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Who is your hero that inspires you to achieve?

Christopher Reeve once said, “A hero is an ordinary individual who finds strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles.”

A hero, at the most fundamental level, is a person who guides, inspires, and influences others. He is a person who changes himself, and then proceeds to change the world around him. Throughout my seventeen years, I have always looked up to one person who has changed my perception in life.

This man is a well-known author, motivational speaker, and Christian leader who has inspired literally every person who has heard him speak. I have not had the honour and the privilege of meeting him, but I admire him with every fibre of my being. He has inspired me in so many ways, and when you reach the end of this short essay, I hope you are inspired too.

He whom I write about is not a hero in the field of politics; he did not stop wars, nor did he bring about world peace movements that would be forever immortalised in History textbooks. However, he is a hero to more than 3 million people in over 24 countries on 5 continents, and he is a hero to me.

He was born on the 4th of December 1982, and diagnosed with tetra-amelia syndrome, a rare disorder characterized by the absence of all four limbs. As a young boy, he suffered with his sickness emotionally as well as physically. He was also perpetually bullied by his peers because of his disability, and this caused him to sink into depression. He even attempted suicide at the age of ten, but his faith in God stopped him from doing so in the end. He finally came to terms with his disability and started a non-profit organisation called Life Without Limbs.

There are so many things about him that I admire, which a 700-word limit cannot contain, but the most outstanding attribution of his that I have come to emulate is his unwavering strength. Sometimes we think that there is not much we can do when we live with a disability. I can attest to that as I am half-blind

and suffer from acute glaucoma, but this man has taught me that there is so much potential in every person, even in the midst of hardship.

There were times in my life when I hated my circumstances and the condition I was living in. But this hero of mine has taught me to always look at the people around me instead of at myself, because when you really take a moment to think, you realise that no matter how difficult your situation seems to be, there will always be people who are far worse off. And this is when you understand that the power of love triumphs over all obstacles. When you love yourself, you learn to love the people around you. And that is when the beauty of giving kicks in because all you want to do is spread acts of generosity and goodness.

This man has taught me that there is beauty in ugliness and strength in adversity. Most importantly, his selfless acts of reaching out to lonely and depressed people are what inspires me most. When we learn to love ourselves and the people around us, we understand that contribution is greater than consumption. Sometimes, it is not always about isolation, but more so about a community. As a sum, we truly are greater than our individual parts, and this man has shown me how this holds true with all the words he has said and the things he has done.

I am inspired without even meeting him in person, and I now live a happy life of hope and faith. With him as the example whom I will always emulate, I now believe that I can reach greater heights. You probably know of this man whom I write about, or at least have heard his name being uttered by the people around you. Even without arms, he has embraced more people than you and I ever will.

His name is Nick Vujicic.

And he is my hero.