

eTable 1. Additional narratives

Participant	Quote
Theme: Adjustment and dealing with emotional reactions	
Allen	<i>Like I said, with me, transitioning from up north to here, my injury was still fresh. I was a little different. I had periods of the transitioning thing, the depression thing. I was fortunate because, I don't know if it's because I'm [a] PK [preacher's kid], wherever the support came from, I got over that really quick. I had good friends and family and wanted to go forward; so when I got to Georgia, the school I was in had a lot of good support and stuff.</i>
Brian	<i>I don't think I realized it was a lifelong injury. So I really never experienced depression. Maybe the first couple of weeks when you're in the flat bed getting flipped back and forth. Once I hit rehab, was there for 2 months, went home, and started seventh grade. Started that as soon as I got out of the hospital, then went to college, and started playing sports (basketball), then you get to meet all the other people in wheelchair sports. I think at 13 it's much easier than anybody that got hurt at 17 or 18, 19, 20s. People I know [who were injured at those ages], those are the ones that have had the hardest time.</i>
Category: Anger	
Susan, Milton, Vernon	<p>Susan: <i>It took 2 [years] for me [to transition back to work]. I was mad, real mad.</i></p> <p>Facilitator: <i>Did you have to deal with the anger first?</i></p> <p>Susan: <i>Yes I did.</i></p> <p>Facilitator: <i>How did you do that?</i></p> <p>Susan: <i>I started going to church and talking to people because it really wasn't anyone's fault. I got over it.</i></p> <p>Vernon: <i>It took a while for me as well.</i></p> <p>Milton: <i>It took me 3 years. I was pretty mad at the world. My football career was over. I looked at it as me and the group I hung around, everybody looked up to me. I was used to being around a crowd all the time; but being in this chair, I didn't want people around me. I didn't want attention, so I was completely different. For a long time, I didn't care about anything—life or nothing. And I was always in pain and hurting so bad.</i></p> <p><i>I would just hang around the same crowd once I got a little better, but I was doing all the wrong things: I would smoke marijuana, drink to numb the pain and my thoughts. Eventually, what helped me start getting my mind together was God. My mother was a preacher and would talk to me and encourage me. Family and friends would. Then I would start praying more and reading the Bible. After that, I talked to God. He told me if I wanted to change and do be and be successful, I'd have to following him. So once I stopped doing the thing I was doing and start following Him, He led me to everything I'm doing now.</i></p>
Category: Serious mental health issues	
Raymond	<p><i>I got injured ... from a hunting accident. I was accidentally shot. ...I had to relearn how to walk. That was really hard for me. I was always truck driver before I got injured. The first five or six years, I didn't do anything. I stayed depressed because my injury took a toll on me. I was really active and doing stuff, and I had a lot of support and friends, but I was just depressed. I couldn't adjust because my life was so full of outdoors and activities, and I couldn't do them anymore, so I stayed depressed, and I just kind of wanted to stay in that.</i></p> <p><i>Then I stayed in contact with [the rehab center] and therapist and started bringing me out of it. Then I wanted to live again. So I started relearning how to walk, I could still drive. I thought my driving career was over, but then I learned how to walk again and getting leg movement, so I started driving again, local. I did that for like 10 years.</i></p>

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eTable 1. Additional narratives (CONT.)

Participant	Quote
Edmund, Lisa, Raymond, Ronnie	<p>Raymond: <i>The mental state is basically what's going to tell you which way you going. Are you going go forward or not? I got into a depression to where I didn't do anything. It was over. So if you're mental state isn't right, you go into a depression. You don't want to do nothing. Open up? You're not going to reach out. When you're in the right mental state, you kind of want people to help you.</i></p> <p>Lisa: <i>I've seen two different kind of people and different individuals with this: the ones that give up and they hooked on pills and woe is me and lay in their bed and don't try anything. Or you overcome your obstacle, and you go out and try to go on with your life.</i></p> <p>Facilitator: <i>That's why I'm interested in Edmund. You were drinking for a year.</i></p> <p>Edmund: <i>Right.</i></p> <p>Facilitator: <i>Yet you got beyond that. What allowed you to do that?</i></p> <p>Edmund: <i>I started going into a depression and feeling sorry for myself. People started coming around and start getting me drunk just because they know the fact that I drink. Then I don't really know why my wife didn't leave me because a lot of times they would take me somewhere and leave me at the doorstep. And she was the one help put me in bed, so I don't really know.</i></p> <p>Ronnie: <i>It gets old too.</i></p> <p>Edmund: <i>Yeah, it lasted about a year; major drinking. I think I drank every alcohol there's been.</i></p> <p>Facilitator: <i>But how did you get from there?</i></p> <p>Edmund: <i>I start feeling I got more depression. I said, "Well, I can't keep living like this. I'm going to try suicide." I even tried suicide. I'll tell you the truth. I stuck myself in my chest with a knife, went all the way in. I could show you the wound. One day they came, and they got me depressed, and they like "How you living like that?" I couldn't do it. So I told them, "Hey, I don't have to live like that," and I stuck a knife in my chest. It went about that far in. They couldn't pull it out. I was trying to pull it out because I was drunk crazy. But the doctor, when the police came to get me, and said, "Well, if you had pulled that knife out, you would have died right here because you suck too much energy to die." So when the ambulance came, they tied me up to the bed so I couldn't use my hands, took me to [the hospital]. I guess by the nature of God, they kept putting something . . . The doctor had to actually stand up over the bed to pull the knife out of me. Couldn't put me to sleep because they said if I got to sleep I could die. I'm looking at this stuff remembering it just like I'm talking to you. They pulled that knife out, I started sucking air, and they put something in my chest that makes it like flare up. I don't know what it is. It's like a smut that flares in your chest that cuts off the bleeding, stops the bleeding. Couldn't do it for a couple of times, so they kept doing it over and over. And it caught, and it stopped bleeding. I got the sore right here.</i></p> <p>Facilitator: <i>Did that change things?</i></p> <p>Edmund: <i>Yeah, then I started to Now I'm not going to do this anymore.</i></p> <p>Facilitator: <i>So it woke you up?</i></p> <p>Edmund: <i>It woke me up. I woke my wife up because I guess she was at a point "You going to keep on this, I'm going to leave you as well." So it woke me up.</i></p> <p>Lisa: <i>I was suicidal as well. I think more self-destructive after that. I was just adamant like my life was taken from me, and I don't want to live like this. I will not live in a wheelchair, handicapped. So I overdosed on pills. It comes to a point where you realize I survived this, and all of this survived these accidents for a reason. If God would of wanted us dead, we would have died. So we're here for a reason. It's more wanted to build that will.</i></p> <p>Ronnie: <i>That will push you through. That pushes me a lot.</i></p>
Stephen	<p><i>I hated to get out of the house. When I broke my neck and coming home to be a dad for the first time that was the first time. I was a disabled husband. . . I was in a pretty deep depression. Finally, I shook out of it. I think I finally figured out man, I'm gonna sink here. I'm gonna sink fast unless I come up with something. I tried to commit suicide. That's how bad I got.</i></p>
Bill	<p><i>The other factor is after my injury a couple of years, I knew I had a fear of being institutionalized and losing control over what happened to me. I knew that not going back to work will put me in that situation because I had not worked enough to receive enough disability or whatever to give me the quality of life I wanted.</i></p>
Theme: Gaining self-confidence	
Joanne	<p><i>There's a psychological thing too especially when you're first entering back into the work force and you're in a wheelchair. You feel sorry for yourself. [Emotionally] You know when you get home, you're going to have to do other things that they're not going to have to do. You don't know how your life is going to be. Are you going to find a person you love? Are you going to be able to do extracurricular activities and not have to worry? Are you going to have that social thing? There's a lot of that.</i></p>

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eTable 1. Additional narratives (CONT.)

Participant	Quote
Frank	<p>Facilitator: <i>Were there psychological or environmental factors that arose once you've worked a couple years?</i></p> <p>Frank: <i>I had a big internal crisis when I switched positions because I thought I'm not used to this. I even questioned not my supervisor but someone who is the same level but this way [gestured] who talked me into switching. This was after the layoff, and I'd been assigned to day treatment. That was going fine. This person kept saying, "You should go to this speech job." So I did that and said, "Can I go back to my old job?" I was not doing too well after the first couple days.</i></p> <p><i>Then well, no, you probably shouldn't because we have new plans for merging. As it turned out, merging day treatment in the partial hospital program; and sure enough, they kind of downsized the secretaries there. So I stuck it out, and it got better. And I still can't keep it really straight: these terms like the trachea, esophagus. It was quite a baptism by fire. It didn't feel quite that way in the crisis center when I started there, although that had its anxiety issues too.</i></p>
Allen, Lisa, Raymond, Ronnie	<p>Raymond: <i>What you do with me, when I got hurt and started back to work, I was scared. I don't know about nobody else, but I had been doing something for so long, and I was getting ready to do something else. I was scared, because I didn't want to go into nothing else. So first of all, I was afraid. You got to do some footwork. You got ask people, talk to people. And I was afraid, so I was hesitant. I don't know about anybody else, but it wasn't easy for me to go into another field. It took some courage. It was scary.</i></p> <p>Lisa: <i>I feel like the men, they have more of a burden on them to get a job for the family. With me, I stayed at home so long with my kids; and I didn't have recent work history. So I was telling him, "Nobody's going to hire me. I haven't done anything lately to go out."</i></p> <p>Facilitator: <i>I still hear the fear in your voice about doing something new. Do you also fear how people will react to you?</i></p> <p>Raymond: <i>Exactly.</i></p> <p>Ronnie: <i>Like she said, even you don't have a work history, you write down your skills. And that works good.</i></p> <p>Facilitator: <i>There's some sort of sense that you get to the point to where you have to think "I can really do this"?</i></p> <p>Ronnie: <i>You have to have confidence in yourself.</i></p> <p>Raymond: <i>You going to have to have that. You right.</i></p> <p>Allen: <i>I started telling Lisa I was saying the Goodwill programs, all those programs [job training stuff] are good; but it's really all about applying yourself. They enhance the skills you have, but really you got to have that courage in yourself and your own drive.</i></p> <p>Lisa: <i>I think through volunteer work I've done, I want to be in administration. I want to be with people, stuck in a desk, putting stuff together in a room by myself. I know it's little, but I'm a PTO president for four years. I've dealt with adults and money and keeping all these. That was volunteer. Then I was a producer for a radio, a radio host.</i></p> <p>Raymond: <i>Actually, you have a lot of skills.</i></p> <p>Facilitator: <i>Is this in the last 10 years?</i></p> <p>Lisa: <i>I'd be in charge of greeting, and then there are volunteers. If I got paid, they couldn't afford me, so I have done it. It's not that I've been lazy and unmotivated. Now I'm confident enough through that to use my skills to get paid.</i></p>
Edmund, Lisa, Raymond	<p>Edmund: <i>With me, I figure when you get in with the department, it depends on [where I work at the Westin Hotel] I'm the only one there in a wheelchair. I've been there 18 years, and I'm the only one in a wheelchair. There are two disabled, other disabilities; but I'm the only one that's been there for 18 years that's in a wheelchair, so they work with me.</i></p> <p>Facilitator: <i>So the attitude of other people can be a help?</i></p> <p>Edmund: <i>Right. With me, when I first there, I was really scared because I was like the table you sit at was too small. When I go to lunch I feel people looking at me, feel funny.</i></p> <p>Raymond: <i>Right, right.</i></p> <p>Edmund: <i>I feel scared. But now since I've been there so long, I started as an operator, a phone operator; and I worked as a phone operator for about five years.</i></p> <p>Facilitator: <i>How did you handle the fear?</i></p> <p>Edmund: <i>Actually, at first, I was mad. When you first get disabled, you're really angry.</i></p> <p>Raymond: <i>Yeah, bad, bad.</i></p> <p>Edmund: <i>I was like "Why are you looking at me?! Why are you staring at me? I'm human." When you riding on the buses or train, people are staring at you, and you figure you're different. So at first it made me angry. I'm like, "Why do you keep looking at me?" They still do it now. Once you get on the train, they look at you from your head to toe. So after a while, I start say, "Yeah, look at me. I'm human. You know, forget that. You can look at me all you want." At first I would try to argue back with them. I was like "Why you keep looking at me?" Then I decided the heck with it. They going to look, let 'em look. So my wife used to follow me and said the same thing. She started picking up what I was picking up. Why are they staring at you? So I start telling her "Just ignore them because they going to look."</i></p> <p>Lisa: <i>It's not just a physical obstacle. It's mental and emotional and things like that.</i></p> <p>Multiple voices: <i>Yeah.</i></p>

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eTable 1. Additional narratives (CONT.)

Participant	Quote
Jeannette	<p><i>I needed to work harder, more organized, know my subject matter better. It helped that I was in a male-dominated field because I was a novelty, and it helped that I had a visible disability in the sense that I got away with more because people didn't know what to make of me or do with me. So I would be at meetings as the subject-matter expert, and there would be all these men (a lot of them in suits), and I was the one with the power because they didn't know what to do with me.</i></p> <p><i>I could draw from an experience. It wasn't just rhetoric or academia, so when somebody said, "Why do we have to design it that way?" I could give them a solid, straight-forward, no-nonsense answer. I remember I was in a fight with Department of Transportation staff over the accessibility of our rest stops. They didn't want to put in the lateral transfer stalls because ambulatory people would have to wait longer. So the question was my community doesn't get to use the restroom at all because the standard user might have to wait. I remember I slammed my hand on the table and told them to get the hell out of the meeting and get back to me only when they had a reasonable plan.</i></p> <p><i>So over the last 30 years, I've gotten away with loads of crap that that an ambulatory person would never have been able to get away with. A lot of it had to do with the fact that they didn't know how to respond to somebody with a disability, somebody in my field: certification, experience, and a bit outspoken.</i></p>
Joanne	<p><i>Outspoken is important. Taking a college class in how to speak in front of people is important. Getting out to as many people as you can at different levels. I've volunteered in junior highs, elementary schools, for junior achievement. I was on the diversity council for a year, co-chaired it; and I was the only one in a wheelchair, but there were a lot of people with disabilities or had children with disabilities. There would have been no other way I would have been able to talk to people that were up here [gestures?] that make the decisions.</i></p> <p><i>I did one United Way video with my son and talked about how I used the benefits at Wells Fargo when I had my disability. ... Doing that shows people you go above and beyond. And you build confidence and are more comfortable talking about your disability and experiences. So networking can be fun and rewarding.</i></p>
Sabrina, Joanne	<p>Facilitator: <i>How about peer mentors?</i></p> <p>Sabrina: <i>That's only if you were in places that had those kinds of people. I came to the rehab center and met Katrina. Katrina was the one who said, "I'm this age, and I made it. You will. It will take you a while, but you will be someone who will be rolling around. You will be doing these things."</i></p> <p>Joanne: <i>When I was at [the rehab center], I was only 25, I hadn't had kids, and was going into a home that needed to be made accessible. They gave me Sheryl's name and said she would be a good mentor. Thank God for Sheryl because she was the only person I had seen outside a wheelchair for probably the first 5 years other than if I went to a hospital. And she showed me how to transfer in and out of a car, going into her house [how to make it accessible]. She was so loving. She would tell me about her job, what she was doing, and so forth.</i></p> <p><i>So seeing someone that can live normally in a wheelchair was huge for me. That was the breaking point for me, when I knew I could be in a wheelchair, be happy, and have a life. When I didn't know I had that, I was hopeless, depressed, and didn't want to live another day.</i></p> <p><i>Faith is huge too for me and I don't want leave out that. Sometimes you have to let go and let a higher being take over and control things. The minute I started doing that, I didn't try to control myself; and things started falling into place.</i></p>
Peggy	<p><i>... They see me coming in and they're thinking What can this little person in a wheelchair do for us? It was up to me to convince them and carry my knowledge in the interview and turn it around. If you can conquer that, you've done your job. People will always see things with eyes first, but that doesn't mean it's their final judgment.</i></p>
Lisa	<p><i>I kind of stayed at home, but they're 12 and 15 now, so I would love to try to venture out. I think my main concern is the fear of coming off disability because that's stable. So I'm thinking I do want to work, but is it going to be worth the while coming off. And if it's standing a lot, I can't do that. Or sitting a lot. Like I said, I have the peripheral nerve damage where pretty much everything in the back of your legs doesn't work like the hamstrings and those type of muscles don't work. I have to wear braces on both legs, but I am ambulatory, so that helps, it's just slower. I would like to go back to work and pursue a career.</i></p>

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eTable 1. Additional narratives (CONT.)

Participant	Quote
Eloise	<p><i>I am one of the few originally from the school, from Atlanta. I live in Tallapoosa now, which is six miles before Alabama. I was in a car accident in October '71, T-3, T-4 injury. At the time, Shepherd's didn't exist unfortunately; and I went to a place called Warm Springs, Georgia, for rehab, which was not as extensive as here. I was there for a long, long time. It was forever as far as I was concerned (a couple of months), came home and was in the bed because I had a broken arm and a lot of other problems.</i></p> <p><i>After a year from Warm Springs, I went to work for about four weeks and found out it was too early for me to go back to work. At that time, handicapped accessible bathrooms, offices, and everything else weren't available. So it was a hard four weeks, and I decided too bad for me. So I started staying at home.</i></p> <p><i>In '82 I think it was, I had a really good friend who was an office manager. I was sitting at home watching soap operas, and she called and said, "Do you want a job?" I said, "Huh? Why would I want a job?"</i></p> <p><i>Anyway, I went through the interviews with a lot of PhDs and managers. They hired me. The company was sold, I went with the company to another place, and then I left there after four years and went to Hyundai regional office in Lithia Springs, 10 minutes from home, which was wonderful.</i></p>
Theme: Preventing burnout	
Category: Maintaining mental health	
Joanne	<p><i>Going back to education, I did phone bank sales, and I always wanted to get into management, but I never had the background, so I asked for responsibilities to lead the team. There was a team leader and a manager. Got a team lead position and eventually, after trying three or four times, got a management position on the business side having 20 people report to me that were in business customer service on the phone bank.</i></p> <p><i>Did that for a year. It was too stressful and too many hours, so I became a business banker on the sales team. Then I went back to the branch, was a business personal banker at the branch. I didn't like the manager. She treated her employees really badly, so I looked for an opportunity to go to mortgage because I did a lot of referrals to the mortgage department. They gave me the training for that, did that for a couple of years. Again, too hard with the hours you had to work, moving, transferring; so I went back to the phone bank.</i></p> <p><i>Finally I have a wonderful position on business integration and compliance where you monitor phone calls to make sure they have all the federal compliance and regulations.</i></p> <p><i>There are a lot of people in my company who hire people with disabilities, so I want to encourage that.</i></p>
Victoria	<p><i>When I took the job in Atlanta, I traveled all over the country. Before that, I'd been many place but not on a regular basis by myself. So definitely making sure I planned things, understood how to get a taxi in DC, how to use a lightweight bag, how to pack appropriately. Out-of-state travel, I had to psychologically prepare for it and have the environmental things in place. Now they know me in DC.</i></p>
Category: Vacations, sick days, and mental health	
Victoria	<p><i>The other thing psychologically when I took the most recent job, I already worked a lot of hours. I still work 50 or 60 hours a week, so keeping up that pace and not crashing and burning physically or mentally. That is always a challenge as we age. You have to set boundaries, which I'm terrible at; and take care of yourself, which I'm terrible. So everything I preach about are things I don't actually do, but I am aware of those factors of keeping a good balance between work and other activities.</i></p>
Joey	<p><i>Burnout is something we experience more than able-bodied people because we have more physical things we have to do. The importance of taking a vacation day and not planning anything and knowing when to call in sick. I'm sure all of us have worked when we were sick, with UTIs or when you didn't feel 100 percent. So knowing when to say when. You think you're calling in work, are they going to hold it against me. But for your health, you have to know when to say when.</i></p>

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eTable 1. Additional narratives (CONT.)

Participant	Quote
Category: Burning out	
Bill, Max, Stanley, Victoria	<p>Max: <i>I had burnout partly because I felt I had to do twice as much twice as good as everyone else to show I was the same employee as anyone without a disability. Part of that was putting in 16 hours a day on site, going home, and getting up and getting to the job in order to put in 16 [hour] days without getting up at 4 o'clock in the morning. After several years of that, you hit a point where you get burned out from the physical part but also the psychological part.</i></p> <p><i>At the time I did that I was coordinator of a peer support program, going into a newly injured person's room day in and day out and having to tell my story to the parents or the spouse. They always wanted to know my story because I'm at [the rehab] Center working, and [they want to know if] their person ever going to get there. Telling that story over and over and putting in those 16-hour days, finally put me at the breaking point where I had to switch jobs. I fortunately was able to move into another position.</i></p> <p>Victoria: <i>I'm a little conflicted because I hear him validate what you feel. I work in a culture where we're all martyrs. We're all over work and all hyped up and I'm a type A personality and run 100 miles an hour. For me, I don't think I'm trying to compensate for my disability but that I'm in the pack and a perfectionist. Some of that is more personality driven versus me trying to prove myself. I know my competence level in my field. I'm very competent. It's more about the environment, the culture where I work, and my personality type. It might be a small smidgen associated with disability, but that's not the whole factor.</i></p> <p>Max: <i>I agree. To be more clear. What hit me was not [that] I felt like as a person with a disability [that] I had to do twice as much but that [my] Type A personality drove me to do twice as much.</i></p> <p>Bill [joking]: <i>And then you get old. [Laughter]</i></p> <p>Stanley: <i>It's important to realize the difference between the two. Am I burned out or my physical age? Environment also. You were talking about the focus on the wheelchair. I've been into many third-world countries. That's all they did was look at the wheelchair versus learning about the operations. You can see these guys and gals, "I can't believe you're here." That made you have to work 200 percent.</i></p>
Bill	<p>Bill: <i>I didn't know this, but I picked up some messages from co-workers I found out later, I had gone through a change in personality and interacting with people. People saw this but I didn't, particularly after I retired, I became so much more relaxed. People told me, "Man, we were so concerned about you," even my family. But my family and support system wouldn't say, "You need to retire." I don't know they knew what was going on. I didn't recognize it, and here I am supposed to have psychological training to recognize stuff.</i></p> <p>Facilitator: <i>How old were you when you retired?</i></p> <p>Bill: <i>I retired in '96; my birthday is '49, so 47. I had worked 20-plus years, and I took pride in not taking time off. I knew that if I got enough leave saved up, it would count toward early retirement; and I saw that as money in the bank. I used my travel time as my down time. I still worked, but it was like oh man, this is so great to be away all that stuff going on in the office.</i></p>
Theme: Attitude	
Category: Attitude about yourself and your injury	
Eloise, Lisa	<p>Eloise: <i>And God has blessed me. One other thing that none of you know. It's not a biggie; it's nothing to any of y'all. My accident was in '72, '71. Seven years later, my youngest brother is a quadriplegic now from a diving accident that happened seven years after I was in a car accident. My mother took care of me and him all of our lives. She's still alive. She's actually helping me some right now because my husband's had back surgery.</i></p> <p><i>So if you want to say woe is me, I'm the wrong person to say it to. My husband says, "You are the most pathetic person," and I said "Why?" and he said, "Because you don't feel sorry for anybody." I said, "Sorry, if you got a hurt toe, thank God you can feel that toe.</i></p> <p>Facilitator: <i>So no pity parties for you?</i></p> <p>Lisa: <i>Not everybody is that emotionally strong.</i></p> <p>Eloise: <i>But that's just what I'm saying. I am that way. I have always been that way. My mother, I guess, started me out that way. My mother's the same.</i></p>
Victoria	<p><i>I'm not sure that if I was not disabled that I wouldn't be healthy anyway. That A-type personality, sometimes you put things on the back burner. But some of negative is that balance with work and family and social life. It's my choices, but the negative is the time alone, self-reflection, doing nothing. I have very little of that. That's not healthy, and I know it's not, but I haven't done anything to change it. But it is not a good way to live everyday life. It's a negative you can change if you so choose.</i></p>
Ronnie	<p><i>You get knocked down and just got to get back up.</i></p>

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eTable 1. Additional narratives (CONT.)

Participant	Quote
Jeannette	<p><i>I was injured ... when I was about 2 years old. I was in a farming accident when my dad was moving some equipment around, and I was in the way. I was supposed to be by the sand pile with my siblings, but I rarely follow the rules. So there I was.</i></p> <p><i>I'm T-5, T-6 incomplete. My spine was crushed. I went to the rural doctor. He said he couldn't find any injury, it was temporary and I'd be fine. After several months of no improvement and not being immobilized. I've got eight brothers and sisters. If they're doing things, I'm going to do things. If I couldn't walk, I figured a way to get around. And I got carried quite a bit too. So I grew up with a disability.</i></p> <p><i>My first employment experience came young. In high school, I got a job as a keypunch operator. They were looking for a couple of kids to do that, and I volunteered. When I graduated high school and moved to the cities, I did dreadful telemarketing jobs selling magazines. Then I got a great job at Café de Nicolony serving cheesecake and grinding coffee and working my way through the University of Minnesota.</i></p>
Benjamin	<p>Benjamin: <i>Psychologically, it's open ended. I always like to make new friends. That's what I got out of work. I made new friends.</i></p> <p><i>Then our department has always tried to make each other better and watch out for each other because there's a lot of safety hazards up there. I have some good friends up there. Most of them are retired now, and I hopefully will be retired soon too.</i></p> <p>Larry: <i>How does it feel being one of the older workers?</i></p> <p>Benjamin: <i>Yeah, isn't that something? I'm in a wheelchair. But they've been great. I think they were glad. We're like the pioneers. I know guys before me that helped me along and made some trails for me. They were just happy to have something. They were something they would ask me, "Hey Bill, do you need something? Would that be good to have a big door there? How's the bathroom?"</i></p>
Larry	<p>Facilitator: <i>Let's move on to behaviors and maintaining jobs. Were there or do you have any specific behaviors or skills that allowed you to maintain a job?</i></p> <p>Larry: <i>I love doing what I do! It's my passion. It's like therapy for me. ... There's the saying that if you love your work you'll never work a day in your life. I can't imagine doing something else.</i></p>
Karl	<p><i>I had a CEO tell us if you come to work and it's not fun, you need to find you another job. He believed in you got to have fun on the job and relate to the people around you, make jokes. If you don't make it fun, work can be hell. But if you have fun and the people around you are happy, it makes your job a whole lot easier.</i></p>
Raymond	<p><i>With me, when I got the job, it was like, "Well, I got the job." Then after being there for a while, I wanted to do everything in my power to keep the job. I hear people saying, "Well, I don't want to come to work," or "I don't feel good," and be late. My job isn't perfect, but I love my job. I don't make millions of dollars, but I love the job.</i></p> <p><i>Even when I was sick, they were like "No, you can't come back here." I would call and, every day, I would call; and they were like, "Man, it's Raymond again." They were like, "He ready to come back, but we want you to be well." I actually went back three weeks before I was supposed to. They were like, "Oh no," but I went back because I love the job.</i></p>
Ellis	<p><i>I loved my job. Then doing different things.</i></p>
Kevin	<p><i>I love the people you meet and the experiences. They call it work, but it doesn't have to be work if you have a lot of fun too.</i></p>
Joanne	<p><i>You figure out what you can do in a wheelchair to have fun. You don't look at what you can't do but what you can do in a wheelchair. Nobody taught us that; we had to learn it on our own.</i></p>
Category: Attitude about work	
Bill	<p><i>One of the things I had to overcome that came out of being in the hospital and rehab was my expectation that once I got involved in rehabilitation agency and counseling that when I finished my education I'd be delivered to an employer, I'd automatically have this great job. I figured out quickly that I have a lot of responsibility in this process.</i></p> <p><i>Initially, I resented it. What am I paying these people for? Aren't they supposed to get me a job? I knew I could perform (or thought I could), but in terms of wanting to sell myself, I had to work on that and strategize.</i></p>
Victoria	<p><i>I would add I used my parents as role models when I entered the workplace of what work ethic meant. I have a high level of confidence, and I'm pushy, aggressive in a nice way, well spoken. Those skills are critical when you're selling yourself so that people can see you're confident and you can do the job. After college, I went on one interview; and I had a job. It's all about that attitude, confidence, self-assurance. Once you have the job it is about competitiveness, commitment, those things that make you stand out whether you're disabled or not. If you want to climb the ladder, that's what it takes.</i></p>

(Continued)

eTable 1. Additional narratives (CONT.)

Participant	Quote
Joey	<i>Opportunity. I wanted the opportunity to get back to work. Some people would say the pieces of your life, pick them up, and continue on because going through a major injury kind of shakes your world and make you reevaluate things. But my faith led me to . . . I think it was the second week of rehab, I thought I'm either going to go on or I'm going to let this change me. So the opportunity to go back to work was a big deal to get back into society and all the other opportunities. Some were brought about by policies and things like that. But every one of us when we first had our injury wanted the opportunity to get back to a normal, productive life.</i>
Al, Vernon	Al: <i>Self-improvement is more than anything. When you have to do a job that before you didn't do, right now you improve a little bit more because you want to do it. You want to be better.</i> Facilitator: <i>So you're very motivated?</i> Al: <i>Ah, of course. I think when you get the job; you want to do it better than anybody else because you don't want anybody to see this as an excuse because it is not an excuse.</i> Vernon: <i>I can agree with that. You have to go far and beyond your colleagues, so they can see past your physical disabilities.</i> Al: <i>Your physical disability has taught you people see you, you kind of cannot stop. One thing I hate is when I travel in my country, and they at you [and] laugh. We are inconvenient. The reality, I am not inconvenient. If we see it that way, oh my gosh, they see us as real human beings. The inconvenience of sitting in this chair is nothing else.</i>
Milton	<i>It's okay to me to prove myself. I want the opportunity to prove myself. The problem is once they see you're in a chair, they don't like to give you the opportunity. Proving myself based on me playing junior high and high school football, you always got to continue to improve yourself. If not, somebody else is always going to take the job. Competition and improving yourself is never the point, but judgment on what I can do and not what you think I can do, that would be the problem.</i>
Max	Max: <i>But the more important factor is (having worked with thousands of people over the last 20 years), what we've talked about today and what everybody at this table reflects, a willingness and desire to work. Without that willingness and desire and the need to get out of the bed and do something other than sit in front of the TV or playing Nintendo, it's not going to happen. There are a lot of things that go into that for people with spinal cord injuries. One is when you were injured, age injured, level of injury. If you have kids under the age of 18 and you're 50 years old, you're probably going to be bringing home more Social Security benefits than you were at the job. So that's not a huge incentive to get up with a C-5 spinal cord injury every day and go back to work. There are so many factors that play into the whole realm.</i> Facilitator: <i>So the motivation and attitude first and then if the programs and policies can be beneficial to provide the groundwork. Still maintaining your role continues to be essential.</i> Max: <i>I can only speak anecdotally with no hard evidence. I don't do the kind of studies Dr. Krause does. I can tell you that I can tell within a few months of starting to work with a person which people will see this through and see it successful because they bring the attitude into this and which people don't bring that attitude. And I can tell you that based on that anecdotal evidence that about 30 percent will bring that attitude to go back to work. And they're going to do it whether they've got impairment-related work expenses or a PASS plan or anything else. About 70 percent are probably not bringing that attitude, and I don't know how you instill that attitude.</i>
Karl	<i>A lot of handicapped person, all they want is an opportunity. I don't want you feeling sorry for me; just give me the same opportunity. I can do the same thing. As he was relating, I found out a lot of us are a lot more intelligent than other people walking around.</i>
Category: Attitude of others	
Victoria	<i>I have a different perspective. Because I was a clean slate and never had a job and didn't have expectation of what the work would be and if I could do it; I went in with a clean slate, so everything was awesome for me. There's differences for when you have your injury, especially the timeframe, the '70s when there was less adaptability. I was hurt in the '90s, and my parents did not coddle me. Maybe a year or two after my injury, but after that, "You're going to college. You're finishing high school. You're going back to cheer on that team that you made us pay for that uniform. And you're going to college and get a job." So that expectation was set for me. Not having that comparison was probably good for me based on my injury age and time I was injured. Had I been injured at that age in the '70s, who knows?</i>
Al	<i>Put it this way. The last time I have an interview; this guy is the same age as me with one degree in engineering, and me, lighter skin. I have so many degrees, and they hired him. I know why they didn't hire me. It's obvious. And the lady, I look in her eyes and say, "That's okay." I know there is a job in the world for me. But I don't really care because, if I care, I won't find a job. I won't push myself. For people in a wheelchair, this stops you to do.</i> <i>But I laugh about it, because when I told so many people it's exactly the same. Who's losing? It's them; not me because if they look at me who I am, maybe they got a big surprise.</i>

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eTable 1. Additional narratives (CONT.)

Participant	Quote
Vernon	<i>It took a while for me as well. I guess it was a blessing for my mother because it's about people not feeling sorry for you, you're not feeling sorry for yourself. After I had my accident, I was feeling sorry for myself, but my mamma, first she found the support, that's the main thing. But still, she didn't feel sorry for me. Like I said, she put that paper in my face and said I was going back to school. When I went back to school I was wondering how people were going to accept me. I was a little embarrassed about going back to school. But once I got in there, people accepted me fine, I got all this counseling support getting around campus. After that, it was okay.</i>
Category: Behaviors associated with attitude	
Bill	<i>The attitude part is having and developing a sense of humor. There is often preconceived notions or stereotypes about a person with disabilities taking life so seriously and not being able to laugh at ourselves.</i>
Allen	<i>I remember being in rehab and stuff where they had groups. They had some people there, believe me, I was like "Man!" I couldn't relate to them. Even though I was still a new injury, I actually was the entertainment of our sessions. Not so much overshadowed of what they was going through, but I brought a lot of humor to the group meetings. So as I got better, got out of the hospital, I maintained that same personality in the work force. I let my personality (my appearance) let that outshine the wheelchair. So that's what I've used, and I've been that way ever since.</i>
Katrina	<i>I talk to a lot of young people about what they're going to do in their life. What I say often is "Do not pass up any opportunity that will help you grow as a person. . . . never pass up an opportunity even if it's uncomfortable, difficult, or scary."</i>
Katrina	<i>But another piece of my education that I would recommend to anybody was I moved to a foreign country for a year and learned a lot about myself and things by putting myself in a different environment. It's hard to do with a disability, but it's a piece of my education that was important.</i>
Joanne	<i>I'm not the type of person that takes no for an answer, and I'm a good sales person. So part of the interview is selling yourself. I never put that I had a disability on my resume because the minute I sat down with that person, I knew it was my job to make them comfortable with being with a person in a wheelchair. In the interview, I would say, "Before we get started, would you like to know about my disability or have any questions." I wanted them to get to know me as a person instead of assuming my disability was a hindrance.</i>
Joey	<i>People said there's no way Joey could sit at a desk, but adaptability and being able to continue working is a big thing. Even now, if my situation was to change and I became unemployed, I have a list of things I'd like to do, some of which would be school. I missed out on the college experience and would like to entertain further education. But work is something I always wanted and continue to want to do.</i>
Chester, Jason, Richard	Jason: <i>Every . . . anniversary of breaking my neck, I get a bunch of people together and have fun with people. I tell people at work and they're like "What the Sam hell are you happy about this for?" "God, I'm here. I made it another year. I survived."</i> Richard: <i>It works for me too, though, because I've got family members that were 9 and 10 years old when I got hurt. They still don't quite get the whole anniversary thing, but it's a rebirth of who I am. Somebody totally different than who I was the day I got injured.</i> Chester: <i>My anniversary last June I was at a function, and I told somebody it was my anniversary. "Oh, I'm really sorry." And I said, "What for? I'm alive another day. I'm here." A lot of people don't know how to react to that as far as what we've been through and what we go through. Yeah, it's a shitty thing that happened; but as long as you can make the best of it, great. As long as you get something out of it that makes you want to live another day, fantastic!</i>