



賢者の言葉

The words of a wise man

Sean Stephenson
【英語版】

Expected to die at birth, Sean Stephenson has faced an army of reasons to give up and countless opportunities to embrace pity. He suffered more than 200 bone fractures by age 18, reached a height of only 3 feet, and is permanently confined to a wheelchair. However, this man took a **STAND** for a quality of life that has inspired millions of people around the world, including Tony Robbins and President Clinton.

Among Sean's accomplishments:

- Has worked on Capitol Hill as Legislative Affairs Support Staff for Congressman William O. Lipinski AND in the White House as a Presidential Liaison for the Office of Cabinet Affairs.
- Started his own professional speaking company to travel the country and motivated individuals in schools, companies, hospitals, prisons, and federal agencies.
- Shared the speaking platform with Tony Robbins, Henry Winkler, and Mark Victor Hansen.
- Filmed a fitness video called, No Excuses! with Miss Fitness Universe and her husband, a former Mr. Olympia competitor.
- Testified in front of the United States Senate on two occasions.
- Was appointed to serve on the Board of Directors for National Association for Self-Esteem.
- Graduated from DePaul University with High Honors, right across the street from the very hospital where he was expected to die birth.
- Has appeared in dozens of media outlets including: Oprah, CNN, The Discovery Health Channel, WGN, and CBS News, and in The New York Times.
- Received Board Certification in Clinical Psychotherapy from the Association of Integrative Psychology, is a Certified Trainer of Neuro-Linguistic Programming, and currently receiving his Doctorate from American Pacific University. Sean operates a private practice out of the Oakbrook Terrace Tower in Chicago, IL.

Over the past decade, Sean has found that individuals are notorious for making excuses, “I would work harder, ‘BUT’ it won’t make a difference” Sean not only addresses the excuses but the “BUTS” that fuel the insecurities behind them. “I would love myself, BUT I am not pretty enough, wealthy enough, or popular enough, etc.” Sean has created a movement committed to educating students how to get off their ‘BUTS’ and **STAND** in life.

In Sean’s powerful presentation, “Time to Stand!” he outlines where “BUTS” come from, why they control us, and how to get off of them. Audiences are taken on a journey through human potential; using emotional stories from his life, Sean proves that we can all triumph with the power of **STANDING**.

I was 12 years old when I first heard this song come onto the television. You might have heard it before, especially my American friends, it goes something like this [hums Hail to the Chief]. You guys know what that is? You're really there, right? This isn't television. You guys know what that is? Hail to the Chief, right? When do they play Hail to the Chief? When the President of the United States comes onto the stage. Twelve years old, little boy watching the television, and everybody jumps to their feet as this song starts to play. I'm thinking, "I got to have that job. That's my job! I'm going to have that job when I grow up."

So I started doing my homework, so I started doing my research to see what has to happen in order to become President of the United States. Well, apparently you have to be 35 years old, so I had some time, so I started doing my research to see what you have to have. Well, you've got to understand politics, geography, human relations, you've got to understand how to pay people off...what? I didn't say that. You have to understand a lot of things in life to become President of the United States.

Finally, people would come up to me growing up, "What are you going to be when you grow up?" They're thinking teacher, doctor, lawyer...I said, "President of the United States." College came around. I had the opportunity to apply for work at the White House. I'm thinking, "That's the next step! If I'm going to live there I might as well check out the decorating." Right? So I applied to work at the White House, and I remember the day that I got the envelope.

Have you ever had a piece of mail come to you that could determine the rest of your life, or at least have a major impact on your life? Raise your hand if you've ever had a piece of mail that could mean a lot to you, right? For some reason, our brain believes that it can tell what's inside that letter through the nose. You know what I'm talking about, you hold the letter up and you're like, "Oh yeah, that's it, this is a winner." So I open it up.

When you get a letter from the White House it doesn't come on fancy stationery, it's just a plain white piece of paper, in the corner it says, "The White House" and it said, "Congratulations, Sean Stephenson. You've been selected to work alongside of the President of the United States. You will be reporting for duty in two months, we look forward to seeing you." One step closer to that childhood

dream of becoming President of the United States.

I remember the first day I entered into the White House, let me take you back to that moment. I'm going up and down the halls and I'm thinking to myself, "John F. Kennedy walked these halls. Abraham Lincoln walked these halls." And I looked around and I thought, "I'd probably move that painting a little bit over there, but whatever, that's fine." And there was something extra special that I loved about working at the White House.

What I loved about working at the White House is when the President would come home from being overseas, he didn't show up in an SUV or a minivan like you or I would coming home from work. No, he shows up in a gigantic helicopter. One of these helicopters is the size of a school bus, and it's dark green, and it's got a bright white stripe on the top and a big American flag on the back with two giant propellers, and you can hear this thing coming for miles.

So I thought, "You know what? I have a brilliant idea. I'm going to be in the back yard when the President comes home from work. What bad could happen?" Don't get ahead of me. So I looked at my schedule, I looked at the President's schedule, and I lined them up right at the right time when he was going to be coming home. I had my errand under my arm, I heard the helicopter, and I set out on my journey.

I got to the South Lawn. If you've ever been to the White House, the South Lawn is where the President lands his helicopter. I get to the doors and they're closed, and there's not that handicap accessible button. Raise your hand if you know what I'm talking about. You know, those buttons you use when you're carrying a lot of pizza and you think, "Oh, how convenient!" and you bump it with your butt, you know what I'm talking about? They're for me.

While I'm on the subject, seriously, handicapped parking - I don't know if you have it in Canada, but in America - folks, it's not short-term parking, seriously, and the handicapped stall, it's not your dressing room, okay? But I digress.

Anyway, so I get to the door -- you guys need to wake up, seriously - so I get to the door and the doors are closed. I'm thinking, "I've got to get through these doors! There's a 12-year-old boy inside of me and he's all giggly and he's saying he's got

to be outside.” I hear the helicopter coming, and I’m thinking, “Sean, you’re a smart dude, you can do this, you can use physics. Momentum, 45 pounds of love, we can bust through these doors.

So I’m looking at the doors closed, I’m thinking like an athlete like, “What? You’ve got nothing on me!” I start pumping myself up, I’m getting myself ready, and then I take off and BAM, these doors open up. I’m thinking I’m in the clear, right? No. There’s a thing called wind from the helicopter and it’s blowing me back into the White House. I’m like, “Oh, no!” and I’m fighting the wind and I’m pushing against this door and I’m finally outside and the door closes.

I was a little frazzled at this point, and I’m outside, and I’m thinking to myself, “Oh, that wasn’t that bad.” Have you ever been through something major and then you calm down and you look around at everybody and you’re like, “What? I’m fine.” That’s where I was. So all of a sudden the helicopter is landing, I think I’m in the clear, then out of the corner of my left eye I see something. One of the trees is moving in a different direction than all the others. I look a little closer and I see 12 men in all-black military fatigues coming down ropes, running at me with giant machine guns. Well, I’m glad you think that’s funny.

I’m looking down at my chest and I’m seeing little red laser dots. I’m thinking to myself, “That’s not good.”

I’m looking at these guards. Now they’re called emergency response teams, I’d already foiled the Secret Service, but the last resort to protect the President was the emergency response team. They are running at me, I’m thinking, “I’ve got to get to the helicopter. The President knows me, these guys don’t know me.” Now if you guys aren’t very perceptive, I can’t really run, but that day something just jumped inside of me. I looked at the helicopter, I looked at the guys, and I took off. I was like, “Aaah!” and I’m heading toward this helicopter.

Finally, the door swings open, the President steps out confidently, he looks me directly in the eyes, and I think to myself, you’d better have a vision. You’d better have a vision for what you want in your life. Everyone in here, you’ve faced closed doors, you’ve felt the pressure of people running you down, you’ve wondered secretly – as achievers that you are – “Can I do this? Can I really make this work? Is this for me?”

Think about the games that you play in your mind when what you want doesn't come easy. You start talking yourself out of it sometimes, like well, "Maybe the doors are closed because I'm not supposed to have it, maybe it's just not in the cards for me." People are chasing you down, you think, "Oh, maybe somebody else is supposed to have this, not me."

I've made it through my life because I have had clear visions for what I want. The reason why I have been buzzing with excitement to be with you ever since I was sitting in Richard Branson's living room and Greg turned to me and said, "Hey, I heard you want to meet the Dalai Lama, I'm kind of looking for a speaker, maybe we have a win/win here." Maybe! The reason why I'm excited and honored to be in your life for the brief moment in time that we have together is because we're not here for me, and we're not here for you, we're here for the planet. Do you feel that?

I've been a therapist for about eight years now because, as being a professional speaker, I got good at telling people what to do, and I realized I needed to be good at listening, that's what's really important. So I went back to school to become a therapist, and in studying the human mind I've learned what we really all want. In this program I'm going to share with you how to get what you really want. Would that be of value to you, yes or no? The biggest thing that needs to happen right now is we need to go from a group of audience members that are sitting so politely and clapping when necessary to a family. Do you guys want to be a family? Okay, turn to your neighbor and say, "I don't want to be here." I'm just kidding, that's what you would say to your family.

Here's what we're going to do, I need to bring you guys together and I've learned, in the 13 years of being a presenter, that there's two ways that I can interact with you. I can communicate, and communication is an exchange of information - you might want to write this part down - communication is an exchange of information, it will always leave you feeling empty. Our cell phones can communicate, laptops, fax machines, Twitters, Facebooks, Myspace, LinkedIn, we've got lots of ways we can exchange information.

Raise your hand if you've ever been to a party with a lot of people and felt all alone. Raise your hand, come on. Sure. It is not exchanging information with a group of people that makes us feel alive, it is this next element that I'm going to share with

you, and that is connection. So what is connection? It's not an exchange of information, it's an exchange of humanity. It is an exchange of you and I, while we don't look alike, we have so much more in common than we can ever know.

Connection occurs the moment we feel that someone cares about us. Think right now of one teacher, guardian, parent, or mentor that helped you, in your childhood, become the leader that you are today. Close your eyes, picture that person, when you have that picture in your mind raise your hand so I know that you have it. Okay, keep raising. Alright, put your hands down, open your eyes. I'm guessing that that person is not somebody who was maybe the best presenter of data to you, it wasn't the professor that had the best syllabi - no offense to the university people that might still be around - it was the person you felt cared about you. Raise your hand if you agree with that. It's the person you feel cares about you, and I care about you. I don't need a reason to care about you, I don't need a reason or your permission to love you.

When I became a therapist, I took an oath on a spiritual level as well that I was going to love every human being equally. That's intense, because there's a lot of annoying people on this planet. They're not you, right? But I chose to love every human being equally. Why? Because how good of a therapist would I be if an individual came into my room, sat down and said, "I'm a child molester, I need your help." And I looked at them and said, "You gross, wrong, bad...get out of my face." How about a person who is abusing their spouse? Do I say, "You gross, bad, you're evil, get out of my office." How much impact would I have? Where would the rehabilitation be? How about working with prisoners? You're wrong, you're bad, you shouldn't have done that and you will pay the rest of your life, I'm not going to help you? Is there any correction there? No. I have to love every single one of you equally. I don't have to love your behaviors, though.

I want to make this room come together as a group. I'm going to need a volunteer, preferably a single woman. I don't know why I said that. Abbey, you want to come on up here? Let's bring up Abbey again. Here, give her a round of applause. A bigger round of applause, this woman has courage! No idea what she's getting into. I've never seen this woman ever before in my life, and that is a complete lie because I spent the day with her. Abbey, have you ever hugged someone?

Abbey: Yes.

Sean Stephenson: Raise your hand if you've ever hugged someone. Put your hands down. You've probably been doing it all wrong, Abbey, and so have they. But that's okay, I'm going to teach you, you guys are going to learn something. You guys ready to learn something? Awesome, here we go. So Abbey, the blood in your body, it doesn't just flow one direction, it flows several directions. So if you can come down to my level, what we're going to do is we're going to hug left to left, and then right to right. Let's do that right now. Left to left, everybody say aaw. Now right to right, everybody say aaw. Everybody stand up and - that is what we call a balanced hug - give a balanced hug to the person on your left and right and then sit back down. Thank you, Abbey.

Abbey: Thank you.

Sean Stephenson: You bet, my pleasure. Go ahead and sit back down. Okay, I got to break you some bad news. Some of you look like you haven't been touched in a while. I'm not going to be presenting on that issue, sorry guys. Truthfully though, what happens, I can see it in your faces now, welcome. Welcome home.

I was at a coffee house not too long ago, this little kid was walking up to all the people in line saying, "Can I have a hug?" Complete strangers, and I thought, "What would humanity be like if we had that kind of courage? If we all took the pledge that I've taken to love everyone equally? I hope that's what we get to. We have to create a vision in this time I spend with you for the planet. I'm going to share with you my vision. You need a vision for not just your life, like, "Well, I want to make this amount of money, I want to have this happen with my kids, and I want to create this with my business." Those are your mortal desires.

I'm talking about something bigger. What dent are you going to leave on the human race? What is going to be different by the time you die from now for this planet? You realize you have that power? It's so easy to look up and see people on this type of stage or turn on the television and think, "Well that's THOSE people, they change the world. What can I do?" There's no difference between you and I, I'll prove it to you right now. We all share two things in common.

Let's do an activity, you guys ready for an activity? Okay, raise your hand if you've ever been happy. You don't have to be happy right now. Put your hands down.

Raise your hand if you've ever been sad. Okay, put your hands down. Raise your hands if you think you're sexy. Why did I catch some of you looking around for approval? Seriously, it was like, "Am I sexy? Should I raise my hand?"

We all share two things in common. The first is we all have emotions. Repeat after me, "We all have emotions." We do. Barring neurological dysfunction where they may still be there, just out of sight, we all have emotions. The reason why I feel so connected to you, the reason why I can love you and not have a reason, is because I've wept over graves just like you have, and I've been sick to my stomach thinking, "Does this person love me or not?" and I've been afraid, "Am I going to make the bills this month?" and I've wondered, "Is this ailment going to heal up?" and I've worried, "Does this person care about me?" I've been sad, scared, lonely, felt rejected, been in love...you and I have that together. Yet I am not on this stage, nor any stage for the past 13 years to tell you I know what you're going through. I don't have a clue what you're going through, I didn't grow up with your parents, I didn't live in your hometown more than likely, I didn't have your specific education, nor do I live in your body. I am not an expert on you, I am an expert on only one thing, and that's how to be me, and I do it well. I love being me. Thank you. I love being me because I work hard at this; I work hard at making this look easy. My condition is not easy, and I'll explain more about that in a minute.

So we all share two things in common, the first one is we all have emotions. Repeat after me again, "We all have emotions." Yes we do. When we remember that and we interact with people, we can start waking up to the fact that the people next to us are not a figment of our imagination, they're really there. Poke your neighbor and say, "You're really here." They are! Some of them are annoyed with this activity, they don't like that. Get over it.

We're all here, we're in this together, and we need a vision for the planet. If you get one thing out of my talk today, it's that you better set into motion that vision. You better become very clear what you want to have happen to this planet while you're still breathing, because the universe rewards those that makes their life about service to the planet. As I said, I'm a therapist so I work with a lot of people and I have a unique therapy practice because I only see a client once, for 15 hours in a row. We take potty breaks, okay? I know some of you are like, "What?" Fifteen hours in a row, and I oftentimes get a lot of individuals that have a lot of money, and yet they're burned out -- CEOs, business owners, sales individuals --

and in building up their wealth they've lost their health, or their well-being, or their sense of purpose. When you see the sense of purpose drift out of somebody, you see the beginning of a decay to the spirit.

All human beings share two things in common, the first is we all share emotions, and the second is a very dark force, it's a very negative force, it's the force that causes us to play small in life. This one force keeps us from going after our dreams, keeps us from having amazing love, keeps us from having abundant money, it's the size of our but, our excuses, "But I don't have the time, Sean, the energy, the resources, Sean." Any time you are saying, "But I don't have the..." you're stuck on your but excuse. The second "but" that we're dealing with that keeps us playing small, that keeps us from rocking this planet is our "but" fears. You might want to jot this down - our "but" fears, and that always starts with, "But what if..." But what if I fail? But what if I look bad? But what if I let others down?

Our last but, our biggest but, it is the but that I'm committed from eradicating from this planet, and that is "but" insecurities, and that always starts off with, "But I'm not..." But I'm not tall enough, Sean. But I'm not pretty enough, Sean. But I'm not smart enough, Sean. Believing that you weren't born whole and complete is the most destructive belief on the planet.

I'm going to let you in on a couple of secrets, I love my body. I don't just accept it, I don't just, "Ugh, this is what I've got to deal with." Hello! I love this! Why? Because I can do things you can't. I can go places, I can create an impact that other people have to spike their hair and fall into a tackle box with the number of piercings just to be remembered, I just roll into a room. That is a gift, that is something that gives me an advantage.

You are going to have to get off your but if you are going to rock this planet. Here's what happens with our butts, oh we are so proud of our butts! Our butts get so big and they're cushy and they get us out of stuff, "Oh Sean, I'd love to do that, but..." Aah. But I can't do that. I'd love to buy your book, I'd love to come to your seminar, I'd love to spend some time with you, Sean, to get to know you, but I'm fine the way I am. When you sit back on your but, you begin to atrophy.

The paradox to life is the longer you sit on your but, the weaker you become. The paradox is you can still see what you want. You can still see the partner you want to

be doing business with, the partner you want to be dating, you can still see the great families that exist out there that you'd like to have, you just don't have the strength to get up and go after what you want. I don't want that for you, I don't want that for any of you. There's only one way to get off our butts.

How do we get off our but in life, what do we have to do? We have to stand up, we have to take a stand. You have to take a stand in your life, you have to take a stand for your health, you have to take a stand for your prosperity, you have to take a stand for your relationships, and more specifically of why we are here, why Greg brought me to the stage, why you're hearing my voice in this moment, is you have to take a stand for the planet. You will tap into an energy that will trump any amount of caffeine when you finally wake up to the realization, the world needs you.

I need you to live out your vision because it all comes back to me, it all comes back to all of us. Every good thing I do, I will always get to see how far it goes out. I don't have to, you don't have to. You have to do it anyway, you have to take a stand for your life. In order to take a stand you're going to have to strengthen your standing muscles, and think of me as your fitness instructor for your soul today. You guys ready for that? Alright, so turn to your neighbor, give them a high-five and say, "I'm ready to stand!"

You need some standing lessons in order to stand. You are going to face challenges, you are going to face people that are going to knock you on your butts. Have you ever noticed that when you really take a stand in your health, your wealth, or your relationships and people show up and say, "Oh, you know I really wouldn't do that if I were you." You start getting the naysayers that come out of the woodwork, the people that say, "Oh Greg, to put together the Dalai Lama and Richard Branson, and I mean just getting Sean Stephenson, how are you going to pull that off?" Really. I'm quick guys, you got to keep moving. So it comes down to your vision, you've got to take a stand for your dreams, and in order to do that you're going to need your standing muscles.

The first standing lesson is you've got to connect, we talked about this, but you can't just connect with your personal fan club. You know who I'm talking about, you know who your fan club is. They're the people you could burn down your house and they're the first people on the scene rubbing your back saying, "Sweetie,

there's a learning lesson here. Fire...maybe we're just supposed to look at the flame tonight, sweetie." You know who I'm talking about, the fan club. They show up with T-shirts and say, "You're going to do this! Bankruptcy is cool!" Those people...that's not the ones you need to be connected with, they're already connected.

There's another group of individuals you need to be connecting to, and they're the individuals that challenge you most. Raise your hand if you have at least one person in your life that drives you nuts, be honest. Hopefully you're not sitting next to them, that would be awkward. You're kind of looking and you know the people that are like, "It's not you, trust me it's not you." You have to connect with the people that challenge you most. I love the movie...raise your hand if you saw the movie *Peaceful Warrior* by Dan Millman, great movie if you haven't seen it. In that movie they have a line that says, "The people that are the hardest to love are the ones that need it most."

I learned this when I was taking a child psychology course in college, and every week I would leave the university and I would go down to this elementary school to work with kids from about K-6. Raise your hand if you have children. Okay, put your hands down. Raise your hand if you were ever a child. Okay. I had to work with these kids between K-6 and it was so much fun.

One day I was in the gymnasium and I was half court at the basketball court and I had them in a little semi-circle around me, and I'm teaching them valuable lessons about loving yourself, about being good to your neighbor, and as I'm teaching these valuable lessons to these 50 children, out of nowhere something comes flying at my head and hits me right square on the temple. I looked down, it was a shoe. Now where I'm from, shoes don't fly. So I'm looking around the room for a shoeless child, finally I see him -- Shoeless Joe over here -- and he is laughing hysterically. Now just by a show of hands -- no legal ramifications against you -- who, by a show of hands, might be interested in throwing the shoe back at the child if they got hit? Just by a raise of hands. Good to see the peacemakers are here.

So I'm furious. There are 49 other children there, do you think these 49 other kids -- while this kid is laughing hysterically and I have a big lump growing on my head -- do you think they sat there quietly and thought, "Oh, Sean, that child has lost his way. I will sit here quietly as you discipline him appropriately." Do you

think they did that? No! They went crazy, they were like a pinball machine in a tornado. They were running around the room, and I lost all control for the rest of the day. Finally, the parents started showing up for their kids, one by one, until I was left with one extra child for an additional 45 minutes. Guess which child? I'm pretty sure it was Satan.

I'm thinking, "Out of all the kids they could leave me with, this child. Finally the back door swings open, this elderly lady comes waddling in and she says, "It's time to go." Little boy jumps to his feet, "See you later, Sean." He scurries out the back door, and I headed to my vehicle in the parking lot and I was frustrated, and disappointed. By a raise of hands, did you ever try to connect with somebody that didn't want your help?

Right before I got to my vehicle I heard a voice coming from behind me, "Sean, wait up." It was the principal. "Sean, how are the kids? How's your class project?" "Oh, they're all a bunch of angels except for this one child." "Sean, I know who you're talking about, you need to know about that child." "No, no I don't. I'm pretty sure I know all I need to know about this child. This kid's a pain, that's what I got to deal with." "Well Sean, what you don't realize, is just about a year ago that child's father killed that child's mother. Now the only living relative to take care of him is his grandmother, and she had to pick up two side jobs just to financially support the two of them. His babysitter, most of the time, at home is just the television; when he comes to school, for lunch he's usually only packed with a candy bar and a soda. I just thought you should know that." By a raise of hands, anyone want to throw the shoe back? No. Why? You got another piece to the puzzle; it made the picture come into vision, made the picture come clear.

Do you know how many pieces you are missing from your reality that if you had would make sense to your world? You think you know what other people are going through, you don't have a clue. Even the people you live with, the people you work with, the people you think you've known your entire life, there's a side to them that you have no clue because you are not in their skin. That's why when I see a behavior that's not appropriate, when I see a person that's acting out, I realize people are not their behavior. People are so much more. Behavior passes as hurt is released and hurt appears.

I love the quote, "The hurt hurt, and the healed heal." As long as you are hurt, you

are like a cactus, it's very hard to reach out to you. This child was hurting. I wanted nothing more, when I got that piece, to just chase after that car, go after him and his grandmother, scoop him up, pick him up, give him a hug and look him deep in the eyes and say, "I'm sorry for judging you, I am here right now, I will be your mentor, whatever you need. I am sorry I had anger toward you."

Who are you throwing the show at? Who are you judging in your world? We can talk all we want about world peace, it's not going to happen until you get peace. It's not going to happen until we, as a human race, find peace. That's what I'm on this planet for is to create world peace through inner peace of each individual.

I believe I was put on this planet to eradicate an epidemic. The epidemic is insecurity. When a person does not feel like they're enough, they have to lash out with bad behavior to get attention, and if you get caught up in the delusion of their behavior then you have more growing to do. I still fall into that trap at times. I tell this story hundreds of times a year so that I can remember I don't have all the pieces, and it's my job to find as many of them as I can.

So you need to connect with the people that drive you nuts, you need to reach out to those that are challenging you because those are the individuals that are creating the negative vibrations on this planet that are causing constrictions in the flow of the good. When you show love to those that may not be deserving of love in the moment because of their behavior, something magical transpires. When they lock up a Nelson Mandela, when they kill a Martin Luther King, when they take down leaders that want nothing more than peace, we can not even hate the captors and the killers, we have to find love for them too. That's hard because we have egos. We need to be bigger than our ego, and I'm working to do that every day.

The way that I can be bigger than my ego for you right now is to share with you our next standing lesson. Not only do you need to connect with others and those that challenge you, but you need to connect with somebody specifically in this room in order to transform this planet, and that person is sitting in your chair right now. You need to be good to yourself as well. I need your help in finishing this phrase, hopefully it's internationally-known, "If you can't say something nice...don't say anything at all." Yeah, we think that when we have to deal with and when we're talking to other people, what about when we're talking to ourselves?

As achievers, as healers, as entrepreneurs, as peacekeepers, it's so easy to make our world about others. That's great, it needs to be, and yet you're a part of the others. If you take care of everybody but yourself, you're not taking care of everybody, are you? There's a voice that resides inside your mind, and it's talking to you at all times. It's saying things like, "What voice? I don't have a voice. This little man, he's crazy - but attractive." It's that voice, and it's constantly talking to you. It's talking to you when you're awake, it's talking to you when you're talking, and it's talking to you when you sleep, in your dreams and in your nightmares.

It is this voice that you need not to be afraid of, it is this voice that you need to take control of because this voice is like a 5-7 year old child. If a 5-7 year old child is acting out or a 5-7 year old child wanted something, you wouldn't scold or ignore it, and yet that's how you're treating yourself most of the time. I know that even the individuals in the confines of this amazing room, people who have privilege to fly or drive to be here, have the time in their life, have clothes, have cars, have the great luxuries that the majority of this world will never get to experience, even you with all of your amenities are not completely at peace because you're beating yourself up, and that needs to stop. That needs to stop based on the words that you use when you're talking to yourself. You need to watch what you say to yourself, you need to start treating yourself like a best friend because the words you use are powerful, they're packages of emotions, and we all have emotions. If you keep taking on negative, toxic packages they will go into your neurology, they will go into your vital organs, they will go into your bone structure, and they will break you down.

Words are so powerful. I learned the power of language as I was speaking to this audience a few years ago, elementary kids - I've learned so much from kids - and there was this mom in the back of the auditorium, she had this little visitor pass on, and she's taking all these copious notes during the talk. Then after the program was over she slipped out the back door, I never got to meet her in person, but I'd like to invite you in on a phone call that we had together.

"Sean?" "Yeah, what's going on, how can I help you?" "Sean, you don't know me, but I was recently in your audience and I saw you up on stage, and I saw you were so confident and powerful and people looked up to you, yet you looked so..." Then she paused and I said, "You thought I was good-looking, didn't you? I know." She said, "No, I was thinking you looked a little different. You're so tiny, and in

that wheelchair – yet you move people, how do you do it?” I said, “I’m happy to tell you my secret, but why is it important to you?” Because remember this, there’s always a question behind the question. So why is this important to you, what valuable information is this going to bring to you?

She said, “Well my daughter was in the audience and she was only in the 3rd grade, and she comes home from school every day crying because her classmates make fun of her. They call her weird and they call her different.” I said, “Why’s that?” She said, “Well, my daughter was born with this rare condition where her fingers were grown together at birth and her hands are webbed like frog’s. They call her weird and different, and I want to know – is there anything I can say, is there anything I can do to help her feel good about herself?”

Before I could give it much thought something just blurted out of me. I said, “Can I talk to your daughter?” She said, “Oh, that would be great! Let me go get her.” She puts down the phone. Now my heart is racing out of my chest. Raise your hand if you’ve ever volunteered to move somebody out of their apartment or their home. It sounds like a good idea, it sounds benevolent, it sounds glorious. Then the day comes and you’re like, “Oh, sincerity. Oh, man.”

I was thinking, “What am I going to do? This girl is thousands of miles away! Am I going to tell her something over the phone to help her feel good about herself? Way to go, motivational man. What did you get yourself into?” Then all my fear, all my anxiety melted away when I heard an adorable little voice on the other end of the phone. “Hello?” I said, “Hey darling, how are you?” “I’m alright.” “Just alright? What’s going on?” “My hands, they look like frog’s and people call me weird and different.” I said, “I’m going to ask you a question, are you ready?” “Okay.” “When people meet you for the first time, do they remember you?” “Yeah, everybody remembers me.” I said, “Then you’re not weird, you’re not different, you’re memorable!” She said, “I am? I’m memorable?” I said, “That’s right, sweetheart.” She said, “Cool!”

She handed her phone to her mom. This little girl ran around her house screaming at the top of her lungs screaming, “I’m memorable! I’m memorable!” Her mother got on the phone and said, “What did you just do to my daughter?” I said, “I don’t know, but why don’t you call me back in a couple of weeks and tell me how she’s doing?” Click.

Several weeks passed before the phone rang again from that woman, and I had time to think about words and language. Language doesn't define our experience, it creates our experience. The words that you are using when you speak to yourself have an impact on you. My voice will fade out of your life, and all these presenters' voices will, that's the evaporation that naturally takes place. The voice that will stay with you until your last breath is yours. That's the one voice you need to be paying attention to.

You're so caught up as a human individual in wondering what other people think about you and what other people are saying about you. Listen closely – what other people think about you is none of your business, because it's not even about you. What other people think about you is about them, it's about what they would do if they were in your shoes, but they're not. The person you need to be speaking to with respect, the one you need to be looking up to as if it was your greatest mentor is you. The words you use, you string them together in phrases, go into the unconscious mind and leave an imprint, but what do most individuals do when that voice gets negative? They choose methods that I call numbing agents.

For some of you, numbing may just be turning on the television. You come home, you turn on the television, you just numb out. For some of you it might be mindless hours of surfing the internet going from clip to clip, page to page, no real purpose, no real release, just numbing. For some of you, your numbing agent might be food. Oh, I know the experience of going to your refrigerator, you open up your refrigerator and it's like, "Ooh, there you are!" You see your favorite food. Don't act like you don't know what I'm talking about. You go in and you get that food and you bring it out and you're like, "Oh, I'm going to take care of you tonight." And you bring it in and you eat it, and you take care of it, and you let it sit in your belly and it just numbs you and you don't have to think about your life or anything on the planet.

For some of you it may not be television, the internet, or food, it might be drugs or alcohol. You just think, "You know, wine is good for you, I can have 16 glasses before I go to bed, why not REALLY thin the blood?" Right? What happens when we numb ourselves with alcohol? We're just getting ourselves to the point where we don't have to hear the voice anymore.

There is an extreme measure of silencing the voice that I've seen, sadly, as I've travelled this planet, going into school systems and helping parents grieve. When that voice gets too harsh, sometimes we concoct an idea, "I got it! I'll shut you up for good. I'll take my own life." I don't want that for you, I don't want that for your children, I don't want that for this community or any of the communities that you represent, or this planet. Every life we lose to a suicide is not necessary. We need to step up and start connecting to people. When behavior starts becoming erratic, when people start retreating, when people start pulling back, we need to step up and take a stand. We can save lives. The words we use have an impact.

I got another phone call a few weeks later, except this time on the other end of the phone there's a woman on the other end of the line, and she's absolutely hysterical. "Sean, you will never believe this!" Now I get a lot of women going crazy on the other end of my phone, so I have a protocol. I go, "Shh, relax. Seanie is here." She said, "Sean, Sean, you will never believe this! My daughter is so confident now." I said, "What happened?" She said, "My daughter marched into school, she went up to all the bullies that were making fun of her and she said, 'Hey, I'm not weird, I'm not different, I'm memorable, and you're going to remember me for the rest of your life. Hahaha.'"

So I ask you the question - can just changing one word from "weird" to "memorable," can it really make that big of a difference? You better believe it, and that's just one word. Think about all the words that you're using to talk to yourself. Are you saying things like, "I'm important, I'm going to change this planet!"

Or, "What if no one likes my idea? What if it doesn't work?" Are you going up to the mirror and saying, "Hey, you sexy devil." Or are you saying, "Ugh, you again." Are you thinking to yourself, "I'm important." Or, "No one cares." What are you saying to yourself? That is so incredibly powerful because if we are going to do something massive for this planet, if we're going to come together at this venue and we're going to start exchanging contact information and talking to each other, if we're going to make friends and hug and talk and learn from the Dalai Lama and Stephen Covey and all of these amazing individuals that have made money, and donated money, and shaped this planet and rocked this world...but you go home hating yourself, questioning yourself, doubting your abilities, thinking you're not enough, all of this fell flat on you. That's not what's going to happen, though.

You are going to start treating yourself from this moment forward like a best friend would. Turn to your neighbor and say, “Hey, I like your best friend.” Do that now. I’ve had so many opportunities to beat myself up. I’ve said I make this look easy, my condition. Do I have your permission to be honest? Do I have your permission to be really honest with you right now? Being born in this body is amazing, yet there are challenges that you will never have to go through. Something so simple that you might overlook in your life that you have access to, is one of my biggest challenges.

This is as high as my arms go. Now you might think to yourself, “So what’s the big deal?” I can’t put on a baseball cap on my own, shampoo myself, and when I have an itch on the top of my head I have a glaring reminder that I am different than you. I need to have help getting dressed, being put on the bathroom, and when I travel in vehicles and airplanes I use a child’s car seat. I tell you this not for pity, for pity is a drug that I do not take and I recommend you stay away from as well, I tell you this to let you know that this body has been an amazing journey because I am humbled daily.

When you get a bunch of success and your body is working great and you’re running up and down stairs, you’re not thinking twice. No matter how big my persona becomes on this planet, no matter how much money I accumulate, this is the container I have, and that is a blessing. I haven’t always thought this. There were days that I did have anger, there were days that I did have pity. I would like to read a story about the day that my entire life shifted. It was the day I realized the purpose to my condition.

I was in 4th grade and it was Halloween morning right before school. My mom was in the kitchen packing my lunch, and I was on the living room floor with a big smile on my face. This was my favorite day of the year. Sure, I liked Christmas, my birthday and all the other holidays, but Halloween held a special place in my heart. To most kids, Halloween meant candy, parties, and wearing costumes. To me, Halloween was real magic, a disappearing act.

Every day of my life my entire life I had been stared at because of the way I looked. Strangers would point, scowl, and sometimes even laugh at my appearance. No matter what time I left my house or where I was, I couldn’t escape it. The one

thing I wanted so badly to do as a child was just put on a baseball cap, mix into a crowd of people and disappear. That, however, was never an option except on Halloween.

On that one day everyone got dressed up, everyone looked different, and I got to blend in. I absolutely loved it. On this Halloween morning when I was nine years old, Mom finished packing my lunch and I was taking my stuff out to the car. I was so excited, I just couldn't keep still. I was going as a mummy and already wearing my costume. I was out of my wheelchair on the floor, lying rolling around with excitement. Oh, I look so good, I can't wait to show this off to my friends. As I rolled around on the floor, impatient but filled with joy, I caught my left leg on the corner of the door. I bent it back and I snapped it at the femur. The world stood still. I knew what would happen next. There was always a delay between hearing the snap and feeling the pain.

In a fraction of a second it felt like my whole life came crumbling down. I'd broken my femur bone, the biggest bone in my body. My temperature began to rise and sweat began to burn into my eyes and my breathing became ragged. It felt as if someone had put a vise on the bone and began to twist tighter and tighter. As if the pain weren't enough, white-hot anger exploded in my mind, it coursed through my veins and it drove right into my heart. This was not fair! I was being punished for a crime I had never committed! So I let out a blood-curdling scream, "Why me?!?! What did I ever do to deserve this?"

My mom came running into the room and knelt down beside me, and she knew the drill. There was little she could do to help me. She couldn't race me to the hospital, there was nothing the doctors could do either. The medical experts had told her earlier on in my life that she was to keep me immobilized on the very spot where I'd broken for 4-6 weeks while I healed. Literally the same spot. It didn't matter if it was my bedroom, the basement or the living room floor, that's where I remained absolutely still until the bone healed.

My mom tried to calm me down. She ran her fingers through my sweaty hair, she said, "Shh. Sean, sweetie, we have to relax." Then, as she always did, Mom tried to play this little game to transport my mind as far away from the pain as possible. "Sean, what's your favorite part about our last vacation?" But that Halloween day I didn't want to play any games. I knew I was going to be stuck indoors on the one

day of the year that meant so much to me, I was furious, and my mom could see that in my eyes. She stopped playing, leaned back, and formulated a question, a question that has changed my life, the question that has moved me to be here today.

Looking deep into my eyes, she said, “Sean, is this going to be a gift or a burden in your life?” I’m thinking, “Is she crazy? A gift?” You and I have had gifts, they come on our birthdays, we open them up and we go, “Ooh!” How could this be a gift? Before I could say anything, something magical took place. My life calling, my purpose came to me, it found me in 4th grade. It was like a warm wind of wisdom surrounded my body and it all became clear. In that moment I realized I love my life, amidst the pain, and maybe the purpose to my condition was to teach the world how to do the same.

It wasn’t until many years later and thousands of dollars of education to become a scholar, as I’ve been called, a student in all actuality, that I realized we’re all going through pain. Our world is going through pain. My mom taught me another valuable lesson on that day, she said, “Pain is inevitable, suffering is optional.” Please write this down, “When you find the purpose to your pain, you will find the drive to go through it and out the other side.”

When you find the gift, the blessing to your pain, you will not alleviate the sensation, but you will give yourself permission to move through that pain. We need to do that as a planet, we need to find that pain is inevitable. Think about all the countries when we started this day that stood up and we heard, I mean we have all these different individuals collectively, if each and every one of you just went home and shared that pain is inevitable but suffering is optional, we do not need to feel pity, we do not need to feel sorry for ourselves, we need to take a stand, we need to support ourselves in a position of strength. Who is with me on that?

You are going to go through challenges in your life, you already have. You’re going to go through pain, and more pain is headed your way. It is not pain that we will be able to eliminate from this planet, it’s the suffering that we can. When we eliminate the suffering, we can open up to raising millions of dollars to get to that huge part of our percentage that President de Klerk talked about, that is living below that poverty level. We can reach out to those individuals that do not have the privilege to have what you have, that as individuals we need to find how to rock this planet

from that voice on the inside that says, “Pain is inevitable, suffering is optional.”

One of the last things that I want to share with you is that being a therapist, I’ve found that we also, as a human race, we all want another thing, the bonus third thing. We all want to feel good, don’t we? We all want to feel good, and I believe – and this is me personal belief – that we do everything to feel good, even the negative stuff, because on some level it has payoffs. You need to be an individual that chooses better choices to feeling good, because you have two ways to feel good. Write this down. You have gratification and you have fulfillment.

Gratification is fleeting, it’s instant, and it will always leave you with a craving, a hunger, a feeling of, “I can never have enough, I will never be enough. I need to get more of that just to feel good again.” It takes from you. Any time you feel that taking experience, that is gratification.

There is another level, it’s why Greg asked me to be here. When we were sitting around the coffee table in Richard Branson’s living room, a very modest, shabby coffee table, and we are talking about what needs to be shared at this event, Engage Today 2009, what has to happen? I said, “I need to help your audience recognize they need fulfillment and not gratification.”

Fulfillment comes any time we are doing something that has a slow burn, has a long-term, lasting benefit, not instant, not fleeting, not immediate. What’s more fulfilling, and be honest – a brownie or a book? A seminar or a glass of beer? Think about it, one is fleeting and one lasts. Choose things that last and burn slowly in your life. Fulfillment comes through only two ways that I’ve learned.

One way is we have to do things that grow ourselves, you’re here to be fulfilled right now by growing your mind, growing your perceptions of what’s possible for your life. The only other way to be fulfilled is to contribute, to give back, to find your purpose. I don’t even look at, really – and it drives the people in my company crazy – I don’t even look at the numbers anymore, I look at the results. I know I’m going to die, do you? I have good news, you are all going to die. You’re thinking to yourself, “Okay, I lost him there.” That’s good news because this experience is fleeting, our time is fleeting, and that’s why we need to search out fulfillment.

So there I am, White House South Lawn, the helicopter is landing, the President

steps out. He looks at me and he says, “Sean, good to see you, buddy.” He steps out of that helicopter, he walks toward me and says, “Sean, would you like me to bring you into the White House today?” I said, “That would be an honor, Mr. President.” The President of the United States starts wheeling me into the White House. This whole time, my superior was in the top window banging on the window, “Sean, no!” I said, “Mr. President, that’s my boss.” And he went, “Hey, buddy!” As the President was wheeling me in the doors, as if by magic, opened and I heard a song being played: [hums Hail to the Chief].

It has been my pleasure and honor taking a stand for you, make sure that you use these tools. Not just what I’m teaching you, but the other individuals on this stage, bring them into your life. Don’t just take notes, file them, and go back to your life, incorporate them into your life. I look forward to giving you, each and every one of you, balanced hugs. I love you, thank you very much.