

CPhysio Focus

Issue Two



Lord Jeffrey Archer

Prepare for Snow

Winter Coughs

Now, tell me your story...

Listening to stories is the cornerstone of a thorough and detailed physiotherapy assessment. Without it we can get lost in the detail of an examination, not really understanding what actually happened. And, more importantly, why.

So I was filled with intrigue and curiosity when I had the opportunity to meet Lord Jeffrey Archer, undoubtedly one of the greatest storytellers of our time.

Mightier Than the Sword

Most of my knowledge was confined to news stories about his jail sentence for perjury and perverting the course of justice, so I was keen to learn more about his personal, political and literary history.

At 79 years old, he entered the stage with stooped posture and stern face. With a voice like Winston Churchill he announced his candidacy as the next British Prime Minister!

And so it continued for the next 90 minutes, filled with jokes, character voices and wonderful anecdotes. Lord Archer proceeded to effortlessly educate us in the art of storytelling. Not writing, but story telling.

Reading to a room attentive to his every word, he imparted wisdom about the key features of a story, all wrapped up so neatly by his own prize-winning short story comprising just 100 words.

It sounded so easy. Telling stories, though, has never been one of my strong points. A few months ago Leanne found one of my early efforts from school kept by my parents for posterity. A classic short story? Unfortunately not. But it did provoke some humour that will be long remembered in our house.

So what went wrong?

According to Lord Archer there are several key components to a good story:

1. A beginning
2. Use short sentences

3. Avoid unnecessary words
4. A middle
5. Pique the interest of the reader with misdirection
6. Add some humour as people love humour
7. There is no substitute for damned hard work
8. And an end

I identified many similarities with our rehabilitation process (misdirection not always required!).

A Beginning

Setting the scene determines whether you're likely to read on to the end of the book or put it down and dismiss it as boring. For us, it all starts with the story of your injury.

Getting a thorough assessment sets the scene for your recovery. In your opening chapter we concentrate on the what, when, how and why. It focuses the mind and establishes where you are now and where you want to be.

What?

Is it your back, ankle, shoulder, neck? We need to know what the problem is otherwise it's like taking a stab in the dark. All the peripheral issues are important too. Don't assume that health problems are unrelated and dismiss them without thought. Let us know and we'll be able to use that information to help set the scene.

When?

Was it a couple of days ago (an acute injury), or have you been suffering for a number of years (a chronic/long term problem)? These details are important to know which stage an injury is at and how quickly we can get to work with making a recovery. A 2 week old fracture will need to be treated very differently to persistent pain following a fracture 5 years ago.

How?

The mechanism of injury can guide our diagnosis and helps us to understand the way the tissues were injured. The way a knee twists if you have an impact from the inside instead of the outside of the knee can result in very different set of structures that are injured, even though the pain may be similar.

Research suggests that 90% of our clinical problem-solving process comes from the history, or the story of your injury.



Your story is so important. Because I'm trying to understand and pick out the WHY.

Why?

The body heals amazingly well. In most instances injuries will recover with some simple exercises, ice, heat and appropriate rest.

When things don't progress as expected we need to ask why that is?

The devil is in the detail. The more detail you give, the better we can work out why you're struggling and what is most likely to help you recover and come out the other side.

Short Sentences and Unnecessary Words

Keeping your story easy to understand really helps us to focus on the key parts. With a complex story it means we can break it down into separate parts that link chronologically. We'll be writing down your story as you tell it, so we'll summarise the key parts to keep it easy to understand.

A Middle

Each treatment session is a separate chapter that leads us through your story. Some will be full of treatment, exercise progression and dramatic results. Others could be fillers that move the story steadily to its conclusion.

As with any story, there's loads of unwritten content. You'll find out performing your exercises regularly is the boring bit that doesn't make for great reading. Without them, though, you'll get

stuck reading the same thing over and over again and won't be able to move on to the next chapter.

Misdirection

We aim to make your rehab journey run smoothly with steady progress of your recovery week by week. Responding well to exercise enables you to take control of your own recovery. But it could be filled with twists and turns.

Characters enter and leave a story with varying degrees of involvement.

If shoulder pain is the main character, neck stiffness is commonly the evil sidekick. A jaw problem could play a fleeting cameo, with uncontrolled diabetes hovering in the background throughout the tale.

We'll constantly assess, treat and reassess your condition to make sure you're keeping on track. Your response to treatment might lead off at a tangent that at first seems unrelated to the main storyline. Different characters, body parts and medical problems will be involved to varying degrees. We might need to bring in new characters as the story develops. GPs, consultants and other healthcare professionals could be important to bringing your story to a successful conclusion.

Every character plays its role, and only by treating each part can we conclude their role in the story.

Damned Hard Work

For Lord Archer, his damned hard work has obviously paid off. Describing his daily routine it is obvious he has a zest for life and writing that sets him up for success. 8 hours of writing a day, in 2 hour segments, starting at 7am and finishing at 9pm.

And there's no sign of stopping with another 7 book series deal agreed to take him into his 80s.

300 million books sold worldwide, 19 No 1 Bestsellers, 4 No 1 Best Short Stories, and a No 1 Non-Fiction Bestseller (The Prison Diaries). 40 years on his best-selling book Kane and Abel is still in print. He certainly has the credentials to impart wisdom about writing a good story.



Your rehabilitation story should be filled with hard work too. Committing to your exercises and home routine should be a major focus but remember your rest phases too.

Take time out to do things you enjoy and respect the rest phases in your schedule. Especially sleep. Sleep is such an important factor in recovery as it helps the body consolidate the changes you've made with your exercises and treatment. If you're having

difficulty with your sleep mention it to your physiotherapist, as there are ways we can help your sleep patterns to assist your recovery.

The End

The ideal ending is when you come back to us and say "Yes, I'm 100% better, back to work and doing all the hobbies and sports I enjoy without any restrictions!"

Great – Discharge

But what happens when the story ends?

Do the characters just pale into insignificance?

Or is there a sequel?

To make sure you don't need to write a second book, keep up with all the things that never made it into the book in the first place. The hard work completing your exercises, the self-treatments and the attendance at Pilates classes.

Stories never end, they just inform us of the highlights that are interesting and relevant to us. So many people's stories never get told that we forget there are lots of exciting, humorous stories that remain hidden.

Don't hide your story away. Tackle it head on and lead us on a journey to a positive conclusion and let us help you tell your story that has a beginning, middle and a successful end.



Inspiration: Lord Jeffrey Archer

Focus On: Get yourself Ski-Fit

It's getting to that time of year when many people's thoughts turn to the snowy slopes of Europe. We've even had a bit of the white stuff in the UK!

If you are an experienced skier then you will already know that you need to prepare your body for the challenges that lie ahead. If you are a novice then you should be preparing thoroughly to ensure you get the most from your holiday.

Our team of award winning physiotherapists has designed a ski fitness programme suitable for all age groups and abilities. The course runs for 6 weeks and includes a range of skiing specific exercises designed to develop and improve your strength, flexibility, balance and control whilst reducing your risk of injury.

5 Benefits of Ski Fitness

- ① Skiing control will impress your friends and family from Day One!
- ② Improved strength means you will be able to tackle all types of slopes!
- ③ More stamina means you can cover more miles!
- ④ Better balance reduces your risk of injury from falls!
- ⑤ Extra energy helps you enjoy your après-ski activities to the max!

Visit us online or phone to book the programme designed to get you Ski Fit in just 6 weeks.

What About Snowboarders?

Our Ski Fit programme can be easily adapted to suit the needs of snowboarders. By focussing on balance, abdominal, thigh and hip strength and control you will be working all the major muscle groups just as you would on the slopes.

3 Simple Ways To Avoid A Chest Infection This Winter

Dark nights, cold weather and the talk of mid-winter rings alarm bells with respiratory physio.

It's Chest Infection Season!

Although there are many people who are susceptible to chest infections in the colder months there are ways to prevent them.

Follow the 3 simple steps on the next few pages to keep you healthy and fighting fit this Winter.

1. Stay Hydrated

Current NHS guidelines recommend that we drink 1.5-2L fluid per day.

To be honest the last thing you may feel like doing in this cold, dark weather is drinking water but why is it necessary?

Water is essential for bodily functions such as:

- transporting nutrients and oxygen around your body
- getting rid of waste products
- controlling your temperature
- the function of your digestive system

What Should I Drink?

The best fluids to drink this winter are:

- Water and
- Fruit squash (sugar free)

Other fluids can contribute to your daily intake if taken in moderation. They contain other substances such as caffeine and sugar and shouldn't be consumed in large quantities:

- Tea
- Coffee
- Fruit tea
- Fruit juice
- Diet fizzy drinks

Fluids to be avoided include:

- Alcohol
- Sugary fizzy drinks

If in doubt, stick with water and you'll be on your way to 2 litres a day!



2. Keep Moving

Not a regular at the gym? Too cold or icy to go out?

Don't worry – You can set up a small circuit of exercises in your very own home.

Our top 3 exercises for keeping active this Winter are: *(see exercise images on next page):*

1) Step Ups

Stand facing the bottom step of your stairs.

Step up with one foot, then the other.

Bring one foot back down, then the other.

Repeat for 30 seconds.

2) Bicep Curls

Hold a bottle of water or a dumbbell in each hand.

Bend your elbow, bringing your hand to your shoulder, then relax back down.

Repeat with the other arm.

Repeat for 30 seconds.

3) Chair Squats

Stand facing away from a chair.

Sit down onto the chair, then stand up again.

Repeat for 30 seconds.

After you've been through all the exercises, you can repeat each one 3 or 4 times to get a solid workout for your arms, legs and lungs.

Remember to take the exercises at a speed that is right for you. The slower you go, the harder your muscles will work. But speed it up and your lungs will work harder.

You can also adjust the number of times you do each exercise. It's better to start with less repetitions and build it up gradually, than start with too much and struggle towards the end of the exercises.

To see the exercises in action and view easier and harder variations of each exercise, click on the heading of each exercise to view it on the C-Physio YouTube Channel.

Finally, if there's no snow or ice on the ground, then head out walking.

Walking is one of the best forms of exercise to clear your chest. Just 20 minutes of walking can improve your lung function and keep your muscles strong.

Remember – We are not bears – we do not hibernate!

3. Get Wet!

No I don't mean jumping in puddles!

Taking a warm bath or shower is a great way to open up your airways and loosen any phlegm that might be getting stuck at the bottom of your lungs.

Not only is it relaxing (especially after your exercise) the steam is excellent for your airways and will help to loosen any phlegm for you to cough out. My favourite saying as a respiratory physiotherapist – better out than in!

If you regularly struggle with chest infections you may have an underlying respiratory condition. You should make your GP aware of the problem as there may be other treatment options that can help.

Alternatively, you can take a proactive approach to chest clearance and improve your lung function. At C-Physio, you can get effective exercise programmes and chest clearance techniques from one of our Specialist Respiratory Physiotherapists to clear phlegm more easily and reduce the risk of chest infections in the Winter months. It's never too late to start, so give us a call on 01274 270450 to book a Respiratory Physiotherapy Assessment.

For now – Wrap Up Warm, Stay Hydrated and Keep Moving!

Best wishes and a Happy (chest infection free) New Year!

Leanne Carter

Respiratory Physiotherapist at C-Physio



1) Step Ups



2) Bicep Curls



3) Chair Squats





Our 5 Guarantees to You

At C-Physio we aim to make you feel better and to help you have confidence in our service before, during and after your visits to us we offer you our

5 Guarantees:

- ① Your first appointment in under 24 hours or you get it for free!
- ② Treatment at your first appointment or your next session free!
- ③ On time, every time or £10 off!
- ④ The best outcome in the area or your money back!
- ⑤ Tip-top condition for life or a free Physio Tip Top Check!

Whichever way you look at it, you are guaranteed successful treatment at C-Physio!

Great News!

The Red Box Project

After two and a half years of providing free period products to schools across the country, and following a legal campaign launched with Free Periods, we are delighted to say that the Government has at last taken action to tackle the issue of period poverty experienced by children in England. The Department for Education has committed to funding the supply of free period products to all schools (primary and secondary) and colleges from early next year.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our patients, friends and family who kindly donated to The Red Box Project during its time at C-Physio. Both ourselves and the staff at The Red Box Project were overwhelmed with the number of products we collected in the 12 months we had the boxes at C-Physio.

