



## My weeks of living disabled-ly!

This past Tuesday, in our book discussion on *To Kill a Mockingbird*, we noticed how Scout learned to experience life through the experience of others. The aftermath of my bike mishap last week has been a similar experience for me. And it has caused me to reflect on how blessed I have been, and remain, and how much I have yet to learn.

For over fifty years I've been able to go pretty much anywhere, and do pretty much anything---the primary limitations being financial or legal or some-such. I've never broken a bone. I've never suffered a debilitating illness. I'm hardly ever even sick. But, for the past 10 days, I've been "crutch-bound" (and will continue to be for the next several weeks).

This morning I was able to shower in my own house (as opposed to the gym), as I was finally given the go-ahead to climb stairs (as long as I didn't put any weight on my injured hip). What a small thing . . . what a BIG thing. At DU, I'm fortunate that there are many touch-pads that will open doors for me, elevators that will move me from floor to floor. On the other hand, walks that used to take 5 minutes now take 10 - 15. And our seemingly level campus . . . isn't!

Last week, after a doctor's appointment, my wife took me to a local chain restaurant. She left me at the curb to go park the car, and I turned to enter the eatery. No touch-pad. Fortunately some folks were exiting the restaurant, and held the door open for me. In their absence, I was on my own (at least until my wife would arrive). Not a big deal, certainly, but big enough to be yet another "eye-opener" at the barriers faced by another segment of the population -- a segment of which I am now a part.

Yet, I am lucky. I am only on crutches, and, God-willing, only temporarily. Physically broken, for the time-being. Surrounded by many, helpful, "non-physically-broken" folks for whom I'm constantly thankful. Someone once said (the attribution is disputed): "Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a great battle." I've learned more about the battles some are fighting, and have been reminded, metaphorically, of the battles we all face. My prayer is that I continually remember my own broken state (and that's not just physically) and recognize that in others . . . and exercise more kindness to all.

Blessings,

Gary