



Interview with Disabled Rights Activist Sabrina Cohen

Kathy Hersh: Hi, my name is Kathy Hersh. Today is the 20th of May 2015 and I am interviewing Sabrina Cohen for the Miami Beach Visual Memoirs Project.

I understand that you were born on the beach. So, what was it like being a beach kid? Or like you said earlier, a beach girl?

Sabrina Cohen: I just remember as a kid just growing up in such a beautiful warm environment, spending a lot of my time when not in school outdoors with my friends enjoying all types of sports and activities. Always in the water whether I was at the beach or in a pool or playing football with the guys. Just a really different life than today. You know, the city has evolved quite a bit. It was a little quieter back then. Calmer. Laid back. And a great community as a local to grow up in.

Kathy Hersh: We are talking about - the period that you're talking about is really the early 80s, right?

Sabrina Cohen: Yes.

Kathy Hersh: That was a time of great change on the beach.

Sabrina Cohen: Yes.

Kathy Hersh: Were you aware of the elderly people and then that shift that happened?

Sabrina Cohen: Absolutely. For multiple reasons. One reason, which I'll get to in a second, is because my mother worked as a rental agent in several condos on the beach so she saw the transformation of trying to bring in new populations that would somewhat move out the elderly into a different area.

But, firsthand as a child, my babysitter - who was probably in her late 50s / early 60s - lived on Ocean Drive and I, as a kid, recall always going to the beach with her. But, building after building after building was - there were like senior homes and elderly with very elderly populated area. So, I do recall very well, yes.

Kathy Hersh: What did that feel like to a small child? I mean, what did you think? Do you remember what was going through your mind?

Sabrina Cohen: My immediate family, besides my parents and my brother, my grandparents were down here too. So, I grew up – my grandparents were like a second pair of parents. To me that love from my grandparents represented warmth and community from elderly people. So, it was, I think for me, a major comfort zone.

You know, and I've always loved seniors and elderly people because I think of them as I think of my grandparents with just love and gratitude. You know, we're here because of them. The community was always very loving and supportive for me in my experience.

Kathy Hersh: Do you recall seeing their activities out on the beach?

Sabrina Cohen: That I don't recall so much to be honest with you. That is probably a little more vague. I probably recall more if we went out to eat or shopping. And more of like in a different setting.

Kathy Hersh: Did you do those things with your babysitter?

Sabrina Cohen: I do recall doing beach activities with my babysitter. The beach was actually right in front of her building so everything was in close proximity. I do remember her taking us to the beach and just enjoying the outdoors, you know as a kid.

Kathy Hersh: You went to school on the beach.

Sabrina Cohen: Yes.

Kathy Hersh: To the Beach schools.

Sabrina Cohen: Yes.

Kathy Hersh: What was it like knowing everybody and having everybody know you? Was that comforting or was it troublesome at times?

Sabrina Cohen: No, I think actually it was the norm. It's what I knew. It's how I grew up. Having a very friendly innate personality, I love people. So, to have a big community and support always around was just what I knew and what I know to this day. So, well appreciated, yeah.

Kathy Hersh: What kinds of things did teenagers do when you were a teenager on the beach? Where were your hangouts? What did you do?

Sabrina Cohen: In my freshman year, which was when I was just getting into my teenage years – 13, 14 – being a freshman and sophomore in Beach High, we always went to the beach.

We were always hanging out at the beach. We went to the youth center. We would do indoor activities, ice-skating. Movies at the time were a big deal for us.

And then as I got closer to my 15 year age, starting to go to parties and parties on the beach and house parties. Just more going out stuff started to happen naturally. Shopping - going to malls. So, those were the type of things...

Again, a lot of outdoor activities. I was also on my high school swim team. So, a lot of my time after school was occupied with swimming and gymnastics or whatever the sport was at the time that I was involved in.

Kathy Hersh: Did you have a sense of being lucky to be in this environment? Or is it something that you just took for granted?

Sabrina Cohen: It's probably safer to say 'took for granted' even though I appreciate it. It's, again, the environment I grew up in. It's all I knew. And it's all I know to this day, to be quite honest.

You know, I've traveled all over. But, my home is Miami Beach. So, in theory I can think about what it would be like to live somewhere else, but this is home. So, it's my comfort zone.

Kathy Hersh: Tell us about the day that changed your life.

Sabrina Cohen: October 31st 1992 - I was a sophomore at the time in high school.

I was two months shy of turning 15 years old. When you talk about what type of activities as a teenager, you know, it was a Saturday night. It was Halloween. I don't think we were so much planning to go out to celebrate Halloween as opposed to another Saturday and let's go out and meet up with friends and have a good time.

So, about 9 o'clock at night at that point, my best friend and I had decided we were going to go to downtown Miami to a party. I know it sounds young but at 14, again, there were house parties and friends hanging out. Those were the type of things we were already engaging in.

So, through another friend of ours we made arrangements to get picked up by some other students from our high school that were a little bit older than us because we were still unable to drive.

At about 9:30 pm, one vehicle showed up to my house. It was a BMW. There was a driver - he was about 16 years old, Beach High - with two other kids in the car. Another 16 years old and a 15 years old kid, a guy. Plus, our friend - another girlfriend - who was our age. So, total of 6 of us were in the vehicle.

At the time I had lied to my parents about where I was going. I was a good kid, but I just knew if I told my parents I was going to a party with kids I didn't know the answer would have been no. At that age, that's catastrophic. So, I had lied to my parents, told them I was going to see a movie with another girlfriend of mine.

We got out of the house, jumped in the car, and basically within about 5 minutes one of the kids sitting in the passenger seat was like 'let's stop at my house and get my car in case I want to leave the party early'. Very innocent, you know. We drove to his house. I wound up staying in the backseat. My best friend sat in the passenger seat. The driver remained in the vehicle and the other three kids jumped out and hopped into Dodge Stealth on Pine Tree Drive.

We didn't stay there longer than a few minutes. When we left to continue on to get to the party we started driving down Pine Tree to take a left on Alton. When we took a left on Alton, literally within seconds the two cars began drag racing with speeds up to 90 miles per hour.

The other car lost control, hit the car that I was in and slammed into a park car and a tree. I instantly became quadriplegic and paralyzed from the neck down.

Kathy Hersh: This other car was the people you were going to the party with?

Sabrina Cohen: Exactly. What we later found out is the kid driving the other car was not the 16 years old who owned the vehicle. He let his friend who was 15 without a license to drive. So, there were several lies involved in the incident. You know, they covered it up by saying that the owner was driving. But, that wasn't the truth. We found out later. But, basically the two cars completely demolished. Luckily, the other 5 kids walked out. 2 girls, my best friend and the other girl at the time both suffered some injuries. However, I had the most severe permanent injury after impact.

Kathy Hersh: What kind of resources did you find within yourself to deal with this?

Sabrina Cohen: I think the biggest resource that I had to help me move on, probably number one, denial. I had zero comprehension of what a life with a spinal cord injury was. What it could be. What it is. I think that I was completely clueless. I was under the impression that within a couple of months, maybe a year, I'd be up and walking again. That's what kept me moving forward.

And at the same time, innately, the outpour of love and support from my family, my friends, my schoolteachers, everyone was around me to encourage me to just keep moving forward. You know, I went back to Beach High literally like a week or two after I left the hospital. After three months, so I was...

My mom was a bulldog. My dad would have liked me to stay home and do home schooling. My mom was like, nope, you're going back to school. So, I don't think I had too much time to think. I sort of just started doing what I needed to do. I went back to school, which was extremely difficult. But, I eventually made it

through and was very, very focused on my education and physical therapy. That was my life. Weekends, going out, dating, that really all came to a stop.

Kathy Hersh: What were the challenges of going back?

Sabrina Cohen: To Beach High?

[Affirmative]

So, some of the challenges, internally, were very emotional. It was very difficult. I had to now rely on a fulltime nurse. You know, the school – Miami Day School Board- they provided me with a nurse throughout the day to stay with me in school. But, coming to terms with that was very difficult because I had lost my independence.

I, at the time, refused to show up in school with an electric wheelchair, which would have given me my independence. I preferred to use a manual chair because I thought I would look more normal. So, I had to rely on my nurse pushing me around everywhere, because I didn't want to deal with a bigger machine. So, in a lot of the image in internal – a lot of shame – you know I kept my head very low. I was embarrassed. I was very shy...I went into like a shell of internal sadness and shame, a lot of shame.

I think the other challenges were just focus. You know, being in class with my peers was I think hard for all of us. You know, as an adult I can look back and I can say, wow, what an eye opening shocking experience for my peers and my teachers to have embraced my return. But, it was a daily reminder of reality. So, focus. It took me quite a while to get focused – and able to sit in a room with my friends and my peers and just study and do what I needed to do.

Kathy Hersh: It had to become normal.

Sabrina Cohen: It had to become the new normal, yes.

But, in regard to what needed to be done in the school system, honestly, my teachers, principal, the school system took care of me whether it was behind the scenes or it was just easy to make happen. It was flawless. The whole system – having the nurse that I needed, having transportation to and from my house with a bus with a special lift, that was all taken care of. Getting out of class ten minutes early to get to the next classroom on time, a note taker. All of that was really flawless. My teachers supported me throughout the entire remainder of my time at Beach High. Another two and a half years until I graduated.

Kathy Hersh: Did the school have to make any physical accommodations for you?

Sabrina Cohen: They really did not. The school was accessible. There was an elevator so that's really all I needed. In the classroom a desk was removed so I could just pull up. There was not much that needed to be done, really. Accessible bathrooms, it was easy. The only accommodations came, you know, I was in swim class. I was in dance class. I was just about to enter into driver's E.D class. So, my schedule had to shift to accommodate what I could do now which was non-physical type of activities. So, I just took different courses for electives.

Kathy Hersh: You graduated on time?

Sabrina Cohen: I graduated on time, yes, with the rest of my class.

Kathy Hersh: Were there any acknowledgments that came your way in terms of the adversity, the challenges that you met.

Sabrina Cohen: Yes. I was given a trophy from my high school principal for courage in the face of adversity. I recall a standing ovation at high school graduation.

I'm going to tear up.

I was the first one of 600 students to receive my diploma. I recall it was such a defining moment for me as a child because they literally placed me on the front of the stage and as all 599 kids literally had to walk over me to get to their diploma, I really realized in that moment that I could have easily given up and everybody else would have still been on that stage. That started to empower me to give me the strength to live my life as it was.

Kathy Hersh: So that moment you really feel that that moment was a turning point.

Sabrina Cohen: I'll never forget it, yes. Never forget it.

Kathy Hersh: I just want to reiterate that moment when you realized you had a lot of stuff, and you were going to make a contribution. What did you start doing? How did you evolve to getting into the work that you're in now?

Sabrina Cohen: Actually it happened rather quickly. It's – safe to say, clearly. Within a couple of weeks of returning to Beach High I got two requests, one from my principal if I would talk to the seniors about reckless driving and being safe for prom night. And I got a request from an elementary school if I would go and speak on behalf of the DARE program – DARE to keep kids off drugs.

Now, in my situation no drugs or alcohol were involved in the accident. But, as a teen representing reckless driving and peer pressure and making proper decisions in life, my immediate reaction was, no, I'm not the person to do this. This is not my

calling. This is temporary. Who am I to tell anybody else what they can or cannot do?

But, the other side of me who's willing to jump in and do what I can to help somebody really just jumped right in and it was that first experience which was with the elementary school speaking to several hundred kids was like the most profound experience that I could have ever experienced so early on with my injury.

By the time I was done talking, I had about 3 or 4 hundred kids around me. They made a song for me. They thanked me and I don't know if I quite got it at that time. But, I realized eventually with time that sharing my story could help other kids. So, for the last 22 years I've spoken to thousands of kids all over South Florida elementary and high schools. I've been to colleges; I've been – you know as many places as I can go to educate and motivate people to go on with their life. So, really at 15, that's when my work started.

My work with my foundation started after college. I went to the Miami Ad School and I, at the age of – let's say 25 – around that age, maybe less, I started working in public relations and advertising because that's what I studied. About a year into that I had met somebody who started their own organization for regenerative medicine. I was very much attracted to the future and the promise of stem cell research and really jumped on board. Within no time at all I became the director of public relations for that organization. I traveled around the country; I met politicians. I did a front porch event in 2004 with Michael J Fox. So, I got very immersed in advocacy for research.

That's what I did for the next 6-7 years. About 3 years ago, still an advocate for research and disability rights and traveling to Capitol Hill, I really had like an awakening; it's safe to say, about also supporting quality of life initiatives because I was very athletic before my injury. I've always maintained my health because of exercise and eating well and going to physical therapy and doing aqua therapy. I recognized that there was a lot that could be done now to keep people healthy and maintain a good spirit and a great lifestyle. That's when I welcomed more of a fitness related program into the mission of my foundation. That's what I've been doing ever since.

Kathy Hersh: Tell us about the accessibility to the beach issue.

Sabrina Cohen: Yes.

Kathy Hersh: In terms of quality of life.

Sabrina Cohen: Yeah. So, as a beach girl growing up I went to the beach all the time. You don't even have to think twice about it. After a disability like this when you're confined to a wheelchair, I almost took no – well, I did. I did take no for an answer for over two decades. Just

didn't go to the beach because I couldn't get close to the water because wheelchairs can't go very far with sand beneath them.

At the time my – one of my closest directors of the foundation and I as we were strategizing how to open up our mission to more quality of life, we recognized that there was no loud voice speaking up for this community. We went to the beach and I got on a Mobi-Mat so there are some, you know, accessibility components are starting to emerge.

Kathy Hersh: What is a Mobi-Mat?

Sabrina Cohen: A Mobi-Mat is like a blue vinyl material – maybe vinyl's not the right word – like a plastic-y tough material that you could put over sand and it allows for a wheelchair – somebody with mobility issues to get over the sand easier than without it. So, there are several access points throughout the city. However, the Mobi-Mats come to an abrupt stop at the edge of the dune because of state law and what we're allowed to do. So, where the mat comes to an end is where somebody with a mobility problem can no longer go. Having recognized that I'm like, so there's an effort behind this but it's stopping short of really making a difference. We started researching and looking how do we get this. We reached out to Commissioner Tobin and Dessiree Kane – his aid, and next thing you know we are advocating for beach accessibility.

Kathy Hersh: Full beach, including the water.

Sabrina Cohen: Full beach accessibility. So, now after 2 years of working with the city of Miami Beach I am ready to sign a partnership agreement with this city. We located an area – a first area that we're going to create, sort of like a pilot program and a template that we can create the first fully accessible beach in Miami Beach which is going to be located at 6475 Collins Avenue. It is called Allison Park. We are working with a law-based firm and we are environmental and parks and recreation to push the boundaries in a fair way that doesn't upset environmental and we take into consideration the reasons why until now State law prohibited any structure on the beach.

We're trying to come to a happy medium where we can, where the mat stops our project can bring people with a wheelchair closer to the water. So, in addition to that project we are building an adaptive playground on the site that will welcome children with special needs to this site.

My foundation will be in charge of managing and operating all the outdoor activities from providing beach wheelchairs that people can get over the sand in a specialized chair; getting in the water, adaptive surfing. We have a whole hand-cycling program that we will run up and down the boardwalk. Hand cycle is like a specialized bicycle for somebody with a disability.

We are going to provide art therapy, adaptive yoga, and meditation classes which is welcoming to not only the disabled population – you know, kids and adults in wheelchairs – but also veterans and seniors. So, together as a whole we're serving a large population that might have more special needs. But, it will make beach access a whole lot easier and possible.

Kathy Hersh: Well, the beach is where a lot of us go ...

Sabrina Cohen: Yes.

Kathy Hersh: For renewal or sense of perspective, or...

Sabrina Cohen: Just to think and have fresh air and be free. In September of last year, 2014, I'm slowly starting to introduce the programs to the community. We had a beach orientation day; I invited about 5 End users, but we had a total... End meaning disabled users.

So, we could sort of conduct a little focus group and get feedback. But, I wound up with about 65 people from our community from Commissioner Malakoff to Commissioner Tobin and just friends and therapists and lifeguards. We all came out and for me personally, it was my first time back in the water. We tested out a beach wheelchair. It was the most phenomenal experience since I can recall. So, it was pretty amazing. Pretty cool. That's what we're all about.

Kathy Hersh: When will this park open? Do you know?

Sabrina Cohen: The Park is open to the public right now. The plans to modify the beach component and the playground are expected to break ground winter of this year, 2015. In the meantime, I'm slowly introducing, a couple of times a month adaptive sports programs to the community. That will evolve and grow as everything comes together and is available. You know, from a trailer to a place to store the equipment to all the right personnel on board with the scheduled program. So, I'm working all of that right now.

Kathy Hersh: How about media?

Sabrina Cohen: Media has been – I have won, since we started this project, several grants from the Miami foundation, from the Christopher Reeve foundation. I'm currently, out of 4000 entries around the country, to modify open spaces in different cities, my foundation's project 'beach brawl' was selected as one of 200 finalists in the nationwide competition from the State Farm Insurance. We just have to maintain our place in the top 40.

But, grants are coming to support this project from all over. The media – the ripple effect – has been pretty amazing from CNN interviewed me, and I am currently featured in the May/June issue of Ocean Drive magazine talking about this accessible beach project which, in addition to the local news and other TV news

stations that have taken an interest I think for me as an advocate and as a voice for this community what's pretty amazing about Ocean Drive magazine jumping onboard eager to feature this is the acceptance and the progressiveness of where the society is going with accepting disabilities. It's mainstream and it's really our right to have this. They support it. So, that was a very special moment to have been requested to be interviewed by them. Very proud.

Kathy Hersh: Miami Beach is pretty tolerant place.

Sabrina Cohen: Yes.

Kathy Hersh: Pretty open to all kinds of people. Has that reputation now, anyway, didn't always but... So, in a way it's not surprising that you know it's kind of come on down everybody. Let's have a good time and look at this great beach we got.

Sabrina Cohen: Exactly. I think the location of North Beach, which is an evolving community. I think it demands a fresh edge and an attraction of, perhaps, more tourists. It's really a perfect location to get this project up and running, because the PR around this is – it's only – it's good feels. You know, it's a great, good, right thing to do. So, I think that we're in a really good place to really make change. It's a movement. It has naturally, through social media and these interviews, I have people from all over the world, all eyes on this project, because people want to go to the beach, they want to enjoy outdoor programming. This is what this is going to do. So, it's really exploding at a very rapid pace.

Kathy Hersh: Are you ahead of California?

Sabrina Cohen: Are we what?

Kathy Hersh: Ahead of California?

Sabrina Cohen: Actually you know there are programs in California. But, Virginia Beach actually has a model template that we've been looking at very closely, inclusive of like a park type of playground for kids. They've modified the beach area.

California has components that are accessible but to the extent of what we're trying to do which is bring, you know, put a platform that brings you much closer to the ocean. There're not many models to follow.

Europe is actually more advanced. A lot of places in Europe, Greece and Marisol, which is in the Canary Islands, they've done things that my organization has done a lot of research to see where this is happening. So, people are loving the idea and they want to see it. There's need and there's not too many places to look at that you can say, oh let's do it exactly like that because we're basically creating it. We're creating this newness.

Kathy Hersh: How big is your foundation? How many employees?

Sabrina Cohen: Really, it's just me plus one full-time. I have a media specialist that helps me. I have Conill – VP of Conill – which is a division of Saatchi and Saatchi, wonderful board member. I have a full advertising agency helping me create the material and work. I have a handful or very dedicated volunteers that are helping me make this happen from concept to deliverables.

I'm relatively small, but I'm seeking to expand because the need is there to help sustain and maintain all this programming. But, what is going to ensure the success of this entire project is with the direction of my foundation I also have very reputable, amazing partners that will help deliver all the activities to the community. I'm a big advocate for collaboration and partnership as a team as opposed to fighting to be the one. I really believe more in bringing all the communities together and how can we as a team deliver what's best to the community. So, my foundation has just been fortunate enough to lead the way.

Kathy Hersh: So, you're a leader.

Sabrina Cohen: I would like to think so, yes. From my days when I was much shyer and less confident, I've realized it's my job to lead. You know, and to be an advocate and an icon for a huge community that needs a louder voice. You know, we've taken no for an answer for a long time. I think society's ready, I know they are.

It's just continued education and continue speaking and awareness and we're here to stay. You know, we don't always choose to wind up in these situations so we have to be prepared to help when things happen and that's what we're here for, not only the existing community but down the road. Residents, visitors, people in our lives that it's inevitable to get injured or sick or deal with something. That's what we're setting up the stage for.

Kathy Hersh: Fantastic. Carl, do you have any questions?

Carl Hersh: Yeah. I'd like to know what your personal situation is as you – could you project some 10 years in the future what is?

Sabrina Cohen: Yes.

Carl Hersh: How are you going to be?

Sabrina Cohen: How am I going to be? So, I'm 37 now. I think I only see myself as a stronger woman ten years from now. A really powerful, confident leader that has made a lot of changes starting in this community. Wellness wise and health-wise, personally. Everything I'm creating, I'm also a participant because I practice what I preach so that will help me live a longer healthier lifestyle as well.

A major component that I'm working on simultaneously is developing a first of its kind in this community in South Florida. A whole entire adaptive wellness center. Like a gym for disabled and injured individuals.

So, I'd like to be recognized as having started this beach accessible project, but also having at that point developed and spearheading a wellness center to help people and having people travel from all over the world to be here to get the best healthcare that we can offer.

On a very personal level, I hope to meet somebody and perhaps get married one day. I'm still hopeful to have a child at some point. But, it hasn't happened yet. But, on a personal level that's very important to me, family and continuation of my family. Those are my main goals in life. And just continue helping as many people as possible. Coaching and motivating people to be strong and I hope ten years down the road that this will help me create a platform that I can reach even more people beyond our community and share the message of hope and empower people to live their lives no matter what. On a much larger stadium. That's a big goal of mine.

Carl Hersh: You talked about how supportive your school community was. How do you see that Miami Beach community now when you're out in the street and...? What about accessibility? What about that sense of support that you felt in school? Do you still have that sense now? How has the community – the Miami Beach community – come forward?

Sabrina Cohen: I actually... I'm really pleased with the accessibility in this city. You know there are certain buildings that have been grandfathered in and by law do not have to become accessible. I'm accepting of that.

But, at the same time I sit on the disability access committee for the city of Miami Beach and as a team we're constantly presenting challenges in the city, whether it's broken elevators or lifts into hotels that don't work, or getting audible pedestrian signs up and available so residents that are visually impaired can cross the street independently.

So, as much as this city is accessible there are always issues that I've helped take a lead to present to the public works department and whatever departments within the city to make those changes. It's like anything else. It's a continuing conversation. The city has been very respectful and open to modifying what needs to be done. The truth is, with new buildings and new developments it's the law. So, it's just being available as an advocate with the disability access committee and all those members, being available to give advice whoever need it. So, it's an ongoing job as well.

Kathy Hersh: And to remind people.

Sabrina Cohen: To remind people, yes. You know, I've worked several years now in support of a project called ability explosion where we go into the schools and with the kids we simulate being blind, deaf, and paralyzed you know, using a wheelchair. A few years ago we took that project into city hall. We've literally blindfolded Mayor Levine this year. Commissioner Tobin sat in a wheelchair. We had parks and rec. So, we did a whole simulation so the city could understand what its residents have to go through on a daily basis. It was a really eye opening experience.

I believe they really respected and got a different perspective. So, we continue to do activities like that to educate our leaders on what our needs are and why they're important. Why they're not only important to residents but as a global destination. You know, visitors that come and visit Miami Beach, they might not be so tolerant. You know, they spend the money. They come here. They go to hotels. And then to not have access to facilities can be a really disappointing experience.

So, our job as on the ground advocates and residents is to create the most accessible place that we can. Nobody's alienated at that point. With universal design, it's welcoming to everyone. Actually, it makes it easier for even able-body population to walk through a door when the door opens automatically. If they're carrying shopping bags or whatever, it's an easier experience for all and welcoming to everyone. So, we're working on it and the city has been very receptive.

Nothing comes too easy, but you know, again, it's our job to educate. Until people know what we need, we have to just keep getting out there.

Kathy Hersh: Very good.

Carl Hersh: Is there anything that you would like us to talk about, that you would like to talk about that we haven't approached?

Sabrina Cohen: I think you guys have done a great job at asking me everything. Maybe just going back to the question of, you know, you asking me where I'd like to see myself in 10 years from now. I think where I'd like to see this city in 10 years from now regarding accessibility is inclusive of more transportation options that are accessible to this community where it's almost a norm. You need accessible cab, you pick up the phone, you call, and they are at your door. Those are very challenging, you know, between taxis and services it's still not 100 percent near where it needs to be.

With the beach project I would like to see that my project on 65th Street will have set precedents for other areas in Miami Beach to replicate that model, because after all we're called Miami Beach and we are known for our beaches. So, I'd like to see that become

the norm starting here and with a ripple effect in other communities. That's what I will dedicate the rest of my life to making happen. I believe that, as challenging as it's been for me on a personal level, my purpose is to help make change and help people.

#