



ENGLISH SPEECHES

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MUNIBA MAZARI

WE ALL ARE PERFECTLY IMPERFECT

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fBnAMUkNM2k&t>

Thank you so much for all the love, for all the warm. Thank you all for accepting me. Thank you very much.

Well, I always start my talk with some disclaimer. And that disclaimer is that I never claimed to be a motivational speaker. Yes, I do speak. But I feel like a storyteller. Because where ever I go I share a story with everyone.

I believe in the power of words. Many people speak before they think. But I know the value of words. Words can make you, break you, they can heal your soul, they can damage you forever. So, I always try to use the positive words in my life. Wherever I go, they call it adversity, I call it opportunity. They call it weakness, I call it strength. They call me disable, I call myself differently able. They see my disability. They see my disability. I see my ability. There are some incidents that happened in your life. And those incidents are so strong that they change your DNA. Those incidents and accidents are so strong that they break you physically. They deform your body but they transform your soul. Those incidents break you, deform you but they mold you into the best version of you. And the same thing happened to me. And I am going to share what exactly happened to me.

I was 18 years old when I got married. I belong to a very conservative family, a Baloch family. My father wanted me to get married and all I said was if that makes you happy, I will say 'YES'. and of course, it was never a happy marriage. Just about after 2 years of getting married, about 9 years ago, I met a car accident. Somehow my husband fell asleep and the car fell into the ditch. He managed to jump out, saved himself. I am happy for him. But I stayed inside the car and I sustain a lot of injuries. My right arm was fractured, wrist was fractured, shoulder bone and collarbone was fractured. And because of the rib cage injury, lungs and liver were badly injured. I couldn't breathe. I lost urine control. That's why I have to wear the bag where ever I go.

But that injuries changed me and my life completely. As a person, my perception towards living my life was the spine injury. My backbone was completely crushed. And I got paralyzed for rest of my life.

So this accident took place in a far-flung area of Balochistan where there was no first aid, no hospital, no ambulance. I was in the middle of nowhere. Many people came to rescue. They drag me out of the car. While they were dragging me out I got the complete transaction of my spinal cord.



**ENGLISH
SPEECHES**
WITH BIG
SUBTITLES

And now there was this debate going on, should we keep it here, she is going to die, or where should we go. There was no ambulance. There was one four wheeler jeep standing in the corner of the street. They said, put her in the back of the jeep and take her to the hospital which is 3 hours away from this place. And I still remember that bumpy ride. I was all broken. They threw me in the back of the jeep and they rushed me to the hospital. That is where I realized that my half body was paralyzed and half body was fractured. I finally ended up in a hospital where I stayed for two and a half months. I underwent multiple surgeries. Doctors have put a lot of titanium in my arms and there was a lot of titanium on my back to fix my back.

That's why, In Pakistan, people called me the 'Iron Lady' of Pakistan.

Sometimes I wonder how easy it is for me to describe all this all over again. And somebody has rightly said that when you share your story and it doesn't make you cry, that means you are healing.

Those two and a half months, in the hospital, were droughtful. I will not make a story just to inspire you. I was on the verge of dis-pare. One day the doctor came to me, and he said, well I heard that you want to be an artist, but you ended up being a housewife. I have bad news for you. You won't be able to paint again because your wrist and arm are so deformed. You won't be able to hold the pen again. And I stayed quiet. Next day, the doctor came to me and said, your spine injury is so bad you won't be able to walk again. I took a deep breath. And I said it's alright. Again, Next day the doctor came and said, because of your spine injury and your fixation that you have in your back, you won't be able to give birth to a child again. That day, I was devastated. I still remember, I ask my mother, why me, and that is where I started to question my existence. Why am I even alive? What's the point of living? I couldn't walk, I couldn't paint, fine. I cannot be a mother and we have this thing in our head being women that we are incomplete without. Having children, I am going to be an incomplete woman for the rest of my life. What's the point? People are scared that they think I will get divorced. What is going to happen to me? Why me? Why Am I alive? We all try to chase this tunnel. We all do this. Because we see lights at the end of the tunnel which keeps us going. My dear friends, in my situation, there was a tunnel that I had to roll on but there was no light. And that is where I realized the words have the power to heal the soul. My mother said to me that this two sell-pass. God has a greater plan for you. I don't know what it is. But he surely has.

And all in that distress and grief, mom's those words were so magical that they kept me going. I was trying to put my smile on my face all the time hiding the pain. It was so hard to hide the pain which was there. But all I knew was that I will give up, my mother and brother will give up too. I cannot see them crying with me. So what kept me going was one day I asked my brother, I know, I have a deformed hand but I am tired of looking at these white walls in the hospital and wearing this white scraps. I am getting tired of this. I want to add more colors to my life. I want to do something. Bring me some colors, I want to paint. so the very first painting I made was on my deathbed. It was not just an art piece or not just my passion. It was my therapy. What an amazing therapy it was. without saying a single word, I could paint my heart out. I could share my story.

People used to come and say, 'wow, what a lovely painting'. so much color, nobody sees the grief in it. Only I could. So that's how I spend my two and a half months in the hospital. Lying, never complaining or whining but painting.



ENGLISH SPEECHES

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And then I was discharged. And I went back home. and I realized that I have developed a lot of pressure ulcers on my back, on my hipbone. I was unable to sit. There were a lot of infections all over my body, a lot of allergies. So Doctor wanted me to lie down on the bed straight. For not six months, for not 1 year, but for two years I was bedridden confined in that one room looking outside the window listening to the birds chirping and thinking there will be a time when we will be going out with the family and enjoying the nature. That was the time, where I realized how lucky people are but they don't realize. That is the time where I realized, the day I going to sit, I am going to share this pain to make them realize how blessed they are and they even don't consider them lucky.

There are always turning points in your life. There was a rebirthday that I celebrated. After two years and two and a half months when I was able to sit in a wheelchair. That was the day where I had the rebirth. I was a completely different person. I still remember the day I sat on the wheelchair first time knowing that I am never going to live this, knowing that I am never going to walk for the rest of my life. I saw myself in the mirror. and I talked to my self. And I still remember what I said. I cannot wait for a miracle to come and make me walk. I cannot sit in the corner of the room crying, crippling and begging mercy because nobody has time.

So, I have to accept my self, the way I am, the sooner the better. So, I applied the lip color for the first time. And I erased it. and I cried and I said what am I doing. A person on a wheelchair should not do this. What will people say? Clean it up. Put it back again. This time I put it to myself. Because I want to feel perfect from within. And that day I decided I am going to a life of myself. I am not going to be that perfect person for someone. I am just going to take this moment and I will make it perfect for myself. And do you know, how we all begin? That day I decided, I am going to fight my fears. We all have fears. Fear of the unknown, fear of known. Fear of losing people. Fear of losing health, money. We want to excel in a career. We want to become famous. We want to get money. We are scared all the time. so I wrote down one by one, all those fears. And I decided I am going to overcome those fears one at a time. You know what was my biggest fear. Divorce. I couldn't stand this word. I was trying to cling on this person who didn't want me anymore. But I said no, I have to make it work. But the day I decided that this is nothing but my fear. I liberated myself by setting him free. And I made myself emotionally so strong that the day I got news that he is getting married, I sent him a text and said, 'I am so happy for you' and wanna wish you all the best. And he knows that I pray for him today.

My biggest fear number two was I won't be able to be a mother again and that was quite devastating for me. But then I realize, there are so many children in the world, all they want is the acceptance. So there is no point of crying, just go and adopt one. That's what I did.

I gave my name to different organizations, different orphanages. I didn't mention, I am on the wheelchair, dying to have a child. so I told then this is Muniba Mazari and she wants to adopt, boy-girl what so ever. But I want to adopt and I waited patiently. Two years later, I got this call from a very small city in Pakistan. They said, 'Are you Muniba Mazari'. There is a baby boy. Would you like to adopt? And When I said 'Yes', I could literally feel the labor pain. Yes Yes, I am going to adopt him. I am coming to take him home. And when I reached there, the man was sitting there and he was looking at me from head to toe. Don't judge me, I am in the wheelchair. You know what he said, 'I know you will be the best mother of this child. You both will be lucky to have each other'. And that day, he was two days old and today he is six.



ENGLISH SPEECHES

WITH BIG
SUBTITLES

You will be surprised to know the bigger fear that I had in me. It was facing people. I used to hide myself from people. When I was in bed for two years and I used to keep the doors closed. I used to pretend that I am not going to meet anyone. Tell them I am sleeping. You know why? Because I couldn't stand that sympathy that they had for me. They used to treat me like a patient. When I used to smile, look at me and said, 'You are smiling, are you OK'. I was tired of this question being asked. Are you sick? Well, a lady at the airport asked me, 'Are you sick'. And I said, well, besides this spinal cord injury, I am fine. I guess. Those were really cute questions. They never used to feel cute when I was on the bed. so I used to hide myself from people knowing that Oh my god I am not going to see that sympathy on their eyes. It's all right. Today, I am here speaking to all these amazing people. Because I have overcome the fear.

You know when you ended up being in the wheelchair, what's the most painful thing? That's another fear. People on the wheelchair, who are differently able to have their hearts but they never share. I will share that with you. The lack of acceptance. People think that they will not be accepted by the people because we and the world of perfect people are imperfects.

So, I decided instead of starting an INGO, NGO for disabilities awareness which I know will not help anyone, I started to appear more in public. I started to paint. I always wanted to. I have a lot of exhibitions for Pakistan, I have done a lot of modeling campaign, different campaign for brands like tony and guy. I have done some really funny breaking the barriers kinds of modelings. There was this one by the name clown town where I became a clown because I know that clowns have a heart too.

So, when you accept yourself, the way you are, the world recognizes you. It all starts from within. I became the national goodwill ambassador of UN women, Pakistan. And now I speak for the rights of women and children. We talk about inclusion, diversity, gender equality which is a must.

I was featured in BBC 100 women for 2015. One of the Forbes 30 under 30 for 2016.

And it all didn't happen alone. You all are thriving in your careers. You have bigger dreams and aspirations in life. Always remember one thing, on the road to success there is always 'We' not 'Me'. Do not think that you alone can achieve things. No, there is always another person, who is standing behind you, maybe not coming on the forefront, behind you, supporting you. Never lose that person. Never.

No matter how much I say that I couldn't find a hero. so I became one. I still want to recognize those three people in my life who literally changed my life completely and I get inspiration from them every single day.

The women who believe in me even when I was completely on the verge of dis-pare where everybody left, she was there. And every time, I looked at her saying. She used to look at me and said, it's too sell pass. God has a bigger plan. One day you will say that Oh my God, that is why God has chosen me. She never cried in front of me. She always said that there will be haters, there will be naysayers, there will be disbelievers and there will be you to proving them wrong. My mother.

Whatever I am today, I am nothing without her. I am nothing without her. Thank you, mama, I wish you were here. Thank you for making me, who I am today.



ENGLISH SPEECHES

WITH BIG
SUBTITLES

You know, what we human being have a problem. We always expect each from lives. We have this amazing fantasy about life. This is how things should work. This is my plan. It should go as per my plan. If that doesn't happen, we give up. So my dear friends, let me tell you one thing. I never wanted to be in a wheelchair. Never thought of being in a wheelchair. I was always aspiring to do bigger things. and I had no idea, for that, I have to pay the price to be where I am today. It's a very heavy price. This life is a test and a trial. Tests are trials. I never supposed to be easy and why you are expecting each from lives. And life gives you the lemon. and you made the lemonade. and then do not blame for life for that. Because you were expecting each from a trial. Trial make you a stronger better person. Life is a trial. Every time you realize that.

It is OK to be scared. It is OK to cry. Everything is OK. but giving up is not be an option, should not be an option. They always say that failure is not an option. Failure should be an option. When you fail, you get up and then you fail, then you get up, that keeps you going. That's how humans are strong. A failure is an option. It should be an option. but giving up is not. Never. We have these things in minds. We call it perfection. We want everything perfect. We want our self to be perfect. Perfect life, Perfect relationships, Perfect career, Perfect amount of money that we need to earn no matter what. Nothing is perfect in this world. We all are perfectly imperfect. And that is perfectly alright. That's alright! You were sent here not to become perfect people. Those people who tell you how to look perfect even those people are imperfect. Trying to fight this fear of looking imperfect. I used to be perfect. I still remember I got this compliments, years ago, when I used to walk. OMG, look at you, you are so fair, you are tall, you are perfect. Look at me now. Only the perfect eyes can see that. Only the perfect eyes will see that. Only the perfect eyes will see that.

So, Yes. And all those imperfections you have to listen to your hearts. You don't have to look good for people. You don't have to be perfect just because other people wanted you to be perfect. If your soul is perfect from within. That's all right! This is all what you want. This is all what you need to be. Our society has made a very weird, very weird kind of norms to look perfect in grade. For a man, it's different. For a woman, it's different. We think too much about what people say. We listen to ourselves too little. You know what makes you perfect. When you make someone smile. You know what makes you perfect when you try to do something good for the people around you. You know what makes you perfect. when you feel someone's pain. And how beautiful pain is that it connects with people. No other medium can connect you other but pain. That's why I always say I am in pain. That's a blessing for me.

Today, just because I am in pain and I am on the wheelchair, I work for children. Being the head of CSRF of company we conduct medical camps in far-flung areas of Pakistan where so many kids died because there they don't have medical facilities. And I personally believe that just because they cannot afford to live doesn't mean that we will let them die. so we give them money, we give them medical treatment. We try to heal their wounds. Physical and emotional. And I also work for the beautiful people we call them third gender. The transgender community of Pakistan. You know, what connects me with them. All my imperfections. When I go and hug them they never judge me and this very good friend of mine. Her name is Bijli. Bijli means electricity. She called herself electricity. And I said are you electricity. She says 'no'. I am lightning. I am as strong as lightning. I am thunder. I am lightning.



ENGLISH SPEECHES

WITH BIG
SUBTITLES

She came to me and the first time I hugged she said You are just like me. And I said I am like you. Because to people, we are so imperfect. So how beautiful these imperfections are. Because of these imperfections, you can connect to people then why are we all running after being perfect. What's the point?

Every time I go in public. I smile. And People asked me, 'Don't you get tired of smiling all the time' What's the secret. I always say one thing. I have stopped worrying about the things that I have lost, people I have lost. Things and people who were meant to be with me are with me. And sometimes somebody's absence makes you a better person. Cherish their absence. It always a blessing. I always say that people are so lucky that even they don't realize, you must be thinking. OK. You are lucky in what sense. Well, the breath you just took now was a blessing. Em-brass it. There are so many people in the world who are dreaming to live a life that you are living right now. You have no idea. Em brass each and every breath you are taking. Celebrate your life. Live it. Don't die before your death. We all die.

We live this one routine of the day for 75 years and we call it life. No that's not life. If you are still thinking why you have been sent here. If you are still juggling with the concept of why you are here, you haven't lived yet. You work hard. You make money. You do it for yourself. That's not life. You go out and seek for people who need your help. You make their lives better. You add colors to their lives, You add values to their lives. You become that sponge which removes all negativity. You can become that person who can emit beautiful positive vibes and when you realize that you have changed someone's life. And Because of you, this person didn't give up. That is the day, when you live, Always.

We were talking about gratitude. Why I smile all the time. I cry all night when nobody sees me. Because I am a human and I have to keep the balance. And I smiled all day because I know that if I smile I can make people smile, that keeps me going. Be grateful, what you have. And you will always always always ended up with having more. But if you will cry, if you will crip for the little things that you don't have or the things you have lost. You will never ever have enough. Sometimes we are too busy thinking about the things that we don't have. Forget. Cherish the blessings that we have.

I am not saying that I am not healthy that makes me unlucky. But Yes, it is hard. It is hard when I say I can't walk. It's hard when I say I have to wear that bag. It hurts. but I have to keep going. Because never giving up is the way to live. Always.

So well, end my talk, on a very short note. Live your life fully. Accept the way you are. Be kind to yourself. Be kind to yourself. I will repeat, Be kind to yourself. and then only we can be kind to others. Love your self. Spread that love. Life will be hard. There will be turmoil, there will be trials. But that will only make you stronger. Never give up. The real happiness does not lie in money or success or fame. I have all this and I have never wanted this. Real happiness lies in gratitude. So be grateful and be alive and live in every moment.

Thank you so much, everyone.