrapped around a blood vessel. And my injury with the shrapnel that bounced around instead of by body, just mash that whole group of nerves and the blood vessel up against the bone in the shoulder. And it did not cut the nerve or sever the nerves. It just severely bruised. And the doctors told me that if I was lucky, they had had good results of nerves. Similar, was similar in injuries regenerating to some degree or other. And that's what happened to me. He said it would take time. And one of the things that I did..I was a patient at Walter Reed Hospital here in Washington, DC for about eight months in 1771. And had about two hours of physical therapy a day, I was totally, I was a commuter patient, my parents lived in the area, and I was going home every night and getting real food insted of set up military hospital foods. And I was exercising whatever I was around, I was trying to rotate my arm, flex extended, and try to make sure was my other hand, moving it around to make sure that our joints and muscles were limber enough. So if some of the nerves did regenerate, I would not have atrophied muscles or frozen joints. So it was it was an ongoing processes. You know, I did work pretty hard, I look back on it, I'm pretty pleased with the results.

**Molly Joyce** 06:58

What is interdependence?

**Michael Marceau** 07:00

Interdependence? What is interdependence?

**Molly Joyce** 07:04

Like dependence on one another.

**Michael Marceau** 07:08

While back, but 15 years ago, or so one of the things that I like to do every couple of months was to good and to Walter Reed Hospital and visit some of the patients, I would see them in their, in their various situations after Iraq or Afghanistan, and just let them know that as a fellow Russia, and it was, it was kind of up to you to work on your own self. But I would encourage them and go down and do some physical therapy exercises with the patient indication and showed them my injury and how I recovered from it. Maybe just help them to realize that it's not the end of the world, and certainly things have changed after an injury like that. But it doesn't end your life, it just makes you kind of take a detour.

**Molly Joyce** 08:01

Yeah. And the last one, what is assumption?

**Michael Marceau** 08:08

What is assumption? Um, um, I'm not sure what assumption and maybe, maybe assume that you can't do something because of your injury, maybe you're not confident enough to try to attempt something new. I mean, when I first learned to ride a motorcycle was kind of kind of scary, I mean, you're on two wheels, He's never done something like that. And one of the functions of the motorcycle, you the clutch is on your left hand. And I had to have a head have some strength for that, because I could, I could squeeze pretty well, which I call flex flexing. And I would that would bring the lever and I was able to shift gears with with my foot, and I would relax my grip on the lever, and it would spring back in the next year. So I mean, it took some practice of course, but it's just a matter of not being deterred by by your injuries or by your situation. I mean, we all have different things and whether our injuries are visible or invisible, we still just kind of roll up in our little ball and pull the covers up over our head and make me want the world to go away. I mean, we certainly have days like that are average like that and, and I've come to realize that, you know, there are things that I want to do. And places I want to see and people I want to go visit and just go on with life and I can't do that if I'm cuddled up on my bed or under a blanket.

**Molly Joyce** 09:49

Yeah.

**Michael Marceau** 09:51

So I have to kind of mentally and emotionally kick myself on the butt.

**Molly Joyce** 09:56

Yeah. Yes, yeah.

**Michael Marceau** 10:00

To many people in the the world too much interesting thing. I just went down to a Lunar New Year celebration at the Smithsonian. That's a Mongolian food and listen to some Mongolian music and dancers. If I couldn't have done that it stayed in bed this morning. Yeah, just kind of give yourself a chance to be mad at the world and be mad at your situation for a couple of hours or a day, maybe you're not gonna do what you want to do if you given to the fear and the frustration and the anger. So just get your butt out of bed and go do something.

**Molly Joyce** 10:38

That's great. Thank you.