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## The Introduction

### Purpose of this packet

This packet is being sent to you because you have a relationship with Todd. Todd is entering the next phase of his life and would like you to know ALL about it. His story has and continues to impact a wide range of audiences. The Todd Stabelfeldt Foundation (TSF) was created to share the message of building awareness, understanding, and changing lives through compassionate innovation, and community participation. Todd has been working multiple jobs to create and maintain his “independence” from government subsidies for over twelve years. He is a man with a vision and a message!

TSF’s goal is to have Todd as a full time employee, working solely on the mission of TSF. To achieve this goal, we ask you to consider donating on a monthly basis for the next twenty four months. We need your help to get him to them!

See just how his life has changed in the last year when reading his personal note. You might need a tissue or two...

Kindest Regards,  
TSF

### Contact Information

<b>Personal:</b>	<b>Foundation:</b>
Todd Stabelfeldt PO Box 353 Allyn, WA 98524	The Todd Stabelfeldt Foundation PO Box 363 Allyn, WA 98524
Todd@TheTSF.org 206-794-1524	Todd@TheTSF.org Info@TheTSF.org 206-794-1524

To see additional information on Todd Stabelfeldt:

[www.TheTSF.org](http://www.TheTSF.org)  
[www.linkedin.com/in/tsfoundation](http://www.linkedin.com/in/tsfoundation)  
[www.youtube.com/user/ToddStabelfeldt](http://www.youtube.com/user/ToddStabelfeldt)  
[www.Facebook.com/TheTSF](http://www.Facebook.com/TheTSF)  
[www.causes.com/TheTSF](http://www.causes.com/TheTSF)  
<http://twitter.com/TheTSF>



## Why Was TSF Created?

In Todd's research and due diligence over the last several years, Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Foundations seem focused mainly on finding a cure rather than focusing on solutions for daily life. Foundations are 80-90% cure, 10-20% now. TSF is 99% now and 1% cure. Is a cure coming? Yes, but we have to focus on the now. The existing data we find on SCI is outdated by at least 5-10 years and is lumped into the other types of SCI.

## TSF Vision

TSF is being designed to work with C1-C4 quadriplegics as a primary focus. This group of mainly men in their 30's are on ventilators, covered with a blanket, and most likely living in a home or institution. By finding these individuals thru rehab centers, medical vendors, and viral awareness, TSF will harness this very unique group of people to share a collective voice on medical needs, technology designs, specific data collection, and employment. While this group is building, TSF will create a second group of Occupational Therapists starting in the education space and following them into the field. By working with OTs, TSF will provide a service to assist in developing solutions. Working with both sides of the coin, TSF will change how the world receives quadriplegia. TSF will become a data/solution resource for all rehab centers, universities, hospitals, focus groups, major corporations, government agencies, and consumers. TSF will be the face and voice for all high level quadriplegics. TSF will continue to share stories of hope like Todd's. TSF plans to build a complete awareness package by sharing these stories of hope, determination, and action!

## The Big 5!

Below is a **high-level** summary of TSF main objectives. Detailed information can be shared upon request.

**Awareness** - Sharing stories of injured individuals to all audiences to educate and build community. Assist other foundations in the importance of now and developing solutions to daily life.

**Occupational Therapy** – Create curriculum, teach workshops, and assist OT professors/students in university programs specifically for occupational therapy. Partner with occupational therapists in the field to provide resources and technical support.

**Technology** – Develop and/or partner with organizations to create assistive technology that enables individuals to contribute to society and pursue a full life.

**Policy** - Actively pursue policy improvements at the federal and state level to remove the barriers that prevent individuals from returning to work.

**Sponsorship** - Provide support to sustain and enable independence to applicants who are ready to return to work post injury.



## TSF Primary Objectives for 2011-2012

Starting on January 1, 2011, Todd's will continue to work at Cortex Medical Management Systems Mondays through Wednesdays. On Thursdays and Fridays, he will focus on the items below for TSF:

- Develop, maintain, and assist TSF board in organization framework
- Update [www.TheTSF.org](http://www.TheTSF.org) to achieve:
  - Blogging, Twitter, and Facebook connections so viewers can go to one site
  - Update donation collection process to allow new/existing users the ability to create and update their account and financial support information.
- Develop and maintain TSF material in the following areas:
  - Promotions
  - Speaking engagements
  - Video presentations
  - Web sites
- Develop, maintain, and assist TSF in fundraising and self generating revenue engines
- Develop and maintain a list of clients who will hire Todd as a keynote speaker
- Continue to work with the University of Washington, Children's Hospital, and new partners to build/promote a TSF network for high level (C1-C4) quads and occupational therapists
- Update donors with latest and greatest news
  - Newsletters, blogs, "Tuesdays with T" pod casts, networking sites (Facebook), etc.
- Develop and maintain a fee for service business model allowing donations to be used for TSF consumers, NOT employees
- Continue to develop, "I won't back down" biographical documentary with Mark McKnight
- Work on writing and publishing "Todd's Story" biography

## The Education

### What is a Spinal Cord Injury?

**Spinal cord injury** (SCI) refers to an injury to the spinal cord. It can cause myelopathy or damage to nerve roots or myelinated fiber tracts that carry signals to and from the brain. Depending on its classification and severity, this type of traumatic injury could also damage the grey matter in the central part of the cord, causing segmental losses of interneurons and motorneurons.

The two major types which describe SCI are paraplegia (legs) and quadriplegia (arms and legs). The high level difference is simply the arms. The general word picture would be a manual wheelchair verses an electric wheelchair. This is a very broad statement, but for this purpose it fits. A user operating the manual chair would be a para and the user in the electric chair would be a quad.



## What is Quadriplegia?

**Quadriplegia**, also known as tetraplegia, is paralysis caused by illness or injury to a human that results in the partial or total loss of use of all of their limbs and torso. **Paraplegia** is similar but does not affect the arms. Quadriplegia is used as a broad term to describe **ALL** individuals who have compromised movement in **ALL** extremities.

Quadriplegia has several sub levels and categories. The two major types which describe quadriplegia are **high level** and **low level**. High level “Face Drivers” quads have **NO** movement in both arms and legs. Low level “partials” quads have **compromised** movement in both arms and legs. To better illustrate the magnitude of difference between high and low level quadriplegia, the next sections describe a word picture, so to speak.

I am a high level quad because I cannot feel or move anything below the shoulders. A dear friend of mine is a C5 quad, which is an injury just four centimeters below mine. He would be considered a **low level** quad.

Visualize the following:

- Feeds himself
- Drives his van
- Drives his electric wheelchair with hand controls
- Pays the waitress for our meal (I would give anything.....to do this again!)
- Holds and uses his iPhone and iPad on his own
- Texts his girlfriend (my care providers type what I say - say goodbye to privacy)

Another dear friend of mine is a C3, just four centimeters above mine. He would be considered a **high level** quad. Visualize the following:

- No feeling or movement from the neck down
- Temperature taken throughout the day to monitor body heat. When too high, place ice bags in the inner thighs
- Wheelchair operated by a mouth tube
- Uses a ventilator attached to a tube placed in the neck when sleeping
- Uses a “vacuum” to suction secretions from lungs
- A care provider sleeps in the same room to ensure living



## Quadriplegia Statistics

**\*\*Note:** The below numbers range wildly depending on the source. View statistics as a rough base and understand numbers do not specifically target high level quads. This is why we formed TSF!

- Over 12,000 new spinal cord injuries occur annually in the USA
- Out of the 12,000 new injuries, 2,400 are high level quads
- Total number of SCI in the USA is somewhere in the neighborhood of 275,000
- Majority of injuries are from motor vehicle accidents
- 79% of those who have a spinal cord injury are male
- Average age at which spinal cord injuries occur is 33-40 years
- Most frequent age of injury is 19
- Leading cause of the death is pneumonia and infection
- Average stay in rehabilitation unit: 44 days
- Average first year expenses for a quadriplegic \$417,000

## The Request for help directly from Todd

### Opportunity Summary

Chris Gerhardt, President of the TSF board said this, “You are a victim of your own success.” How true this statement is in my story! I personally cannot manage me, quadriplegia, care providers, insurance, DME suppliers, Cortex, and TSF. By taking a step of faith and cutting back at Cortex, I need help finding \$2,500 additional funding each month.

I forecast a window of twenty-four months before TSF can cover this financial gap. The gap is NOT static however if TSF grows faster or slower than I expect.

### The Priorities

Honestly, asking for assistance is extremely difficult for me. The thought of accepting donations in a climate where we all live paycheck to paycheck is a huge honor. Your support must go directly to the solution. In the last year I have made major financial changes to lower costs in ALL areas, some of which include:

- Moved from Bainbridge Island to Grapeview. Living with family has greatly reduced the major expenses such as rent, electric, etc. Pavement is now replaced with gravel.
- All new care providers were hired with a lower hourly rate due to a lower cost of living
- Constantly adjust care provider hours to better fit a streamlined budget
- Increased family support in most areas allowing for less payout to care providers
- I have not replaced my nine year old wheelchair due to not wanting a monthly “car” payment. My wheelchairs cost a little over \$37,000 and insurance will only cover up to \$5,000.
- A total rewrite of the priorities of my life. I am growing up!



## The Request

Please donate to The Todd Stabelfeldt Foundation on a monthly basis or a onetime donation. TSF will not suggest a dollar amount higher than \$10. We want you to decide what best fits your support style.

Support ideas include:

- Setting up a recurring monthly account in which you deposit \$10
- Financial support is not for everyone, please read the Needs List for additional support ideas

As I mentioned in the primary objectives above, the website is being retooled to accept online donations as well as record your contact information. We have included a contact form and a self addressed envelope in this packet. Our goal to have online financial support is slated for production in February, 2011. Additional details can be provided upon request.

## The Needs List

TSF needs your help! I know there is a ton more than listed below, share your ideas and let's start today.

- Sharing Todd's story:
  - Blogging, podcasts, etc.
  - Be in relationship with Todd to share his perspectives in our community
  - Emailing Oprah Winfrey, Ellen DeGeneres, Larry King, Jimmy Fallon, etc.
- Helping Todd directly through:
  - Time
  - Prayer
  - Care giving
    - Driving Todd to appointments
    - Finding quality people to care for Todd's health needs
  - Securing speaking engagements
  - Support TSF financially
- Monthly Fundraisers:
  - Games
  - Hosted Dinner
  - Concerts
  - Beach party or BBQ
  - Get to know Todd tonight
    - Preview the documentary
    - Teach kids about guns and give wheelchair rides
- Finding C1-C4 quadriplegics:
  - Driving Todd to meetings and assisting in documentation
  - Look for people in need
- TSF Website development:
  - Content
  - Online donations
  - Blogging infrastructure



## References

### Web

- <http://www.brainandspinalcord.org/spinal-cord-injury/statistics.htm>
- <http://www.sci-info-pages.com/facts.html>
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quadriplegic>
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spinal\\_cord\\_injury](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spinal_cord_injury)

## The Todd

### A Personal Letter

Friends-

Tiny puffs of air exiting between my lips spell out these words today. It is still mind blowing to me how after 25 years my story is boiled down to these lips. My physical expression is one of compromise and yet my verbal is an odd mixture of truth, pain, joy, and a mirror.

I sit in this daylight basement writing to you and requesting something I have never asked. My story is leading me down a path in which a request is born. Most of you know me, so you know I must first start at the beginning prior to sharing this decision on the next chapter(s) of the story. Please read with me...

A few months from turning 32 and now living with my brother Tom my life has completely flipped upside down. A five year old walks into my room and asks a question with hope of the answer being a YES. He uses a new tactic in where he gently rubs the top of my hand with his little fingers. Clayton asks, "Uncle Todd... Um, ah... can we play Fat Princess (a video game) when I get back from school?" Little does his tiny mind comprehend, I cannot feel my hand! Rubbing me gently with soft ninja fingers standing a little over three and half feet will not break thru my armor. This armor is years in the making and has been perfectly crafted to not accept touch from anyone. My response to his request is, "YES! Buddy I love you. Enjoy school and remember to rage against the machine." How did he do that? Was he really rubbing my hand? These questions flying around my head at a little over mach three. The thin slicing in my mind fully engaged as I observe this newest exchange. Data elements are being placed in their correct compartments for future queries. The dialog is recorded in full HD video and audio. This will become critical when I am alone in bed hurting like hell because my body spasms in pain which cannot be described other than groaning directly from the gut. Now I see Clayton's "tactic" is really love and invitation.

A seven year old holds my body in place while her mother pulls my designer jeans on. She then moves to the other side with excitement as it is time to pull up the other side. Asking in mid stride, "Mommy, am I doing this right?" The answer returned as quickly as requested, "Yes Izzy. You are doing such a great job helping Mommy." Hours later a salad is fed to me by this little nurse in training. Her heart still cannot be defined by me. I know no words in my current language to describe this human whom I call Baby Girl. She loves with no hesitation. Her approach is simple; she truly cares and will do whatever is wanted to resolve pain. To live with a



future angel is breathtaking and I feel honored to be fed by her. Looking at stains on the knee of my True Religion jeans has now become a reminder of how God delights us with His heavenly gifts.

This is just a crumb of the complete rewiring in my heart. My earthly foundation says work, and if this does not cut it, then work harder to achieve the results. This approach has worked well for me for the last 31 years.

I was employed full time in the anatomical pathology industry within eleven years of my paralysis. A week into being eighteen and working as a software developer was a gift from Cortex Medical Management Systems. They took a chance on something which they had no idea on the return. Many lessons from Steve (part owner and boss) on how to prepare, execute, and follow up as a professional have been instrumental in my life. He once knocked my annual review due to continued wet pants in the work environment. He single handedly taught me how to conduct myself and prepare my disability in such a way it did not interfere with my professionalism. Steve fed me lunch once. He explained it this way, "Chili looks really good. Your Mom is a great cook. This is the last time I feed you. You need to think of these types of issues and have alternative feeders." If Steve is oil, I am most definitely water. We pretty much disagree on everything, but I will forever be in complete gratitude on his approach to teaching me to get over my situation. Steve is an incredible man; I give him my most sincere thank you on how he raised me to be where I am today.

My quest to show you how sexy quadriplegia could be was my priority in life. Every decision was based on how independent I could become or how this could make me look the part. Purchasing everything I could find or invent. My life became a dynamic laboratory for clinicians and all to explore. At one point on Bainbridge Island, I lived by myself for almost a year. My connection to the world in case of emergencies was a faulty speaker phone. There were times I needed something in the middle of the night and the phone would not work. My mind would race for hours and typically land in a sort of last man on earth scenario. When the morning caregiver came, I was relieved! The flip side to the coin was I learned very quickly how to set up systems to achieve better results. One phone became two phones (separate lines for complete redundancy), two phones became three phones. This was my approach to everything. You must create redundancy in everything if you want to live well. My life took off using the skills from work plus my version of preparedness. It's all about the results...right?

Years on top of years of learning and creating solutions put me in a position to share. People started asking me to share my thoughts on technology, where it was heading, and how to make the best of it. This introduced me to a world which forever changed my direction. The amount of resources out there for high level quads (C1 – C4) is slim to none. The data I could find was data back to the mid 90s. This is where it all started to change for me. Something had to be done and I felt a pressing need to begin figuring out yet another solution. The problem was I needed to step way out and invite others to join me on the adventure. The problem with that was I had no idea what it all meant. My heart told me it was going to be painful, I just had no idea how invasive personally it would be in my story.

It is summer time and I am at my brother's house hanging out with his colleagues from work. My sister-in-law, Katie, comes to me and says we need to chat. She shares with me a very intimate conversation she had with her heavenly King. We sat down and she began to explain this idea where I come and live with the family. Inwardly, it seemed to be a bit far stretched. (Side bar – I currently have two perfectly trained 5 year old heroes fighting on the floor next to my wheelchair. The only differences between the two masked warriors are a Mohawk and a lisp. They are discussing how to kill a zombie the quickest. The answer is simple, cut the head off. Back to my story.... Kids wow!) My life is perfect on the island, why would I want to live back where it all started? The



property where my brother lives is next to my parents and grandparents. The lines all run together creating a huge homestead feel. All the memories here are of an eight year old Todd running and kicking butt. This very land stores all the demons of my past and reminds me constantly of what I lost. The driveways are painful to travel whether by van or chair. To literally travel this property means emotional and physical pain. Katie finishes and says, "It is on the table T. Maybe it is not now, but you know you have a place here."

Several months later I found myself moving into my parents place while waiting for my room at Tom's to be completed. I was blown away at how everything changed so fast, all new caregivers, all new routines, and all new depression. I swam daily in the motionless pit of despair. In my eyes, I failed to live independently on my own. Thirteen years down the tubes. How could I have worked harder to stay independent? What was this all for, Lord? Why can't quadriplegia be enough for you? Everyone would see what they always knew... Todd living at home with his family while they cared for his every need. The months dragged on and I finally moved in with Tom, Katie, and the kids. I am in executive management with a software company and I am living in a basement. Seriously what next? Everything was reduced to its atomic level. I could not provide on my own nor could I hide the fact I could not move or feel from the shoulders down. This prison called my body was all around me, constantly showing death row. My environment screamed how I could NOT sustain myself. Everywhere was a loud voice of failure. Talking with old friends in town or at my parent's church was horrible. All of me was ashamed at what the results showed. Every day was jeans and a UW hoodie. An almost complete disconnect from all old friends had occurred. This was a time in where I felt truly alone. I finally succumbed to my failure and died.

It is amazing how our heavenly Father allows us to pen the chapters of our story. What is even more fascinating is when we allow Him to author our story. As I continue to learn and let go of my man made solutions, he replaces them with better, more perfectly sound solutions. I know I am nowhere near being completely restored at this point, but it is time to start the next chapters of my story. The above pages outline a vision of mine. I would ask from you the following:

- Carefully read, reread, and ask yourself how you can assist in this solution
- Has my story at some point inspired you in such a way you changed your approach on living?
- Do you know a person in your story who would greatly benefit in hearing my story?
- Would you invest in me, so I can invest in individuals struggling with their pain and suffering?

## The Accident

Todd was born in 1979 to a great dad, mom, and sister. When Todd was four his father Bruce, died in a motorcycle accident when coming home from work. Four years later on Thursday, August 13<sup>th</sup> 1987, Todd then eight, found himself playing with some antique rifles owned by his deceased father. Todd was accidentally shot in the chin by his cousin, Michael. As a boy growing up with quadriplegia, Todd and family managed as best they could. Todd's mother, Gwen, did not allow him to dwell on his disability. Todd learned at a very young age to not let his disability stop his dreams. He attended public school, became a Natural Helper, and started attending college classes at sixteen. A week after turning eighteen, Todd got his first job as a software developer for a medical software company based in Seattle.



Todd has found ways to touch others in profound ways - he touches with his heart! Through his paintings, volunteering at hospitals, public/inspirational speeches, counseling newly injured quadriplegics, his wit, and embracing honesty, Todd has learned to use his heart through his words to impact the world. Friends, family, church members, neighbors, and often strangers feel drawn to Todd. He listens and gives incredible words of wisdom, love, kindness, and unconditional acceptance. He has also found interesting ways to touch and experience the world around him and embrace independence using technology. Through voice assisted components, computer devices that operate with puffs of air, specially configured headsets and more, Todd uses his technical training and disability to educate both patients and therapists. Todd is one who when you meet, you are forever changed.

## **Todd's Jobs**

Todd would say he is, "The working class quad" which means he works his day jobs with flex hours depending on his health, work/personal schedule, and quadriplegia. All three companies run in parallel to provide Todd his independence and employment at Cortex. All three need attention each day.

### **Cortex Medical Management Systems**

Todd started his professional career at Cortex in January, 14<sup>th</sup> 1997, one week after his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Todd started as a software developer working on the Anatomical Specimen tracking system referred to as The Gold Standard. Cortex quickly realized Todd's commitment to service in everything, and his quick response and willingness to go above and beyond. Todd transitioned into a leadership role within a few years of employment. Todd currently serves as the VP of Operations working close with Stan and Steve to position Cortex as a key player within the Anatomical Pathology and Medical Billing markets. Starting in January, 2011 Todd will cut back to three days a week and step down as VP to focus on the foundation and speaking.

### **Todd Stabelfeldt (Business for Household Employees - Care Providers)**

Todd had to create a business for his personal employees in April 2008. Until 2008 he hired providers as 1099 independent contractors, but an IRS audit, the amount of pay and consistent scheduled care warranted a change within the structure. His care providers are responsible for twelve out of the twenty-four hours. Todd needs help with everything from brushing his teeth to picking him up and putting him in bed. He starts each morning at 5:00am to meet his first meeting by 9:00am. He spends most days alone with scheduled checks or when traveling, hires a care provider to accompany him. Todd's evening routine begins around 6:00pm and ends around 12:00am depending on medical routines. Todd also manages all Durable Medical Equipment (DME) logistics, inventory control, and constant communication with health insurance issues. It is a full time job to manage quadriplegia!



### **Todd Stabelfeldt Foundation (TSF)**

Todd and friends started the foundation idea in May of 2008. Incorporation was completed by August with over \$50,000 in donations. Non-Profit status was approved in May of 2010. Todd works as the Executive Director and continues to shape and define the goals of the foundation. All SCI counseling, consulting, Assistive Technology designs, and lecturing are Todd's responsibility. Due to the economy and securing support, Todd received a paycheck for his work only until February of 2009. TSF currently has five board members which meet the last Thursday of each month.

### **Thank You**

Our earthly suit sure does have some wonderful and colorful designs. To see beauty in the midst of such suffering is a rare invitation. I am truly honored for the opportunity to share my heart with you.

Thank you for taking the time to review this vision. Please call or write with any questions, comments, or suggestions. I value our relationship and wish you the best in 2011!

Stay Real

Todd Stabelfeldt