



To all my friends worldwide who work with Therapeutic Riding, the book *The Boy Who Could Run But Not Walk* written by Karen PAPE, MD, and published by Barlow Books, Toronto (2016) is exciting and invaluable reading. It is very relevant to therapeutic riding and shows us the progress that has been made with people with cerebral palsy.

For those involved either as a coach, therapist or volunteer, this book will inspire you to run more effective programs with children, teenagers and adults.

Dr. PAPE has worked for many years changing the functional movement of children with cerebral palsy and brachial plexus injury. Her journey through and within the medical professional has not been an easy one. She has constantly fought through medical barriers from old established thinking and treatments to modern day possibilities and actualities.

Neuroplasticity has been found and proved to allow lasting change in the brain throughout life. This means that an established form of movement developed in early life could be modified, at any age, to be more 'normal' and affective. The older people are the harder it is for them to change their gait. Early intervention is of huge benefit. 'Untreated spasticity inevitably leads to incorrect body alignment, body distortion and chronic pain'.

A person's spasticity hides and retards possible and correct movement patterns. A boy who could walk with an awkward gait finds that he can run 'normally', as the parts of his brain required for running have recovered.

Therapeutic riding is an ideal vehicle for helping infants and children to develop symmetry, body alignment, strength, coordination, balance and confidence. Improvements in mobility and movement, no matter how small, may greatly assist a person throughout life.

The freedom to move in space, on a horse, allows the brain to refine balance of the trunk and upper body in a way that would not be possible if the person was focusing merely on traversing across a room on an unstable lower body.

*The Boy Who Could Run But Not Walk* is written in a language that non-medically trained readers can easily understand. Parents of children with cerebral palsy will have a much better idea about possible treatments and programs for their children and it will give them the knowledge and confidence to make life changing decisions.

I highly recommend this book.

Mary L. Longden