

Ash's Advice: Article 5

By Ashley Moore

Thomas Jefferson once said, "I believe that every human mind feels pleasure in doing good to another," and I can't help but agree wholeheartedly. Philanthropy, the practice of giving money and time to make life better for other people, can do wonders for one's soul while bringing about essential innovations at the same time. Money donated to spinal cord injury research through philanthropy goes to innovative technologies and rehabilitation facilities used by paralyzed individuals to better their lives. Even more importantly, financial generosity for spinal cord injury research goes to surgical procedures created to prevent more individuals from living life with paralysis.

Raising money or awareness for paralysis research will contribute to innovative technology used by people with spinal cord injuries. Because of the donations given to The Miami Project and The Buoniconti Fund to Cure Paralysis by outstanding philanthropists every year, paralyzed individuals use assistive technology like computer-driven assisted-walking systems that put them back on their feet.

The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis performed the first Schwann cell transplant in 2013 on an individual with an acute spinal cord injury. They are now working hard to do the same thing with people who have chronic spinal cord injuries like me. Individuals with chronic spinal cord injuries require more rehabilitation before and after the transplant due to being inactive for a more extended period. To prepare for the new transplants, The Miami Project will be raising money to build a state-of-the-art rehabilitation facility for this purpose.

Philanthropy for spinal cord injury research will continue to assist in creating surgical procedures and techniques to help repair or reduce the severity of spinal cord injuries. Rewind for a second to the event that causes someone to sustain a spinal cord injury, which can be anything from a car accident to a diving incident that confines someone to a wheelchair for the rest of their life. Procedures like therapeutic hypothermia, a method used to cool a person's body temperature after a person suffers from a spinal cord injury, can, in some cases, significantly lessen the severity of the damage. Some people will even be able to walk after receiving this procedure. Research is only made possible by the hearts of philanthropists everywhere. The money The Miami Project receives directly goes towards research that prevents people from knowing how difficult it is to live one's day without using their arms and legs.

Money given to The Miami Project and The Buoniconti Fund gives our scientists the funds to create and test technology, rehabilitation, and surgical procedures used every day to improve the lives of those living with a spinal cord injury. Eighty-six cents of every dollar donated to The Miami Project goes directly to research. Even individuals who suffer from diseases like Parkinson's, Muscular Sclerosis, or Traumatic Brain Injury will benefit from this exciting research. This month, my advice for those living in wheelchairs and those walking around on two feet is to donate your time and money to spinal cord injury research. Even a small bit of philanthropy could change the lives of people like me.