

TOGETHER, LET'S MAKE
INCREDIBLE HAPPEN.

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Ms. Joan Sample
123 Maple Street
Unit 456
Anyville, PR P0S T1L



May 8, 2018

Dear Ms. Sample,

My mother, Mary, and I have learned to see the beauty of life and to understand the preciousness of each moment. Although our family has had more than our share of thorns, we have learned to stop and, literally, smell the roses.

In 1983, my mother's twist of fate was one in a million. **During the delivery of her fourth child, something went terribly wrong as a result of the epidural. My mother sustained a complete spinal cord injury and in an instant was paralyzed from the waist down; she was told she would never walk again. She had a newborn and three other children at home under the age of nine!**

After spending months at Toronto Rehab's Lyndhurst Centre, my mother returned home to adapt and to recover. **As an outpatient, she learned from Toronto Rehab caregivers how to deal with her new life, and we as a family were educated how to help her. With encouragement from doctors, nurses, family and friends, my mother found her way:** a way to drive a car, visit friends, go to Florida, see the beauty of Paris, and smell the roses in England. Through steadfast support, encouragement and perseverance, she set new goals for herself and began to dream new dreams. We all did.

And then, another twist. I was driving to work on a winter morning when my SUV hit black ice, flipped upside down into a ditch and began to fill with ice-cold water. Amazingly, a veteran paramedic saved my life but I was soon told by my neurologist that I had pressure on my spinal cord – the smallest amount more and I would have become a quadriplegic. This diagnosis left me unsettled; growing up with a mother who was paraplegic, I understood more than many how narrow the divide between roses and thorns.

It was my gratitude for the help Toronto Rehab gave my mother that inspired me to donate a portable wheelchair ramp to a spinal cord injury patient at Toronto Rehab through a program I launched in 2016 to help individuals make their homes accessible. **My family knows how important independence is.**

Another way of giving back is sharing this story and asking you to make a donation to Toronto Rehab today so they can continue to transform the lives of patients, and their families – like they did for us. Thanks to the thoughtful guidance and encouragement of the staff at Toronto Rehab, my mother is living life fully and has four adult children who are grateful to and for their mother. My family knows how thorns make us see the beauty in roses.

Best wishes for a happy, healthy & flower-filled spring!


Sandra Longo

