

- Tim: I've always been a very active person.
- Praful: It's my duty to help others, if I can.
- Anne: I reckon that you should have a go at pretty much anything – and I do.
- Tom: You know, lying in bed staring at the ceiling for 3 months gives you a little bit of time to think about these things and think where you want to be and how you're going to let this thing affect you.
- OT: Anyone at any time in their life could sustain a spinal cord injury.
- Tom: I had my accident playing rugby.
- Anne: It was a road traffic accident.
- Tim: I suffered an accident at work.
- Praful: I fell down in the bathroom and broke my spinal cord C3 C4 complete.
- Tim: I damaged my spine at the level of T12 and I'm now paraplegic.
- OT: Having a spinal cord injury means a complete lifestyle change for most people.
- Anne: It just seems like the most horrendous thing in the world.
- Tim: It took me about 4 months to get through the process of rehabilitation, mainly driven by the fact that my wife was pregnant at the time I was injured.
- Tom: When something like this happens to you, the brakes get well and truly put on your life and everything changes.
- Anne: One of the most important things for people when they leave hospital is where they're going to live. Very often, people can't go back to their previous housing.
- Tim: The house that we're living in is fully adapted to be accessible for a wheelchair user.
- Praful: If I want to use the light, I just sort of click with my head, the light turns on. Click again, and it goes off.

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Supporting people with spinal injury

- Tom: First up, the thing that everyone wants to do when they get injured is become independent again.
- Praful: I wasn't aware that things like this are viable. It makes me independent. I'm really thankful to Aspire, for giving me the property.
- Tim: Through Aspire, I was able to move back to London to be closer to friends and family and closer to my home ground and, therefore, that made a big difference psychologically. It was a tremendous boost.
- Tom: The Aspire National Training Centre is attached to the spinal unit of the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital which is brilliant.
- OT: Most patients with spinal cord injuries find they'll need a wheelchair to get around.
- Tom: You've got your likes of your gym which is fully integrated, your pool, the café. The integration's a great thing. A filtered down sort of real world as it were. So you've got people that come in and are used to seeing people in wheelchairs.
- Anne: Aspire now has these adaptive technology centres popping up all over the place, helping people to get their lives back together and to be able to run their lives as they want to.
- Praful: The Smartnav is software; you put eyes on the top of the monitor and you get Pen Friend, which is word predictor, and you put a dot on your nose and basically you just use your nose as the mouse and it does everything for you. The support Aspire has given me inspired me to use the computer. It's, you know, unbelievable.
- Anne: One of the big problems that people have, especially at the beginning, is lack of money because of course they're not working and they've still got all their bills and outgoings to pay. And so the Human Needs Fund is absolutely brilliant because it helps people to buy equipment, like a wheelchair, so that they can get their lives back together and get on with their lives.
- Tom: Whenever people think about donating to anyone that's got a spinal injury, the first thing they should think is Aspire.
- Praful: I thought because of my injury, 'now life is finished for me' – but it's not.
- Tim: I don't think I've got any less of an expectation of my life in the future or my family life in the future because I'm in a wheelchair.

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Anne: You're still the same person.

Tim: I want to be me. I don't want to be defined by my injury.

Anne: You know, the fact you're in a chair, you're just sitting down, it doesn't make any difference to who you are.

Tom: If you really want to do something and achieve something then people will find a way to do it.

Praful: I'm looking forward for it.

Tim: I'm going to go on, you know, seeking out new challenges and finding new ways of getting around and new ways of getting on with my life.