

Category: Resilience (N=99)

Happy All or Most of the time

...Challenges with everyday life don't tend to stop me and I bounce back fine.

I bounced back through adaptive sports and my education/career. Without them I would be miserable. My recovery was about getting back to my "normal" before injury.

After my accident, I was able to bounce back to mostly a normal life.

Every challenge has a solution and unless you try those challenges you will never know what those challenges will bring.

Facing adversity and bouncing back is something I have done most of my life.

I am good at compensating. If I can't do something, I looked for a new way to do it.

I am very good at facing challenges.

Experiences prior to SCI were important after SCI.

I broke my back when I was eighteen I've learned to just push through the most difficult situations. I think it has made me a more resilient person.

I don't believe in the word "can't". It's either "I don't want to or I'll try."

I don't give up when I have a problem and I am persistent to overcome it.

I have been able to maintain my resilience when faced with challenges since my injury due to my personal growth in the past year and a half.

I just say 'I can, watch me prove you wrong.'

I'm rubber; you are glue whatever you say and bounces off and comes back on me?

I'm very adaptable and have faced many abrupt changes in my life.

Purpose in life and sheer force of will can go a long way in overcoming major challenges -

One word that describes me, tenacious." I have also been called 'very intense.'

... it's a matter of trying and adjusting and trying some more.

I will bounce as high or as far as I am willing or able to go.

Never give up!

Adapt and overcome
My disability has made me very adept at dealing with adversity.
In high school, my senior year, I had to "bounce back" from a down junior year to get into a good college.
...I have never been fazed by the adversity I face and I take pleasure in defying the odds.
It is a constant battle, but after so many years you learn to bounce back quickly;
It is more difficult to "bounce back" emotionally, especially when trying to accomplish routine tasks that should take a minute or so but turn into 10-15 minutes or more.
Just 'keep on pushing' I find there are many more people worse off than myself.
just...never give up!
I always try to do things for myself before asking for help! I do get frustrated when I cannot do something but usually figure out a way to accomplish the task.
Mentally I am very strong and have been able to make the best out of bad situations through my entire life (prior and post SCI).
Most of my resilience is due to...my strong support system.
The chronic pain makes it hard to bounce back.
After my accident I received 1.5 months TX at a trauma hospital followed by 7 months at a comprehensive rehab facility. I think current, shorter rehabs result in discharge too soon not allowing decent level of adjustment and coping skills.
Think outside the box to accomplish activities etc. To stay independent.
I try to face every challenge. 90% I succeed.
I thrive on challenge, when I am told it can't be done is when I don't procrastinate and sometimes get something done. Being a residential builder and rough carpenter help build character, some would say I am hardcore.
I would rather do things myself and I will if I can, but I also will ask for help if I do need it.
The best ways I've found to bounce back is to help others and humor.
Distraction with activities- computer/family support
It is very hard when the govt restricts your monthly income so any set back is very devastating.

I seem to have good common sense have the ability to work things out I am good at rigging things up that work for me
I will try anything - I try even if I fail. Able to move on if things do not work out.
Strong will to live...
Very difficult but I try
Wish I were younger and better physically to "bounce back". Wish I didn't tire so easily.
Art with mouth
Finally, being back at work has helped me a lot.
Driving and working on cars, trucks, grass cutting, and active in VFW
Sometimes when things are in my favor like working on my project car...
I started feeding my horses/doing barn chores while still in a back brace. I was riding my horses <6 months after the accident and competing <1 year afterwards.
<p>Apart from restructuring one's life after a SCI, one of the hardest readjustments has been, what to do with oneself, after retirement from work.</p> <p>The ability to work after my accident ... was in my opinion, a life saver. I'm still trying to figure this one out (retirement). Understanding the limited options one has from a wheelchair, wasn't that much of an issue, when working. I took an early retirement (pending layoffs) because the work I enjoyed was going away and the contraction of the printing trade offered few other positive options.</p> <p>I spend a lot more time around the house doing domestic chores (cooking and laundry), listening to an eclectic variety of music, working in the garage on bicycle / hand cycles and I'm planning to start (single hive) beekeeping again this Spring.</p>
<p>Bouncing back? There is no returning to the major things I did: the practice of [my profession], running along rural country roads, large scale vegetable gardening and extensive care of the grounds around my home. And I miss these things very much.</p> <p>One would think I could still teach ...but even that is limited. The major teaching need is showing students what to do with patients ... (and this requires an ability of my trunk muscles to upright myself after leaning over - which I cannot do). Yes, occasionally, there are lectures I can give and articles I can get published, which gives some satisfaction, but it's not the extensive participation in [my profession] that I had before.</p> <p>And, I do have a stand-up, stationary exerciser ... which provides an upper body workout of some intensity. I also have an arm operated tricycle that I can take out on the country roads, but getting on and off safely is a bit tricky, and is best used when my wife can 'spot me' while doing this (this has led to infrequent use of this). I also got my John Deere utility tractor modified so I can get up on it. But, again, help is needed to most safely get on/off of it- and in this case having a stronger/male person</p>

spotting me on this procedure is best, so he can also help in doing 'grounds care' cleanup of tree/bush trimmings. This need for a hired person has limited my participation in this grounds/tractor use.

But these things do not adequately replace the previous things I did.

I do try to keep up with what's happening in the world, by reading newspapers, magazines and following broadcast radio/television news- and I follow several TV series shows.

When I graduated

Happy Some of the Time

"Pick ya self up, dust ya self off, and start all over again.

Bullheadedly independent

Biggest challenge of my life, haven't been able to complete, yet.

Bounce back is very hard and very challenging. You have your good days and your bad days.

Bouncing back becomes more difficult in old age.

I try to never give up! After all these years it's hard to keep it up.

...I feel that my ability to recover from current and future medical issues is diminished due to spinal cord injury and age.

Even though the deck is stacked against me I have to keep getting up and moving forward because other people still depend on me...

Felt like I was bouncing back when I had regular PT. Insurance is no longer paying.

Older I get, harder it is, longer it takes

'press on' all you can do

Perseverance is the word I would use to describe myself

Try to be a problem solver

Get up = fall down + I

I bounced back at first, but it has become harder to fight all the time.

I don't let many things get in my way when there is something to be done.

Its hard, but necessary in life

I don't take "no" for an answer.

<p>...It's always been two steps forward and five steps back. In that time I have pieced together a lot of successes. I always try to dust myself off</p>
<p>...I tell myself I'm the only one who has control of my life and can make it or break it, only me. I pull myself up by my bootstraps and move on.</p>
<p>I used to be able bounce back from any situation before my accident. Now I can't because of my spinal cord injury.</p>
<p>I've always been the type of person that if you tell me I can't do it, then I will find a way to do it. I'm proud that I live by myself after my spinal cord injury.</p>
<p>Try to do can about situation and sometimes think if I can keep trying results will be better.</p>
<p>I prefer not to argue</p>
<p>Patience</p>
<p>Much harder to bounce back now than it was 10 years ago or more.</p>
<p>My family and I have used many illustrations to reflect my resilience: Tigger, "bounce and re-bounce" etc... I know how to bounce.</p>
<p>Perseverance is the word I would use to describe myself.</p>
<p>You have to be flexible and open-minded. I had to learn entirely new skills, but now I have a better, higher-paying job than I did before my SCI. Some said I went back to school/work too quickly, but that was the best choice for me, I didn't want to become a 'professional patient.' Realizing I could still make a living and support from my family really helped me improve my outlook on the future.</p>
<p>I say to myself- this time will pass- when things become too difficult.</p>
<p>It's not always easy to bounce back. The move from Michigan ... was a plus because of the weather. The VA is beginning to help me with [medical issues and supplies] but appointments are hard to arrange with VA help and doctors.</p>
<p>Even though I had a good recovery following my initial injury and more recently had a good recovery following rotator cuff surgery last year; I feel that my ability to recover from current and future medical issues is diminished to spinal cord injury and age.</p>
<p>I am growing tired</p>
<p>...I don't think anyone bounces back after an SCI. You just become determined to get back as much as you can.</p>
<p>I'm going to school full time studying for a degree in CADD. I also play in pool leagues and enjoy them.</p>

I would have answered strongly agree to every answer if it was not for a forced change in position at work in the last 6 months.

For about 90 days I have been practicing yoga...I cannot express enough how it has helped me regain some of my flexibility, balance, and overall happiness.

Happy Infrequently or Never

I bounce back well because I have always had to. I don't quit.

I have ups and downs when it comes to bouncing back. Sometimes I feel like giving up and other times I feel I can do anything.

My ability to bounce back has been affected by time and attempts to deal with a medical system that caress less and less for my welfare.

It is getting more and more difficult!

I can't bounce back so fast.

I never give up.

I no longer face problems/challenges head on. Instead I hide hoping these things will blow over or just go away.

I quit.

There is no such things as "bouncing back" from a SCI that leaves you in chronic constant pain for 10 years +.

Category: General Outlook (N=82)

Happy All or Most of the Time

The past is behind you. Stop looking back and focus on the present (what you can do and accomplish) future goals.

Be happy with what you have NOT what you didn't do or can't do.

I draw a dark line between 'acceptance' and 'adjustment' when it comes to my disability. My somewhat flippant answer to the question of how long it took me to adjust: 'I plan on being done with it a week from Thursday.' I have never adjusted well, but have accepted my situation (positively) through somewhat fatalistic/naturalistic language like 'Luck of the Draw,' 'go with the flow,' 'it is what it is,' and 'shit happens.' Also, my sense of curiosity -- 'I wonder where this will take me' -- has always been a prime motivator, and usually provides the resiliency to get through a situation or set-back.

Generally, I believe you can do anything you put your mind to.

i believe that i have to live to the best of my ability. if i can't do this then do that. i don't want to waste time feeling sorry for myself, cause there's only so much time left. i'm very fortunate to have a supportive family. because of my attitude, my extensive life experiences and advanced education many people seek my advice and counsel. this is very rewarding to me. also as i lived my life i was heavily engaged in it. i've done so many things i wanted to do do my bucket list is very short.as a result i don't lament about what i can't do but celebrate what i've done.

...Positive attitude, must move up or you will go down.

I put a strong emphasis on my healing because of...things to look forward to, work to do, people to help.

Attitude- eat right. Set goals

You either "get busy living or get busy doing".

I am self-care (Veteran) I do it all, I have to but doing for myself gives me a sort of high. I feel good after clearing, cutting grass, etc. I could never live some place where everything is done for me.

Keep in mind that the harder you work at having a better life the better your life will be.

Life is precious. Everyone has challenges and while paraplegia is visible there are many with tougher issues. There is joy in overcoming challenges. Everyone can do it when it's easy.

...I try to take a realistic view of my options and try to choose the one that address the challenge and makes me happy. This particular philosophy has worked well for me before and after my SCI.

Attitude is key. Having a positive outlook on life helped me accept my abilities and their differences.

The restoring medicine in any temporary defeat is to face it. Zero in on the things I have instead of the things

...I have accepted my situation (positively) through somewhat fatalistic/naturalistic language...go with the flow....it is what it is...

I have a good attitude toward life and people who I know- I hardly ever complain- even though I am hurting I still don't complain. I enjoy most every aspect of my life to the fullest.

What I have learned from the situations that I have faced since being a T5 complete is follow the doctors instructions, and be completely upfront with them on all of your health conditions. And most of all pay attention to what your body is telling you. Because in the surgeries in which I have needed, the doctors always tell me that they appreciate me following their orders because it makes their jobs so much easier. Because I do care about my well-being.

Everyone has always told me I've had a positive attitude.

By focusing on others, it makes what happened to me seem less important.

Usually I try to be optimistic about my daily life with the help of my wife who takes care of me

Control only what you do control (yourself); influence what you can and the rest will settle.

Being able to address obstacles with a sense of humility, and having fun with the chair.

Drop back to remind myself what is most important. I think it's "being a good person". With that in mind, I think of what to do next with the challenge.

Each day is a blessing--the good, bad and challenging we may face. Tomorrow is new day, a new page of life.

...my parents raised me and instilled that I can do anything.

Life goes on whether you win or lose. Learn to accept change and life is a lot better to deal with.

I never cared much what people thought of me before the injury; I think this helped a lot after.

I always try to have a positive outlook. I try to fix things so as to have a positive outcome. I have faith in God. Love my life, sunshine, and green grass. I love my wife and family.

I approach life and problems associated with it one day at a time

Positive attitude goes a long ways.

I view the glass as being half full

I feel that you accept what life deals you...Learn to control future problems to the best of my ability.

I have a good attitude toward life...
One day at a time, eat right and sleep right
I have a positive outlook about life.
Positive attitude – [you] must move up or you will go down.
I like working on problems that make me think on how to get it working or be resolved. I also accept to the point when the problem is one that I or anyone else can't fixed.
If you don't do it, nobody else will.
Do what you enjoy.
While setbacks or problems related to my condition can be very frustrating, especially things like equipment breakdowns, I try not to get emotionally invested or bother by day-to-day hassles not related to my condition.
Always ask yourself: If not you, then who?
I look for the good in all things
Just continue to be yourself and keep working hard to get back on your feet.
...go backwards or forward. I'm not going backwards. Have to stay positive...
Live my life by two mantras: (1) It's not about where you been, but where you're going. (2) From Victor Frankel, "Man's Search for Meaning". "If you find mean(ing)/purpose in life, the "how will take care of itself ...teaching life lessons...my saving grace.
Purpose in life and sheer force of will can go a long way in overcoming major challenge.
It's up to me, go backwards or forward. I'm not going backwards, have to stay positive, but it is hard. But I'm alive and my 3 girls need me. I have a whole bucket of problems, so I just put a lid on it.
I just try to do the best I can. The quadriplegic thing wasn't my choice but I'm trying to make the best of it.
I believe I gained a better attitude about my disability from a few experiences during recovery. The moon info sessions during in-patient rehab were valuable. A positive therapy helped my attitude. I was in outpatient therapy for a few months, then at [another facility].
There is a solution to every problem. I am happy to be alive each day and share my smile or laugh with others. I am in gratitude.
...and I take one day at a time.

Positive outlook. Support[ive] family
What hinders us only makes us stronger.
Life= fall down + I
Just do the best that I can with what my ability is.
Work smarter, not harder. If you can't really use your body, use your mind.
Keeping a positive attitude and religion, you can't change the past, only the future
I think I've done great and though I don't have everything I need, I still am fortunate and live a very active life.
I am very analytical and don't let emotion drive my direction. I try to limit variables that may contribute to issues that arise. I only typically measure and change one variable at a time so I can see or understand the variables impact on my life.
Yes, when a person hits rock bottom in life; there is only one way to go. Never feel sorry for yourself, because all you have to do is open your eyes and note there are many people more deserving than yourself!
There is no returning to the major things I did...And I miss these things very much...But these things do not adequately replace the previous things I did.
Happy Some of the Time
Get up= fall down+I
Even though the deck is stacked against me I have to keep getting up and moving forward because other people still depend on me. Too bad jobs are not available for the handicapped. It would be nice to earn a living and support my family.
I always try to look on the bright side...
I am a positive person. ... but my injury have held me back...and that holds me back not only financially but emotionally.
I believe this trip is our only go-around in life...I've been tortured almost every day since my accident. I learned to turn pain into a positive. I live each day as full as I can...
Best I can in a wheelchair
I have my pity parties then I tell myself I'm the only one who has control of my life and can make it or break it, only me. I pull myself up by my bootstraps and move on. Everyone is caught up with their own lives and issues so with or without them I have to march on otherwise what's the point!

Bullheadedly independent
Be a kid, think how I'm going to get it done
...after my injury I have really felt as though my life has stopped.
I have been known for my ability to see the good in any situation. 'You always have a smile on your face' is not an uncommon statement to hear from others. However, this experience has been the most taxing to date in my life. I sometimes I feel I have 'met my match' as it were or even 'got the challenge I asked for'. So far I seem to be managing, but just barely.
I have done well in the past...I'm not at a high point...but I'll keep swinging...
I don't like to sit around worrying, I look for ways or ideas to try to make myself feel better. I like to walk and exercise when I'm able to. I try not to dwell on negative things. I try to talk to people with the same symptoms I have to get some ideas on what I can do to make things better.
I try hard to remain optimistic in the face of a challenge.
Happy Infrequently or Never
I look at every day as an opportunity to be the best person I can for myself and, more importantly for the people around me.
I have worked through many issues over time. Sometimes it takes a lot both physical and mentally but I have managed. And I still have moments of 'why me' attitude.
When I broke my back and had surgery, I tried to be optimistic, but over the years of chronic pain, I have been worn down...
Confident life is better than death.
The drugs used to treat my SCI have completely ruined my life.
When you are asset everybody know you, when you become a liability nobody knows you. The longer you are a liability the worse it gets. Look at Michigan no-fault insurance. They trying to get off the hook and with all our money we paid into.

Category: Social Support and Social Relationships (N=49)

Happy All or Most of the Time

...I'm very fortunate to have a supportive family.

I put a strong emphasis on my healing because of my family...

...I do have many friends who help me as I live alone.

...Good support from friends that won't keep the chair from letting you do things.

...family.

...I am also blessed by a wonderful wife and family. I also appreciate my medical care and doctors.

Having a good wife and family is all important.

...I love my wife and family.

... I also benefited from being around other active disabled while biking, playing basketball, and various other activities.

I fear some sort of physical challenge in old age will make it too difficult for my family to deal with.

I have a lot of support from my family and friends...

Support[ive] family

... I have two children that have kept me motivated to not give up and live life as independently as possible.

...also, my family and support system is incredibly important to my ability to "bounce back".

I have my down days but thank God I am alive and have so many people that support me in anything I do.

In the 17 years since my accident I have never dealt with bouts of depression or anger because of my...family and friends.

...But I'm alive and my 3 girls need me.

Strong will to live because I am a very happy married man with a loving wife.

..My children and teaching life lessons are my saving grace.

Most of my resilience is due to...my strong support system.

...My husband was a rock, and the care I got through [the health system] was great.
My...kids and friends.
...my husband; my family...
... And I spend fairly regular time with my wife, who watches over and tries to maintain my mental status.
My spouse is very supportive as are my children...
Stay engaged and help others. In the long run it's about service to others....
...I am a very happy married man with a loving wife.
Usually I try to be optimistic about my daily life with the help of my wife who takes care of me
The 1st two years were pretty rough but after that I was introduce to wheelchair sports from a group of my peers. It was my time to make a choice...
The single most important factor in being happy, productive, healthy is the support of family and friends...
Only when I encounter people who are not disabled, I do have a problem setting them to engage on a more personal level. Is it ignorance?
My family and friends keep me 'up.'
I was wounded in Vietnam a very troubled time in our country and own lives, what helped me most after being wounded I was sent to [an Army Hospital]. It was the doctors, nurses, and the people there that helped me most. They helped me come back home because in general the American peoples at home in America hold us Vietnam Veterans, won what did we do to them!
The support from family and friends to encourage.
When you think about family and how this challenge will help you and the around you, you overcome.
Happy Some of the Time
...I have to keep getting up and moving forward because other people still depend on me.
Good family and friends support are a huge help.
Having supportive family/friends, not having to do it alone, having someone there to encourage you to keep going...
Need help with social skills again

My wife takes really good care of me
...I try to talk to people with the same symptoms I have to get some ideas of what I can do to make things better.
Some days I feel more optimistic than others. I wouldn't say I'm a depressed person, but I can definitely get down on myself. I feel like my disability has made me not as social. I feel like I wish I could have what my friends have: a boyfriend/husband, kids and house, and just a happy little family. I'm successful on the academic and career front, but not the social front.
When I got hurt my wife was 7 1/2 months pregnant, then a year after my accident our house burnt to the ground, 9 years later my wife had an affair and subsequent divorce. I had a wonderful life and marriage (I thought) till then. The divorce by far has been the roughest thing to overcome and if it were not for my 2 daughters I would be in a bad place. I think I live my life by example for my girls
My wife's support helps. The love of my family helps.
I always try to look on the bright side, but if I can't, I have my family to support me.
The support my family and friends, would have no "drive to live and little future. They make me strive to be better and to go on a little further along life with a sure step.
Happy Infrequently or Never
...I look at every day as another opportunity to be the best person I can for myself and, more importantly, for the people around me.
Support and care from family.
Would like to help others, sick, elderly, etc. but unable

Category: Religion and Spirituality (N=36)

Happy All or Most of the Time

I put a strong emphasis on my healing because of my family and faith, things to look forward to, work to do, people to help.

Meditation and self-healing with Reiki.

A believer in a higher power.

Every day is a blessing...

God give me the "strength"

Only by the grace of God go I.

God helps me through prayer by His people and by myself. He guides me by His word also (i.e. the bible).

...I have faith in God.

I believe in a God that knows my trial and helps me through each step. I believe that if I depend on his strength that I can succeed no matter what level of function I have or don't have.

I believe my faith or Jesus Christ as my savior and His leading in my life gives me the strength to live my life.

My faith is my number one. I am truly blessed with support and God.

I have my down days but thank God I am alive and have so many people that support me in anything I do.

It all comes [down to] God. Always keep your faith.

... I get up each day, try to remember to thank God for all my blessing.

Most of my resilience is due to my faith...

My faith helped me tremendously

My faith in God, our Creator, helps me through my challenging moments.

My faith in God really blossomed with my SCI. I know I am right where He wants me to be. If my life were to be different He is the only one that could change it. He has also blessed me with a great sense of humor. Believe me with this lifestyle there really is humor. Hey, it's better than crying!

Self-worth is not from my abilities, my friends, or lack thereof - I am crucified with Christ therefore I will live. Everything in this life will eventually fade for everyone - so cling to what is eternal and everything seems to fall into place.

....I count my blessings daily...
The Lord Jesus Christ is my strength, and in Him I put my trust.
The promises for our future that are in the Bible help me to be positive and excited for my future. (Psalm 37:29; Revelation 21:4)
Keeping a positive attitude and religion, you can't change the past, only the future
In the 17 years since my accident I have never dealt with bouts of depression or anger because of my faith, family and friends. I have never been fazed by the adversity I face and I take pleasure in defying the odds.
My faith
'Religion'
Stay engaged and help others. In the long run its about service to others and we must put God back into our principles. Without a moral compass we have no direction then anything goes and that's wrong.
Each day is a blessing- the good, bad and challenging we may face. Tomorrow is a new day; new page of life.
I was paralyzed from the neck down for 2.5 months. After I got up out of my wheelchair, I never wanted to sit in a wheelchair again! To this day I still refuse to sit in one! I credit my family, and my faith in god to all my recovery. I was 19 when I was injured. Fresh out of the Marine Corps. Marines never give up. I never did, nor will I ever. God is awesome!
Happy Some of the Time
Amazing Grace.
Attempting to get through this ordeal with God's Grace.
You have your good days and your bad days but above all blessed to be where I am by God grace and mercy
I sometimes believe it is a test from a higher power (or punishment for wrongful acts.)
I am a born-again Christian. Even after death, I have hope.
In spite of my physical predicament I do have many blessings to count and I often count them to keep things in perspective. Also, the older I get the less time I have to be here in this world. Each day I live is one less day I have to serve in this prison sentence that is paralysis.
Faith and trust in God

Category: Physical (N=28)

Happy All or Most of the Time

Have faced about 3.5 years of fighting severe pressure ulcers and have been subject to a lot of bed rest.

Have medical challenges unrelated to SCI which impacts quality of life.

What I have learned from the situations that I have faced since being a t5 complete is follow the doctors' instructions, and be completely upfront with them on all of your health conditions. And most of all pay attention to what your body is telling you. Because in the surgeries in which I have needed, the doctors always tell me that they appreciate me following their orders because it makes their jobs so much easier. Because I do care about my well-being.

In the last 10 years I had a heart attack; 6 weeks later broke my neck. My daughter was diagnosed with leukemia. U of M saved her life, and lost my mom two months ago. But I get up each day, try to remember to thank God for all my blessings!

I have balance issues, given time I can pick myself up.

Sometimes when things are in my favor like working on my project car, it's difficult getting up and down more than ever before. And bending for something you drop or can't pick up.

VA need to send my medications on time! I go several and a couple of times over 2 wk without getting them. It causes me to spasm uncontrollably. 3 times out of bed and out of my wheelchair when getting in and out! Causes bad withdrawals too. Your going to kill people this way! Or get a lawsuit!

The chronic pain makes it hard to bounce back. The pain drugs have had terrible side effects and have not worked.

When I fell in Florida, I was paralyzed. When they opened up my neck, my spine started pulsing...

Happy Some of the Time

...my largest challenge is my stamina. I have not been able to increase it by any substantial amount.

...I've been tortured almost every day since my accident. I learned to turn pain into positive.

...It's hard to live with chronic pain; it takes a toll on me physically and mentally.

Just chronic debilitating pain

For about 90 days I have been practicing yoga...I cannot express enough how it has helped me regain some of my flexibility, balance, and overall happiness.

When I broke my neck, I was told I wouldn't walk again for 6 months to two years and I am able to walk after 6 months.

When it comes to my health I am very in charge of it. As soon as I have a problem I get it checked out.

I have had 12 separate surgeries in 15 years. It's always been two steps forward and five steps back

I have persistent pain at the level of my injury (T4). If I could manage that my outlook would be better.

Since my fall 3.5 years ago, most all feelings have come back and just wish I could get help to gain strength back, and lose weight I have gained but need help so I can walk again. I am sure someone could help with therapy.

Life has not been easy for me since after the accident. It has been pains all over my body and three surgeries on the two shoulders and neck. I really need employment to assist in family expenses and my personal pocket money too.

...since my neck incident I have been discovered to have liver cancer.

Happy Infrequently or Never

When I broke my back and had surgery, I tried to be optimistic, but over the years of chronic pain, I have been worn down...

Nerve pain drives me crazy 70% of the time.

Due to a severe ulcer that I am going to Ann Arbor VA this month for surgery that was caused by a bad shower chair that took 1 year to replace I hope to become more active and get a life again. Right now I spend 20 hrs a day in bed.

I still would like to walk again so that would be a challenge that I would be looking forward to.

I have tried to be optimistic but over the years of chronic pain I have been worn down.

...the antidepressant used to control my nerve pain has caused severe depression... that I cannot escape from

There is "no such thing" as "bouncing back" from a SCI that leaves you in chronic constant pain for 10 years.

Category: Mood (N=19)

Happy All or Most of the Time

I cried every day for a few months....

I am happy to be alive each day and...

At this point, I'm happy for the experiences and memories but ready to wrap things up - not suicide, just content for what has been-

...I do get frustrated when I can't do something but...

I fear some sort of physical challenge in old age will make it too difficult for my family to deal with.

I experienced PTS disorder. It comes and goes. Have difficulty in moving forward- no motivation- no drive. Fear and anxiety. Drs. don't necessarily care to treat me for this. They expect me to just get over it!

In the 17 years since my accident I have never dealt with bouts of depression or anger...I take pleasure in defying the odds...

Happy Some of the Time

Every time I've found myself at my lowest point, feeling like I can no longer deal with paralysis, I always manage to see someone much worse off than I am. In spite of my physical predicament I do have many blessings to count and I often count them to keep things in perspective. Also, the older I get the less time I have to be here in this world. Each day I live is one less day I have to serve in this prison sentence that is paralysis.

...practicing yoga...I cannot express enough how it has helped me regain....overall happiness.

I get frustrated when I can't do things I used to do before my spinal cord injury. My moods are up and down constantly.

Some days I feel more optimistic than others. I wouldn't say I'm a depressed person, but I can definitely get down on myself. I feel like my disability has made me not as social. I feel like I wish I could have what my friends have: a boyfriend/husband, kids and house, and just a happy little family. I'm successful on the academic and career front, but not the social front.

...I'm not at a high point, but...

... I've recently quit smoking because I am not happy with how little I can contribute to the world around me however I'm not finished living and there's so much I still want to do in life I just feel stuck :(

I have my pity parties...

Happy Infrequently or Never

My ability to bounce back has been affected by time and attempts to deal with a medical system that cares less and less for my welfare. I am in desperate search for a doctor supportive of assisted death. I've considered starting a crowd sourcing project for the purpose, and have no doubt it would be funded overnight- in the same world where I can't get a ride to the doctor or grocery store.

The drugs used to treat my SCI have completely ruined my life. The anti-depressant used to control my nerve pain has caused severe depression that I never had before and I cannot escape from.

I can't seem to overcome the frustration of not being able to do what I once could, anger is an issue. What I most liked to do I can't do any longer. I should be happy with what I have but I'm not.

Too depressed

Look at Michigan no-fault insurance. They trying to get off the hook and with all our money we paid into. They have plenty of money, but will not open the MCCA books. By the time they have to, the books will be fake

Category: Comparisons (N=18)

Happy All or Most of the Time

...someone else always has it worse than you.

I think I 'bounced back' faster than most after my injury. I cried every day for a few months, then I met at 'quad' who was physically much worse off than me, but living his life just fine with a good job, still had fast cars, women attracted to him. It was at that point I realized there was no reason I could not do the same things and more.

Everyone has problems, many are worse than me...

I find there are many more people worse off than myself.

I always take into consideration that there are always people worse off than me.

I know there are people worse off than I. So whenever I want to complain about things I want to do and can't I try to remember that.

I realize that there is someone always worse off than me.

More people than myself (are) worse physically than me.

The 1st two years were pretty rough but after that I was introduced to wheelchair sports from a group of my peers. Once I saw how they were dealing with SCI etc... it was my time to make a choice. Sleep, drink, and drug my life away. -Or- move on life and be thankful for/with what I have. I count my blessings daily :)

When I fell in Fla. I was paralyzed, when they opened up my neck, my spine started pulsing. I could have been paralyzed for life. Things can always be worse.

Realizing that it's not the end of the world and could always be worse.

Every time I've found myself at my lowest point, feeling like I can no longer deal with paralysis, I always manage to see someone much worse off than I am. In spite of my physical predicament I do have many blessings to count and I often count them to keep things in perspective. Also, the older I get the less time I have to be here in this world. Each day I live is one less day I have to serve in this prison sentence that is paralysis.

Happy Some of the time

I feel like I wish I could have what my friends have: a boyfriend/husband, kids and house, and just a happy little family. I'm successful on the academic and career front, but not the social front.

You learn to accept your condition knowing that it could be worse.

Knowing things could always be worse.

We all have a cross to bear, others have it better, many, have it much worse.

I know things could be worse. My main problem is having enough money to take care of my wife and monthly bills every month since they have cut my check down so low. It is hard for us.

You learn to accept your new condition, knowing it could be worse.

Category: Resources (N=10)

Happy All or most of the time

It is very hard when the govt restricts your monthly income so any set back is very devastating.

I would like my vehicle fixed. I need \$150 for a new electric fuel pump. Another \$80 for used tires. Has lift and driving controls. I feel trapped at home.

Happy Some of the time

I know things could be worse. My main problem is having enough money to take care of my wife and monthly bills every month since they have cut my check down so low. It is hard for us.

Felt like I was bouncing back when I had regular PT. Insurance is no longer paying.

Even though the deck is stacked against me I have to keep getting up and moving forward because other people still depend on me. Too bad jobs are not available for the handicapped. It would be nice to earn a living and support my family.

Since my fall 3.5 years ago, most all feelings have come back and just wish I could get help to gain strength back, and lose weight I have gained but need help so I can walk again. I am sure someone could help with therapy.

Life has not been easy for me since after the accident. It has been pains all over my body and three surgeries on the two shoulders and neck. I really need employment to assist in family expenses and my personal pocket money too.

If insurance would have covered more therapy, I think I would have walked again.

Happy Infrequently or never

Lack of transportation, employment

... I've considered starting a crowd sourcing project for the purpose, and have no doubt it would be funded overnight- in the same world where I can't get a ride to the doctor or grocery store.