

Where there's a will
there's a way



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Alex Stough Prof. Minner English 1301 9 November 2012 Where There's a Will, There's a Way Many people who are physically challenged have accomplished a lot during their lifetime, proving that they are not "handicapped". Bob Sampson and Steven Hawking have created successful careers while being confined to a wheelchair. Sampson, despite having muscular dystrophy, has worked for United Airlines for more than thirty years, and has also earned a degree in law.

Steven Hawking, most famous for his book A Brief History of Time, used a voice synthesizer to dictate his books and conduct public lectures because he was unable to speak. He was also a teacher of mathematics at Cambridge University. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Ann Adams, and Itzhak Perlman all refused to let polio destroy their lives. Roosevelt and Adams were diagnosed with polio when they were adults; Itzhak, however, was diagnosed when he was just a mere child.

President Roosevelt led the United States during two of the worst periods of its history; the great Depression and World War II. Reassured by his bombastic voice, Roosevelt inspired hope and determination in the American public. Ann Adams, who was talented in art before polio paralyzed her, retrained herself to draw with a pencil grasped in her teeth; she now produces sketches of children and pets that are turned into greeting cards.

Itzhak Perlman was unable to play sports when he was a child; instead he studied the violin which inevitably made him into one of the greatest violinists of today. Like Perlman, many physically challenged individuals turn to the arts; perhaps the reason is because the joy of artistic achievements compensates for other pleasures that they cannot experience. Ray Charles,

Stevie Wonder, Jose Feliciano, and Ronnie Milsap all express their music through their souls. For instance, a lot of Ray Charles' songs are emotionally driven and have a lot of meaning behind them.

Although they are unable to see physically, their music reveals truly how well they see. Although hearing impairment struck Ludwig van Beethoven and Marlee Matlin, it did not stop them from developing their talents as Artists. Already a successful composer, Beethoven's most powerful pieces were written after he had become deaf. Similarly, Matlin has had excellent acting roles in movies, plays, and television programs; indeed she won an Oscar for the film *Children of a Lesser God*.

She encourages others to develop their ability, and because of this many hearing-impaired actors have been inspired by her. Handicapped is a word used far too often to describe those who are physically challenged. As history has proven, many famous individuals have made great achievements in spite of their disabilities. People who are physically challenged should not automatically be labeled as "handicapped". We as humans have the mental capability to overcome and adapt the challenges that we may face, even if that means making lifestyle changes.