

Chris Norton

Motivational Speaker & Former Defensive Back

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Topics

- Activism / Philanthropy / Civic Engagement
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About Chris Norton

Chris suffered a spinal cord injury while playing football at Luther College (Iowa). The doctors gave Chris a 3% chance of moving anything below his neck again. Four years later, he defied the odds and walked across stage at his college graduation with his fiancé, Emily Summers. The video went viral twice, garnered 300 million+ views, and caught the eye of the country's top media outlets (Good Morning, America, TodayShow.com, NBC Nightly News, CBS, USA Today, Sports Illustrated, etc.).

Three years later, Chris attempted another incredible feat – this time, perhaps the most important walk of his life - down the aisle with his wife, Emily. As with his Graduation Walk, Chris prepared relentlessly, spending four hours per day in the gym. Chris and Emily joyfully conquered the challenge and walked seven yards down the aisle after their wedding ceremony. Seven yards symbolized the seven-year anniversary of his injury. Their beautiful story once again captured the heart of the world, with coverage ranging from nearly all of the top-tier U.S. media outlets to media in Germany, Italy and London, to name a few.

Chris is a well-respected motivational speaker and speaks at numerous events across the country. He was recently named to the ITA Group's 2018 Hottest Keynote Speakers List, alongside Michael Strahan, Magic Johnson and Mark Cuban. Chris' message focuses on the fact that we all face challenges, but our circumstances don't define us – we do. With inspiring anecdotes and positive action steps, Chris connects with his audience in a genuine, entertaining and impactful way. His message resonates with all of us: adversity is universal, but we all have the Power to Stand. Additionally, Chris has written a book; he and Emily are working on their second book; and a documentary is being made about them.

Chris created the Chris Norton Foundation, which is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping people with spinal cord and neuromuscular disabilities by providing opportunities that would not otherwise exist. This is achieved through supporting the purchase of rehabilitation equipment for organizations/facilities and providing services and scholarships for camp programs. To date, the Chris Norton Foundation has raised just under \$1 million dollars.

Chris and Emily have five foster children under 8 years old. They are both deeply committed to providing a safe, loving home for children in need. In late December, they were fostering a 3-year old, and were approached about fostering a group of four siblings. The only way they would be approved for the placement was to buy a bigger vehicle. So, without hesitation, they purchased a "new" used vehicle that would fit everyone. They are truly a remarkable couple, who positively impact those around them.

Select Keynotes

• The Power to Stand

Your life can change in an instant. Chris' changed forever on October 16, 2010. After an accident on the football field, he lost all feeling from his neck down and was told he would never be able to move again.

He had two choices. Was he going to spend the rest of his life feeling sorry for himself? Or was he going to make a stand? He knew one thing. When they tell you that you have a 3% chance of moving anything below your neck again, forget the 97. Focus on the 3. Yes, his life changed forever; but through his experience, he realized that how his life would change was up to him. He had ...

THE POWER TO STAND.

Select Book Titles



- **2019:** The Seven Longest Yards: Our Love Story of Pushing the Limits while Leaning on Each Other
- **2015:** The Power of Faith When Tragedy Strikes: A Father-Son Memoir

Select Articles

- [After 7 years in wheelchair, groom walks down aisle on his wedding day](#)

A determined groom took a huge stride last weekend when he walked down the aisle at his own wedding, despite a spinal chord injury that had left him in a wheelchair for the past seven years.

Select Client Feedback

I saw the movie and it was powerful and inspirational. However, to hear from Chris, to see him, to feel the emotion was simply incredible. Our consultants were touched, moved and permanently impacted by Chris's story and his delivery of that story. One of the best, if not the best motivational speaker's I've ever heard!!

— **Jay Shafer** *Zurvita*