

# Nothing is Impossible; Yes They Can; Inspirational Stories of Persons with Disabilities

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## Introduction

Disabilities is defined as an impairment associated with long standing effects that interferes with doing daily activities by an individual as well as his or her interactions with what and or who is around. Consequently, any condition that affects body and or mind in such a way is termed “disability”. In short, disability entails activity limitation and participation restriction [1].

Disabilities could be congenital or acquired according to their age of onset, single or multiple according to their number, and motor, sensory, cognitive/mental, or physical according to their nature. Unfortunately, the origin of disabilities is multifactorial due to many types of aberrant genetic makeup and or exposure to different types of environmental hazards that makes their complete irradiation extremely difficult if not impossible.

## Impact of Disabilities

Disabilities, if not managed properly and as early as possible will have remarkable effects on the life span and or health related quality of life of the sufferers. Persons with disabilities with late or inefficient intervention will have significant impairments socially, academically, and occupationally. The most deleterious among those is exposure to repeated rejections, losses, harassment, bullying, and abuse as well as feeling and or being treated as stigmatized [1].

## International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD)

The annual celebration of the IDPD has been designated by the United Nations General Assembly 1992 as declared in the resolution 47/3. The aims of the annual celebration of such occasion include promoting an understanding of disability issues and enhancing support for the dignity, rights, and wellbeing of persons with disabilities. Creating and promoting the awareness about the huge gains of their inclusion and integration in all aspects of life; political, social, economic, and cultural, is crucial [2].

Across the years, the celebration of the IDPD had different themes annually. Covid 19 pandemic showed beyond doubt the importance of making the needs of persons with disabilities a national and an international health priority especially at time of crises. The theme of the upcoming celebration this year; 2022, is “transformative solutions for inclusive development” insisting on creating and maintaining inclusive, accessible, and sustainable societies for all of us including persons with disabilities.

## Inspirational stories of persons with disabilities

Zaky (2016) stated that “making a difference is the only thing that it really matters in life. It gives a unique and a remarkable meaning of our existence”. She believes that many individuals live and pass away

without leaving a trace while only a few can make a real difference and special contribution to humanity. Such gifted persons are distinguished role models not only for their communities but also for the whole universe [3].

## Franklin D Roosevelt; the 32nd President of United States of America

The exceptional life story of Franklin Roosevelt is an example for all persons with disabilities to follow. Once they do believe that nothing is impossible, they can and will achieve a lot in all aspects of life; socially, academically, and occupationally.

F Roosevelt assumed the Presidency at the depth of the Great Depression hoping that the Americans regain faith in themselves. He promised them to carry out a prompt and vigorous actions to alleviate their sufferings from unemployment, losing homes, and otherwise. He said that “The only thing we have to fear is fear itself” in his inaugural speech. In his first 100 days in office, he proposed and congress supported a program to help recovery of business and agriculture, and relief of the unemployed as well as those in danger of losing farms and homes, and reform [4].

In spite of being physically disabled due to poliomyelitis that he developed in the summer of 1921 at the age of 39 years, he fought to regain the use of his lower limbs especially through swimming and have a distinguished political career. He was elected President of USA in November 1932 as the first of 4 terms. He has been considered as one of the 3 best USA presidents in history. He started the “good neighborhood” policy for USA instead of the unilateral American manifesto [4].

He tried to keep America out of the war in Europe with strengthening the threatened or attacked countries. When Pearl Harbor was attacked by the Japanese in 1941, Roosevelt directed USA manpower and resources for global war. As the war was about to end, F Roosevelt’ health deteriorated and died of a cerebral haemorrhage on April 1945 [4].

## Conclusion

In conclusion, persons with disabilities need to be respected, understood, and supported by medical professionals, policy makers, and others in their communities. Many of them are very talented and

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have special gifts in many domains that need to be discovered as early as possible, improved, and directed to get their utmost outcome to help such special individuals to enjoy their lives in inclusive, accessible, and sustainable societies.

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