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with Limb Loss

ISSUE # 32

Sonia's STORY *Casualty to Cause*

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WELCOME

“Empathy is about finding echoes of another person in yourself.” – Mohsin Hamid

“Put yourself in someone else’s shoes,” is a well-worn way to describe empathy. But this I know as a card-carrying amputee of nearly 50 years... empathy is just not that simple.

For me, and I think many other amputees too, empathy is something deeper. It’s more complicated than imagination alone. It’s lived experiences and lives reclaimed, shaped by pain, resilience, humour, anger, pride, peers, and countless everyday, ordinary moments that follow limb loss too.

In this issue, we feature 12 books about amputee life that do more than tell stories. They invite readers into lived experience. They challenge the idea that amputation can be fully understood from the outside. They remind us that empathy is not about pity or inspiration – it’s about listening and learning.

When amputees tell our own stories, something powerful happens. The narrative shifts away from stereotypes and toward truth. These books speak honestly about grief and adaptation, identity, frustration and joy. Collectively, they are a testament to the fact that there is no single amputee experience yet, for all of us, strength can coexist with vulnerability, and independence can live alongside support.

For amputees, seeing ourselves reflected in print can be profoundly validating. For non-amputees – family and friends, clinicians, employers, allies – these books offer an opportunity to learn without asking us to explain. That too, is an act of empathy.

If you explore any of these books, memoirs mostly, sit with the author’s experiences and voice. Empathy is not a destination; it is a practice. And one of the most meaningful ways to practice it is to listen – especially when someone is speaking authentically.

Jeff Tiessen
Publisher, *thrive magazine*



thrive founder and publisher, Jeff Tiessen

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Living Well
with Limb Loss

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Get the BOOT for Winter



Choosing the proper footwear is the first line of defense against slippery icy conditions. For amputees, footwear that provides ample traction and support is essential. Look for boots with non-slip rubber soles and a snug fit around the ankle. Consider adding ice grips to the bottom of your shoes or boots for extra traction when walking on snow or ice. For those using

prosthetic devices, ensure that your shoe's sole is designed for winter weather. Prosthetists often recommend the Neos Overshoe. ***Check it out at neosovershoescanada.com/products/glaciertrek-insulated-voyager-cleats.***

LET'S GET CRACKIN'

Fillauer's ETD2 just got a high-tech upgrade. Designed for everyday durability and water-resistant functionality, the device is now delivering a much faster response time than previous models. From outdoor work to cooking in the kitchen, it's built to keep up with daily life. Engineered with all-metal fingers, the ETD2 provides superior strength, precision, and a smoother capacitive touch experience which makes tasks easier and more natural. Learn more about the ETD2 series and its innovative multi-flex wrist design at fillauer.com.

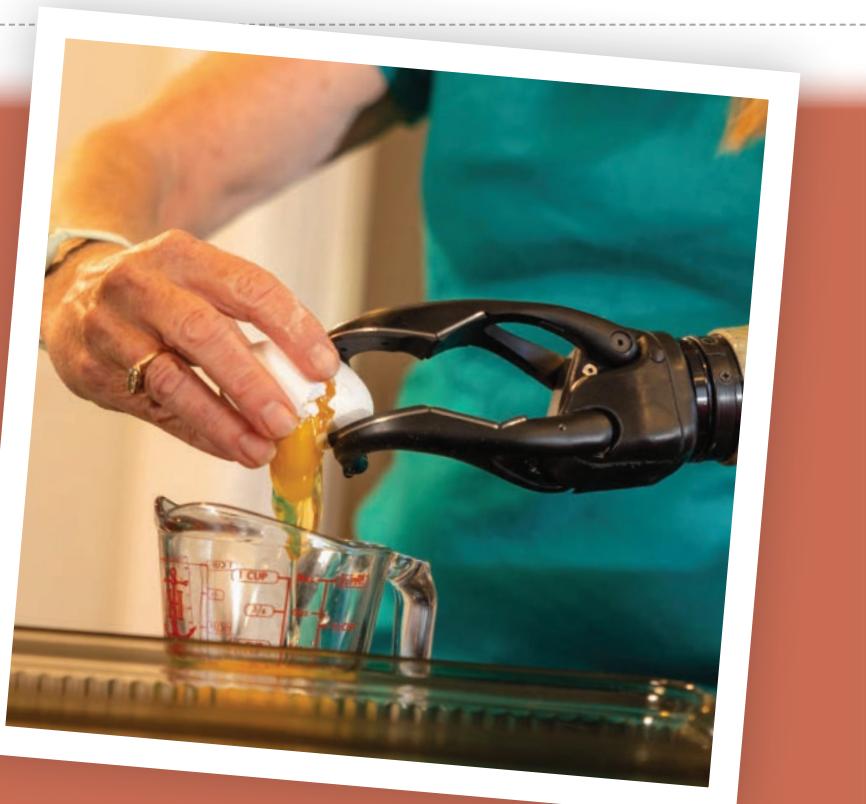
WORLDWIDE PROSTHETIC CARE

Prosthetic-wearing amputees know that travelling can be stressful, especially when a prosthesis needs a repair that calls for more than duct tape. If you're an Ottobock product user, there's peace of mind in knowing that the prosthetic manufacturer has a global network of 285 clinics across 18 countries. Bookmark its handy Global Locator before your next trip for Ottobock's global locations: ottobockcare.com/en-US/locations.



Research Recruits Young Amputees

Researchers at the B.C. Children's Hospital Foundation are inviting child and youth amputees, ages eight to 18, to take part in a study exploring what kids like or dislike about their prosthetic limbs. Participants will take part in a 45 to 60-minute virtual or in-person interview and receive a \$50 gift card as a thank-you. To learn more, visit rc.med.ubc.ca/redcap/surveys/?s=WMFLMEMA4RJHRRN4.





Feet Funder Campaign from ACC

The Amputee Coalition of Canada (ACC) has found a cheeky new way to find funding – selling prosthetic feet photos. Every foot pic sold will support the ACC's mission of providing peer support to amputees. With your help, the Amputee Coalition of Canada will help those experiencing limb loss get back on their feet.

The ACC launched its Feet Funder campaign on November 5th, International Prosthetics and Orthotics Day. The initiative was envisioned and created pro bono by Sid Lee, a global creative agency, and featured three amputee models: Tracy Schmitt (Unstoppable Tracy), Duane Lea, and Kirsten Woodend. The response was immediate. Within 24 hours, the campaign was featured on Global News, and syndicated nationally across the Global Network.

Here's how you can help: Visit FeetFunder.ca. Explore the gallery and learn more about the campaign. Buy a pic or make a donation to support the Peer Visitor Program and other essential services. Share the Campaign – post FeetFunder.ca on your social media to spread the word. Tax deductible donations can be made directly on ACC's website at www.amputeecoalitioncanada.org.

SECOND NATURE A Story About Freedom

TASKA Prosthetics recently unveiled Second Nature, a film that brings the company's mission to life. That mission is to instill confidence through innovation to enable people to unlock life's full potential.

The film captures real TASKA users reclaiming everyday moments, offering a powerful glimpse into how advanced prosthetic technology can transform lives. From casting a fishing line to cruising sunlit roads with no destination, Second Nature celebrates the beauty of personal freedom.



"It's about the moments that we all deserve to experience," says Mark Godenho, Head of Marketing at TASKA Prosthetics. "The simple, personal activities that shape who we are – moments that feel natural. Moments that are, quite literally, second nature." Learn more at taskaprosthetics.com/news/second-nature.



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Taste of Bionics.

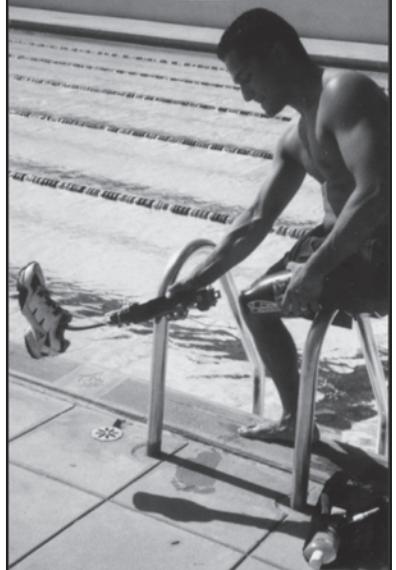
The future of prosthetics.
Hugh Herr on the dream of
eliminating physical disability.

Podcast Pitches the Future of Prosthetics

At age 17, Hugh Herr lost both legs in a climbing accident. Today, he leads groundbreaking research at MIT (the Massachusetts Institute of Technology), a private research university in Cambridge that has played a significant role in the development of many areas of modern technology and science. Herr's work centers on creating prosthetic limbs that restore natural movement and reconnect with the human nervous system.

In Herr's episode on the Taste of Bionics podcast, host Ranga Yogeshwar, a Luxembourgish physicist and science journalist based in Germany, explores Herr's journey and the innovations that could make disability a thing of the past. Herr explains how technology could one day eliminate physical disability. Tune in on your favourite podcast platform or watch on YouTube: Taste of Bionics.

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PASSION FOR PARALYMPICS



Ottobock's partnership with the Paralympic Games began in Seoul in 1988. The global company has provided the athletes with free technical services for all equipment and devices – from prostheses to sport wheelchairs to ice hockey sleds – at every Summer and Winter Paralympic Games ever since. The 2026 Paralympic Winter Games in Italy will be no exception.

The Milano Cortina Games, from March 6-15, will bring together over 650 elite athletes with disabilities to compete in 79 medal events across six sports. Ottobock's Technical Repair Service Team will be on site to ensure that competitors will have the equipment services needed to perform at their best.

Where It Begins

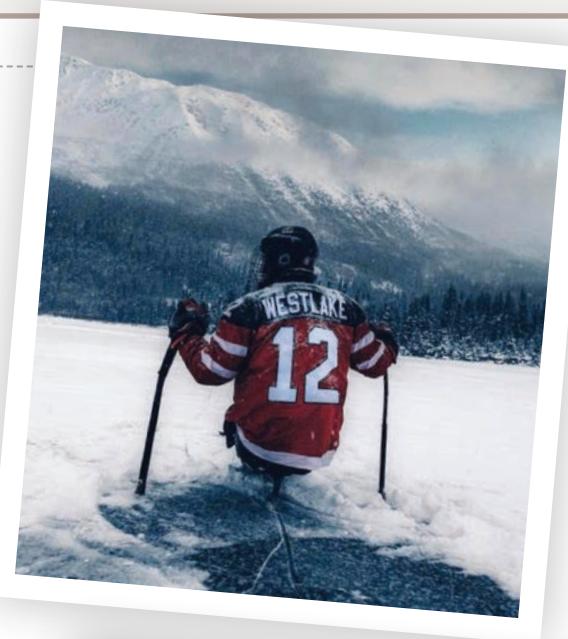
For Canada's Paralympic athletes, it starts on frozen ponds at dawn. On local trails after school. In basements where dreams echo off concrete walls. It starts in places like Campbell River, St. John's, Kahnawà:ke, and Gatineau.

"Where It Begins" is a new campaign that celebrates the journey of Canadian para athletes from their hometowns to the world stage at the Milano Cortina 2026 Paralympic Winter Games – and the communities, coaches, teammates, and families who made that journey possible.

As one of the voices of #WhereItBegins, multi-medalist and long-time leader of Canada's para ice hockey team Tyler McGregor (@tylermcgregor8), an above-knee amputee, shines a light on the roots of every Paralympic journey where hard work becomes hardware.

Renowned wheelchair track athlete and now Senator Chantal Petitclerc (@chantalpetitclerc) is another voice for the campaign. One of Canada's most decorated Paralympians, Petitclerc explains how the campaign echoes her own journey, a path that started on a small track in a small town long before the podium. Her words pay tribute to resilience, community, and the belief that no one does it alone.

Join #FillTheStands and support Canadian para athletes at Paralympic.ca/WhereItBegins. Watch the Milano Cortina 2026 Paralympic Winter Games, March 6-15, 2026, on CBC | CBC Gem | Radio-Canada | ICI TOU.TV.



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HASSAN Mirzahosseini



By Joe Millage

In sports, some pathways extend beyond athletic ability, determination and the mental strength needed under extreme duress. As we saw with the 2025 Toronto Blue Jays, athletic energy can inspire a community and create amazing opportunities for others. That is the stuff that legends are made of and that is what Hassan Mirzahosseini delivers.

Hassan's journey is a testament to the power of determination and resilience. Before the age of 19 he was a rising star in gymnastics and football [soccer]. But when diagnosed with cancer, resulting in the loss of his left leg above the knee, the landscape changed.

Rehab took years of hard work and Hassan was constantly investigating what was possible and where opportunities could be found to express his passion for sport.

"My goal was not just to participate but to push my abilities to the maximum of disabled sports," he says.

In his home country of Iran, he made history by establishing the nation's first national para-climbing team. He joined Iran's first disabled ski team, and started playing sitting volleyball.

His turning point came in 2019 when, while visiting family in Canada, he crossed paths with the legacy of Terry Fox, an encounter with the fellow cancer survivor and athlete that left an indelible mark on Hassan. Terry Fox's unwavering spirit fueled Hassan's aspirations. Now living in Richmond Hill, Ontario, he goes out of his way to pass through a park that has a statue of Fox. "I pass by it almost every day, and it gives me motivation every time I see it."

Hassan hopes his story resonates with others, the younger set especially. With a vision to leave an enduring legacy for future generations, he proudly mentions that he now works in the construction industry (thanks to training from LIUNA). He is literally building a future for others.

A proud ambassador with ParaSport® Ontario, Hassan endeavours to demonstrate to others that physical limitations can be eclipsed by determination and a staunch commitment to inspire others to reach for their own dreams.





When Life Feels Hard

5 WAYS TO MINDFULLY GET THROUGH THE DAY

5

By Lori Deschene

“If today gets difficult, remember the smell of coffee, the way sunlight bounces off a window, the sound of your favourite person’s laugh, the feeling you get when a song you love comes on, the colour of the sky at dusk, and that we are here to take care of each other.”

~Nanea Hoffman

I am currently exhausted. Absolutely beat. I've taken on more work than I can comfortably accomplish in my available time. I've been feeling under the weather for a while, and my eighteen-month-old son is in yet another sleep regression.

Whether I'm caring for him or working, I am almost always doing something, seven days a week.

I know I have little to complain about. I am relatively healthy, and so are the people who I love. I have all of my basic needs met. I have a lot to appreciate. But still, my days feel overwhelming. Maybe you can relate – and maybe for you it's even worse.

Maybe you're struggling with mental health issues or physical pain. Or, you're trying to figure out how to pay your bills because you've lost your job or some of your hours. Or you're dealing with a sick loved one, and the responsibility feels like far too much to bear.

If you're in that overwhelmed place right now – if you're frustrated and burnt out or at the end of your rope – I get it. I really do. And I don't have any simple answers for those very real, and perhaps, seemingly insurmountable problems.

I can say though, that things aren't always what they seem. And no matter what's coming down the road, there are a few things we can all do to help

ourselves get through each day so we're better able to handle whatever the future may bring. Here are a few mindful ways I use to approach the day when everything feels like too much:

1. Only do what you can accomplish by single tasking.

I find it incredibly hard to be present when I have to do multiple things at once because I feel like I'm failing at all of them, and inevitably get caught in my head, judging myself and my efforts.

I also don't enjoy anything when I'm overlapping tasks – even if some of them could otherwise be enjoyable, like spending time with my son or writing. It's like having twenty tabs open in my mind, with music and video clips and Netflix shows playing simultaneously. All good things, but not all at once!

Even in normal times, parents in particular, have to multi-task – there's just so much to do between childcare, housework, and actual work. But still, I've realized that I can ask for help with a lot and simply let some things go. I can wash the dishes later. Or make a non-cook lunch. Or not do

some of the little things I'd like to do but don't actually have to do.

If you feel like you simply can't, ask yourself if that's really true, or if you're just attached to your busyness – because you feel productive, or it gives you a sense of control, or it allows you to avoid emotions you maybe don't want to face.



2. Allow yourself to enjoy the little things.

It sounds cliché, and I know it is, but this really is a lifesaver. When your days feel overwhelming, those little moments can go a long way toward creating a feeling of balance, even when life isn't so balanced.

Take five minutes to savour your tea or coffee instead of scrolling and swiping your way through it. Dance to your favourite song and belt out the lyrics, really feeling them in your heart. Take a few minutes to look at the moon and stars at night and get lost for a minute in the evening's beauty and the vastness of the universe.

The other night, after a particularly taxing experience with my son, I noticed that the moon



looked like someone had painted it. It was truly stunning – full and far more orange than usual – and I can't remember having seen it quite so beautiful ever before. So I stared. I didn't try to stop thinking, but I just did because it was so spectacular. And after a few minutes I felt calmer.



Take a little time to be amazed by something you won't enjoy unless you consciously choose to focus on it. See the things you can't see when you're rushing. Hear the things you can't hear when you're stressing. Get so caught up in your senses that everything else seems to stop for a moment.

3. If you're worrying about the future or regretting the past, take stock in your strengths.

Hard days are infinitely more difficult when we relive hard days past or worry about potential hard days coming. But our minds are like magnets to negative things when we start indulging defeatist thoughts. It's like we put on a grey filter and then look back and forth through time with a dark, depressing spotlight.

So, instead of rehashing the past or worrying about the future, focus on all the strengths that you have right now that will prevent you

from making the same mistakes and help you handle whatever is coming.

Think about all that you've overcome and how that's shaped you. Maybe you're resourceful, or adaptable, or open-minded. Maybe you're determined, or disciplined, or empathetic in a way that helps you connect with people.

Instead of worrying about what the world can do to you, find strength in who you've become because of what you've been through – and trust, in this moment, that you can rely on those strengths to serve you well, no matter what the future holds. And then, even better: find a way to use one of those strengths right now.

The other day I started worrying about my plans for early next year because a lot is up in the air right now for me and – as always – there's a lot I can't control. Then I

remembered that, because I have put myself in many new situations throughout my life, I am always adaptable and resourceful. I find a way to make things work and make the best of things, even if I don't always trust that I will be able to do it.

4. Practice tiny acts of self-care.

There was a time when I had abundant opportunities for self-care. Pre-baby, I could easily do an hour-and-a-half yoga class and also fit in a walk on the beach and maybe even a bath.

These days I'm more likely to do ten minutes of stretching or five minutes of deep breathing to ocean sounds (since I no longer live near the beach) or take a mindful shower.

There was a time when I thought those things weren't worth the effort. I'm an all-or-nothing person! But a day with



“Since I know that it isn't always easy to be mindful, focus on one thing at a time, enjoy the little things, let go of regrets and worries, take good care of yourself, and be kind to yourself.”

Good Job

twenty-five minutes of self-care, spaced out, feels far better than a day with no self-care at all. Here are a few more of my favourite tiny acts of self-care:

- Reading one chapter or a few pages of a book for pleasure
- Doing a facial mask to feel cleaner and rejuvenated
- Doing absolutely nothing for five minutes — just sitting and letting myself be
- Calling someone I love to catch up
- Lying with my legs up a wall to soothe my muscles and relax my mind
- Applying lotion to my hands and massaging it in to relieve tension
- Eating something healthy or drinking a green juice instead of having a processed snack
- Doodling for a few minutes and reconnecting with my creative brain
- Checking in with myself and asking, “What do I need right now?” Then giving it to myself, whether it’s a break, a glass of water, or a walk around the room
- Doing something I enjoyed as a kid, like making up a stupid dance to a song I love.

5. Practice radical self-appreciation.

I find that hard days are a lot easier when I’m easier on myself. Not always easy to do when the day feels hard because I often find a way to blame myself for the difficulty. Like I’m just not good enough or strong enough. Or I didn’t make the right choices, and that’s why things feel so hard now.

To counter this, I try to imagine that I’m watching someone I love living my life and think of what I’d tell them if they felt overwhelmed or down on themselves. I’ve even gotten into the habit of mentally calling myself “sister” sometimes — kind of weird, I know — because I am always highly empathetic toward my sister. When I’m struggling, I might say, “Sister, you’re doing great! No one I know can do as much as you, or as well!”

And then as a more pre-emptive act of self-appreciation, I try to check in with myself throughout the day to note things I’m doing well. And sometimes it’s not about doing, but about being. “Great job being understanding when you really wanted to judge.” “Good on you for being thoughtful when you could have been swept up in your own stuff.” “Way to go on cutting yourself some slack even though you feel like you sucked at life today!”

I know from personal experience that hard days feel even more draining when we beat ourselves up every step of the way. It’s like walking through a storm carrying your own flailing, screaming twin on your back. The storm won’t be any less ferocious because we’re kinder to ourselves, but the journey is much less taxing when we consciously choose to love ourselves through it.

Since I know that it isn’t always easy to be mindful, focus on one thing at a time, enjoy the little things, let go of regrets and worries, take good care of yourself, and be kind to yourself.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Lori Deschene is the founder of Tiny Buddha. She’s also the author of *Tiny Buddha’s Gratitude Journal* and other books, and co-founder of Recreate Your Life Story, an online course that helps you let go of the past and live a life you love. She has produced a Mindfulness Kit to help reduce stress and increase peace and joy. For daily wisdom, join the Tiny Buddha list at www.tinybuddha.com. You can also follow Tiny Buddha on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. This article was first published at www.tinybuddha.com. Reprinted with permission.





I'm an above-knee amputee with over 30 years of personal and professional experience in orthotics, prosthetics, and amputee care. I am a Certified Prosthetist Orthotist (CPO), Technician, Mental Health First Aider, and Amputee Coach.

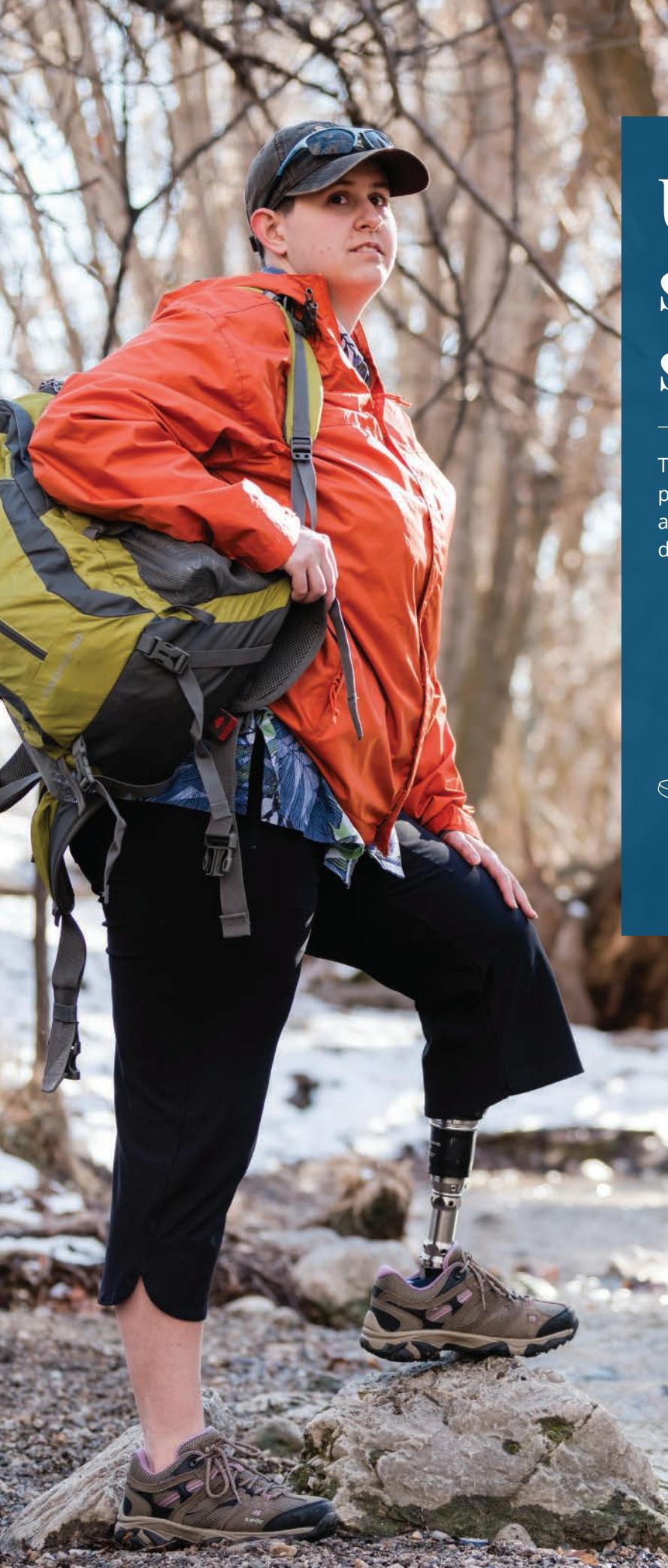
Over the years, I've had the privilege of working with amputees in their homes, rehabilitation centres, and doctors' offices and hospitals, giving me a well-rounded understanding of the challenges amputees face in everyday life. Today, I focus on helping amputees across North America through in-person and virtual appointments, as well as Zoom sessions, offering education, guidance, and peer support.

In this installment, I'm addressing amputation as a lifelong reality that reshapes how we move, adapt, and care for ourselves across every stage of life.

An amputation is not just a surgery. Too often, healthcare treats amputation as if the journey ends with surgery and rehab, as though

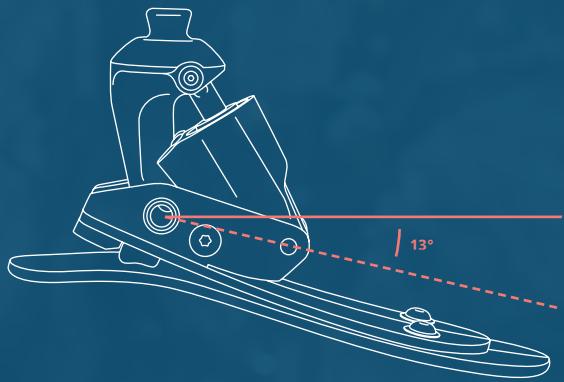
Amputation is a Journey Not a Destination

By Lynn DeCola



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once we have learned to use a prosthesis, the chapter is closed.

But the truth is, some amputees never even reach that point because their prosthesis may not fit, function, or suspend properly. And many in allied healthcare professions might not fully understand socket fit and alignment or how to recognize prosthetic problems versus amputation problems. On top of that, access to rehab is sometimes denied altogether, leaving amputees without the care that they need from the start.

Too often, instead of addressing the root causes of poor socket fit, suspension, or alignment, healthcare professionals suggest invasive surgeries that might have been avoided if prosthetic issues were properly identified and managed. At times, even medically-necessary sockets or components can be denied, which delays achieving proper fit and function.

This not only impacts mobility and comfort but also leads to overuse injuries in the rest of the body, and it takes a heavy toll on mental health. For amputees, the story continues every minute of every single day.

Our bodies change as we age. Socket fit changes, strength and balance fluctuate, and health conditions like diabetes, heart disease, or arthritis add new challenges. Our minds carry the weight of adjustment too, navigating grief, adaptation, identity, and the daily stress of living in a world built for non-disabled bodies.

The emotional side of amputation is just as real and lasting as the physical challenges, yet it is often overlooked. We are all



different. Our journeys, our challenges, and our hopes are never the same, and our care should honour that.

This is not short-term care. This is a lifelong journey. What is missing is a holistic treatment plan that follows us through life. A plan that does not stop at discharge but continues throughout our lives as amputees to address physical, mental, and emotional health with the same priority... a plan that sees us not as patients, but as whole people whose life-long needs evolve with time.

The truth is simple: amputation does not end at surgery. It is life-long, and our healthcare should reflect that.

If you or someone you care about is facing amputation or prosthetic challenges, I invite you to join Amputees Preparing Amputees 4 Life (facebook.com/groups/872511703389474/) for guidance and support, or reach out to me directly at facebook.com/Improvingqualityoflifeafteramputation for affordable coaching.

Learn more about Lynn DeCola by visiting <https://lifelongprosthetics.com>.



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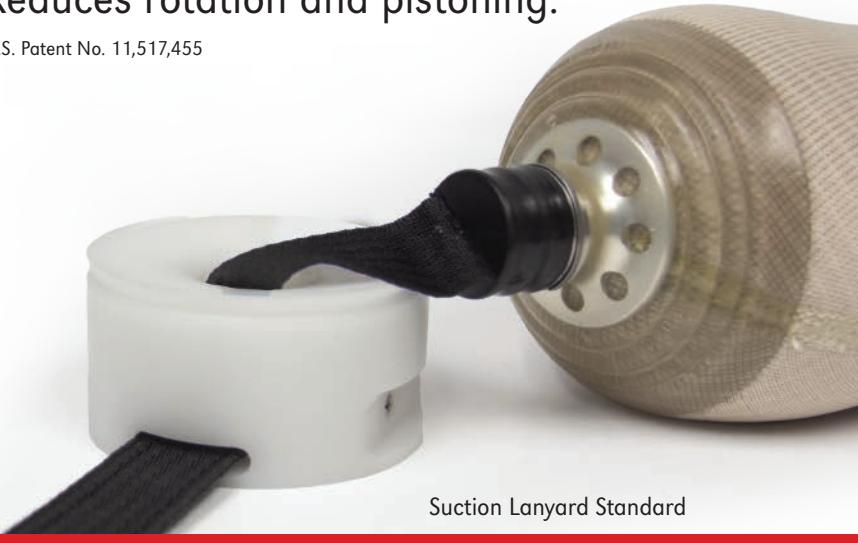
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FEATURE



STORY

Turning Casualty Into A Cause

By Rouzalin Hakim

Hello friends and fellow thrive readers. It's been a while. My last contribution to this magazine was over a year ago, but I found a story so amazing that I thought it's time to get back to writing.

I spent several years sharing my journey as a new amputee with *thrive* readers as I learned how to navigate my new life. My hope was that my story could help others on their journey. From returning home from rehab to returning to work, to the gym, to relationships, and all of the ups and downs along the way, eventually I ran out of 'returns' and quietly put my pen down.

But as we all know, life can have a bigger and better plan and a funny way of lining things up for us. I met a fellow female lower-limb amputee with a story so heartwarming that I just had to tell it. She reminded me of why I started writing in the first place. So, here I am again – pen in hand, heart open – "returning" to my passion for writing to share a story that I hope touches your heart like it did mine.

It starts like this. This summer I received a request from ParaSport® Ontario to speak at a wonderful event in Oakville, Ontario, as a ParaSport Brand Ambassador. It was a 5K Run organized to raise funds for prosthetic devices for those in need by Wings for Limbs, a new charity. I felt very aligned with the cause because I'm a grateful recipient of an Ossur running leg through ParaSport Ontario's Play to Podium Fund. So of course, I immediately accepted.

I hadn't heard of Wings for Limbs, and I didn't have much information about it or its founder, but I knew that this is exactly what our community needs... people

gathering together for hope, love and support. I headed to the event without any expectations, just an open mind and an open heart.

I arrived early and to my surprise, a huge number of people were already gathered and ready to run for their family, friends and community. They were all there at the request of a wonderful woman named Sonia Montanez, the visionary for Wings for Limbs.

Sonia gave the opening speech. Her energy was overwhelmingly moving and full of emotion. Tears of compassion were abundant on the faces of her supportive audience. We all stood poker still, listening intently.

Her words were powerful yet calming, carrying a sense of hope that seemed to wrap the crowd like a warm blanket and bring us all together in unison. I immediately knew that I needed to know more about Sonia.

As Sonia spoke, I couldn't help but think of how life can so suddenly divide itself into before and after. What was her journey like? What brought her here to this stage? What were her hopes and hurdles? What I found out was beyond inspiring.

Before the motorcycle crash that claimed her left leg below her knee, she was an accomplished accountant in Venezuela – driven, family-oriented, and deeply rooted in her community. She'd spent years

challenges

building a beautiful life. She married young, raising two children, and advancing in her career. But when her country went into political turmoil, and the economy began to spiral, safety and stability were swiftly slipping away.

With such courage, Sonia and her family made the life-changing decision to leave and start over in Canada. Leaving behind everything familiar – language, culture, friends

– she arrived in Canada ready to rebuild from the ground up.

It wasn't easy. She faced the loneliness of a new country, the challenge of learning a new culture, and the heartache of distance from loved ones. Still, she pressed forward, finding work, finding community, and a new rhythm of life. But with it came an irreconcilable casualty. The move across continents exposed cracks in her

marriage and the couple made the painful but peaceful decision to separate, both wanting what was best for their children.

In time, Sonia opened her heart again, entering a relationship that would endure on and off for seven years. Then, on the first day of July in 2021, everything changed again. A horrific motorcycle accident left her fighting for her life, a battle she won at the expense of her leg... another casualty.

The recovery that followed was lengthy and painful, both physically and emotionally. It took four months before her body was ready for a prosthesis. "Those four months were the hardest months of my life," she says. Her wheelchair, she shares, was a constant reminder of everything she had lost. She didn't feel accepted, not even in her own home. "The communication and dynamics were completely broken, each one of us sheltering in our own rooms," she said referring to her and her partner and her two teenaged boys aged 16 and 19 at the time of her injury. Her independence vanished, and her confidence went with it. Gratitude for survival slowly gave way to grief. She grieved her freedom, her mobility, her motherhood.

Self-doubt crept in, whispering questions she couldn't yet answer. "How will I drive? How will I work? How will I care for my children? How will I move through my home? I felt like I was no longer the provider, the professional, the one my family could lean on. Who am I now?"

The emotional toll deepened when, just months after the accident, her partner decided to separate and move out. The heartbreak was layered. She was not only learning to live with one leg, but now learning to live through another break-up. Her energy was low, her focus scattered. Even when her body began to heal, her mental health struggled to keep up.

"I felt like I was no longer the provider, the professional, the one my family could lean on. Who am I now?"



But somewhere in that darkness Sonia found a small spark of purpose and it flickered in the form of rehabilitation. Her sessions became her outlet, a place where pain met progress. Seeing others with similar circumstances pushing forward with determination was a source of strength for her. Slowly, her grief began to bend back toward appreciation.

Then came the day that she had waited for – the day her prosthetic leg was ready. Standing for the first time since her accident was more than a physical act; it was a reassurance. The moment that she felt the floor beneath her again, a rush of hope returned. Step by step, she began reclaiming her indepen-

dence, her confidence, her identity. Her therapy and peer support groups became lifelines, reminding her that she wasn't walking this path alone.

Her biggest lessons came quite quietly. Accepting help. Letting go of stubborn pride. She began to understand that resilience isn't a finish line. Rather, it's a rhythm to be found over and again when life asks you to start over.

Out of this rebirth came Wings for Limbs. What started as gratitude for the emotional, financial, and physical support that she had received grew into a mission to

help others who didn't have that same safety net. Sonia wants people with disabilities to feel seen and accepted within their communities, and to know that hope can be rebuilt through collective compassion.

As founder and event organizer, she strives to raise funds for prosthe-

purpose

ses and to connect people who might otherwise feel alone or forgotten. Wings for Limbs is more than a non-profit entity – it is a bridge between pain and purpose.

Today, Sonia carries herself with a quiet conviction and the grounded might of someone who has found peace in her own mirror. She describes herself as faithful, passionate, responsible, loyal and devout – a pillar of family and community.

rebirth





hope & courage

When I asked her what she hopes people would take away from her story, she paused for a moment and smiled. "To cherish who you are," she said. "Mind, body and soul, they have to move together. And when they don't, that's when you have to fight for your balance."

Her words stayed with me, because Sonia's story isn't about what she lost. It's about what she found through loss. She found courage. She found faith. She found her purpose in helping others stand tall again. And maybe that's the truest meaning of Wings for Limbs – not just walking again, but rising high above.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Rouzalin ("Roz") Hakim is an above-knee amputee of four years and a respected voice in the disability community. She blends lived experience with advocacy, public speaking and partnering with brands that reflect her values. Roz volunteers with the Amputee Coalition of Canada, Ronald McDonald House Charities, Sunnybrook Hospital, and St. John's Rehab, supporting and empowering children with disabilities and fellow amputees.

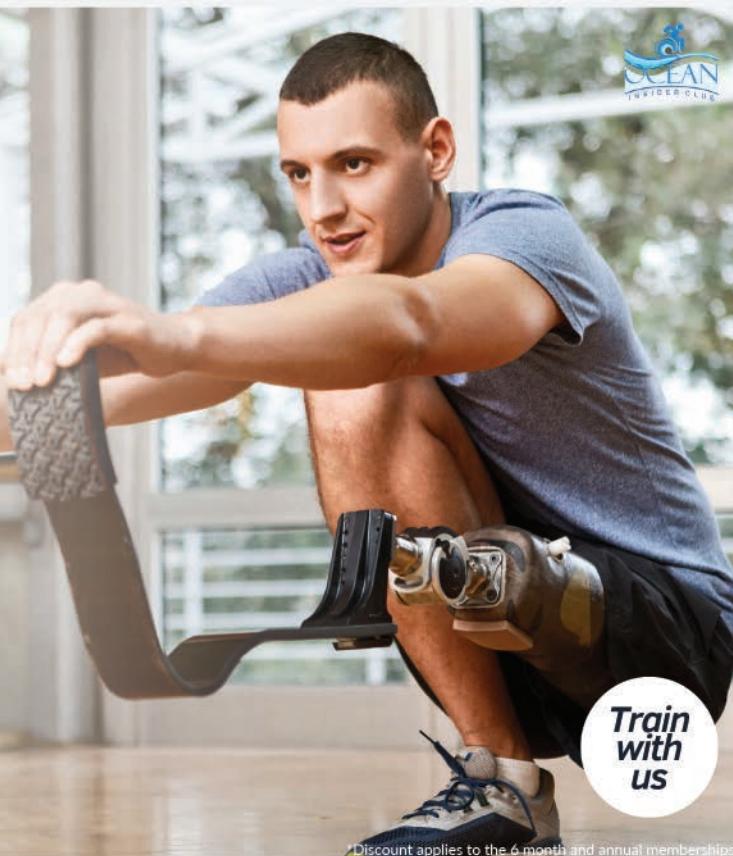


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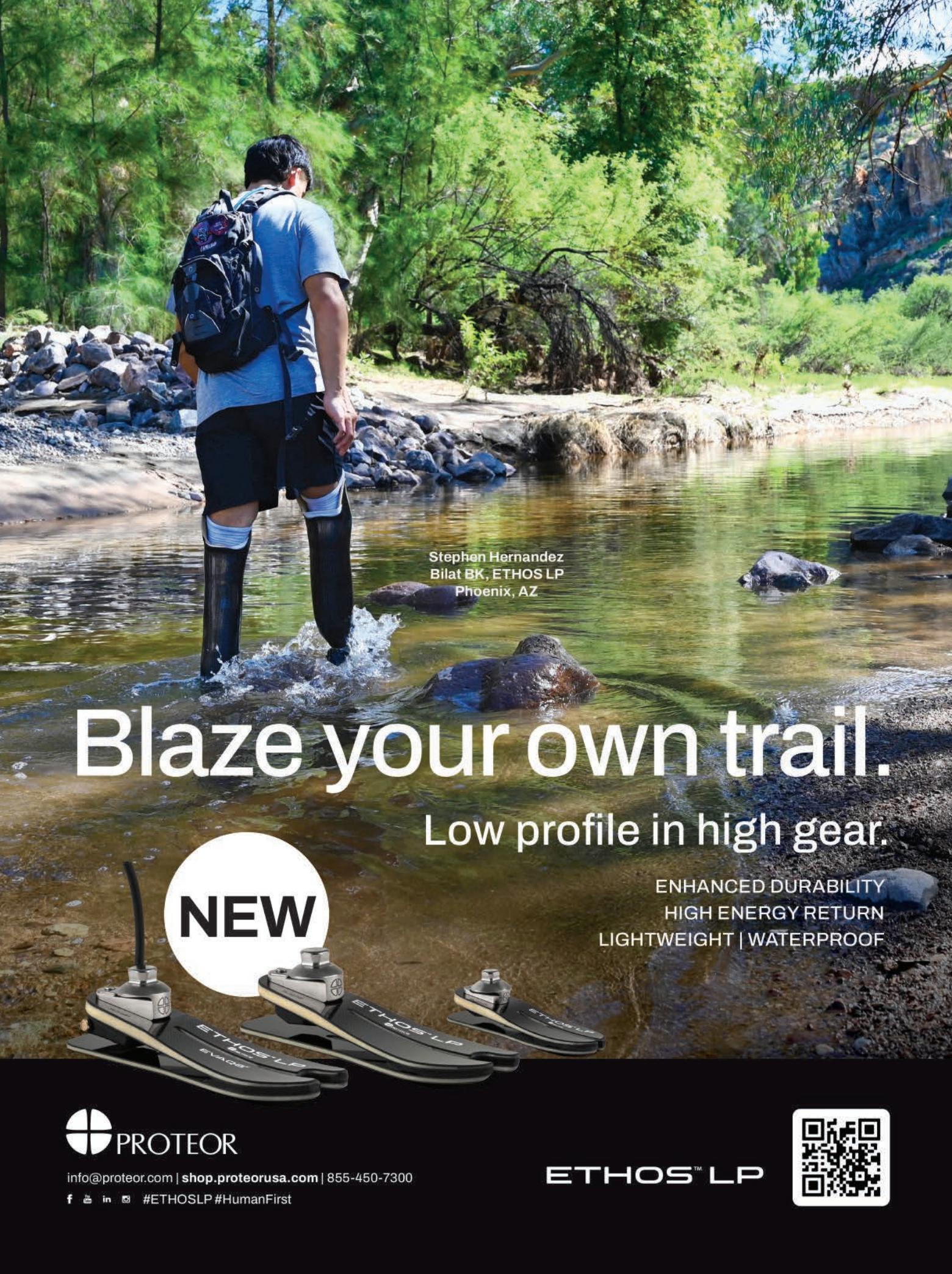
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Adapting, Healing, and Coming Home to Your Body

By Megan Williamson, BA, National Academy of Sports Medicine CPT
Founder & Coach, Ocean Rehab and Fitness

As coaches, we often talk about change – getting stronger, feeling better, finding new ways to move and live well.

But what we don't talk about enough is what happens after the physical changes start to happen. That quiet space where someone has evolved on the outside... but their mindset hasn't quite caught up yet.

I've worked with clients who've spent most of their lives identifying as "the heavy one" or "the out-of-shape one." Over time, through exercising and lifting, nourishing their bodies, and building confidence in movement, they've changed what their bodies can do.

But here's what I notice: even after the changes, many still see themselves through the old lens. They'll tell me that they "still feel big," or they'll avoid clothes that actually fit their new frame – because, in their mind, they're still living in their old body.

No one really talks about that part – how we have to change our mindset, not just our bodies.



When Our Bodies Change

This same internal adjustment shows up for many of my adaptive fitness clients too. For some, their bodies have changed because of an amputation, illness, or an accident. For others, it's scars from surgery or adapting to life using a mobility device.

The change might look different from person to person, but the feelings often overlap – that sense of needing to find comfort and acceptance in a body that no longer feels familiar.

Physical healing is something people can see. But emotional healing? That's quieter. It takes time. And it starts from the inside out.

Making Space for Grief

One thing that I wish more people – and more coaches – understood is that grieving our old bodies is a real and necessary part of this process. You can be grateful for how far you've come and still miss who you were. You can love your body now and feel sad about what's changed. That doesn't make you ungrateful. It makes you human.

Sometimes people feel pressure to "get over it" or to adapt quickly. But grief doesn't follow a timeline. It comes in waves, even years later. The key is giving yourself space to feel it when it shows up instead of shaming yourself for not being "over it yet."



Gratitude and Grace

One of the most powerful shifts that I've seen in both fitness and adaptive movement is when someone starts noticing what their body can do, instead of what it can't.

It's not about forced positivity. It's about respect. About realizing, "My body has carried me through things I didn't think I could survive."

Our bodies are constantly adapting – healing, learning, and showing up for us, even when it has changed in ways we never expected. If you want to explore this a bit more, here are some reflection prompts that you might try journaling on:

- What's one thing that my body allows me to do that I'm grateful for today?
- Where might I still be holding grief for the body I used to have?
- How can I show my body kindness, even on days when it feels different or unfamiliar?



Finding Comfort in Our New Bodies

Finding physical comfort after change – whether that's through exercise, prosthetic adjustments, or simply learning new ways to move – is part of the process.

But finding emotional comfort might be the bigger challenge. It's about learning to see yourself with fresh eyes to soften the inner dialogue. Give yourself permission to evolve without comparison to who you used to be because reshaping body image isn't about "fixing" anything. It's about learning to feel at home again – right where you are.



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Final Thought

Our bodies carry every story, every scar, every adaptation, every moment of strength that we didn't know we had. And maybe the real goal isn't getting "back" to anything. It's allowing ourselves to move forward with compassion, curiosity, and a little more grace for the body we live in.

ABOUT OCEAN REHAB AND FITNESS:

Megan Williamson is a certified fitness coach through the National Academy of Sports Medicine and the head coach at Ocean Rehab and Fitness. Alongside her team, she offers adaptive training for those living with physical disabilities. Her mission is to make exercise inclusive for everyone regardless of limitations.

For exercise ideas, workout programs or a consultation, visit oceanrehabandfitness.com.

Follow Megan's programs with an Ocean Insider Club membership subscription.



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Graduating Definitively

By Tony Korosak

“It’s just cellulitis, very common for diabetics and is treatable.” Less than five days later I was given five minutes to make a life-or-death decision; amputate or likely die. Amputation was done to save my life, and I will forever be grateful to the doctors and surgeons who gave me this second chance. Thankfully the surgeon was able to spare my knee.

In August I reached the two-year mark since my amputation and will soon be receiving my definitive leg. In January I will be turning 60. It’s funny to think that at age 60 I will be participating in a graduation! I’m graduating to my “final” prosthetic leg and I could not be more excited.

Now that my residual limb has stabilized, my prosthetic team is customizing my definitive leg. For me, this process has been a fascinating experience of creating a perfectly-fitted socket where all of the components align. I understand that this new prosthesis will last a few years albeit with adjustments and some replacement components as they wear out and my residual limb changes.

My body is taking its time to adjust. My residual limb is learning how to accept the fit and function of my definitive leg. I use a cane for balance to prevent falls. I have ongoing discoloration with my stump but I'm monitoring it, and sharing any discomfort, pressure points, and changes to my fit, with my prosthetic team so adjustments can be made to help maximize my mobility. That means frequent visits with my prosthetist right now.

I am still engaging in physical therapy, learning to build my confidence through careful walking. We're focusing on balance and strength building and keeping an eye on factors such as weight gain or loss, pain, and muscle changes, which are normal but can affect the socket fit.

Now, this is where it gets fascinating... my new insert is not a sock, but a product that replaces the traditional sock and



works in conjunction with the socket's pin lock. My team and I were very excited to learn that this device is manufactured by a Quebec-based company called Ethnocare that I read about in a recent issue of *thrive magazine*.

This device works with my limb in the socket by pumping air around it to the desired comfort level. With a sock, it used to take me a bit of time to get it just right when I was pushing into the socket. But now I just place my

limb into the pin lock system and pump it with air until I feel secure, and I'm on my way!

This system was new to both myself and my prosthetic team so before accepting the device we did our research. Looking into this system I was excited for the amount of time I would save when putting on my prosthesis. I liked the idea of not needing to add more socks when my fit was loose. I am still learning how to best use the sleeve. On a recent outing, I felt some discomfort with it but rather than take my leg off, I simply adjusted the air volume which did the trick.

Please know that this is my personal experience with this product. If you are curious about it, I encourage you to research it and talk to your prosthetist to see if it's right for you.

Stay Well. Stay Healthy
(@al3gup).



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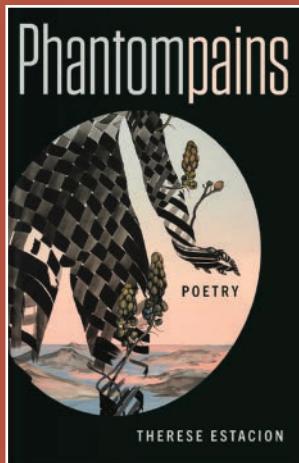
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For many, the experience of limb loss is first understood through a clinical pamphlet, a polite conversation, or what someone has seen on TV, in movies or in the media. Books let us live inside a body other than our own for hundreds of pages – to feel another's experience of a lost limb or limb difference, to track the small triumphs of healing and recovery, to sit with the grief and in time, the surprising joy.

Our selection in this feature – memoirs, practical guides, and even poetry – centers Canadian voices where possible and offers a bookshelf that's valuable for new amputees, long-time prosthetic users, family members and professionals who support us.

Reading to Rebuild



1

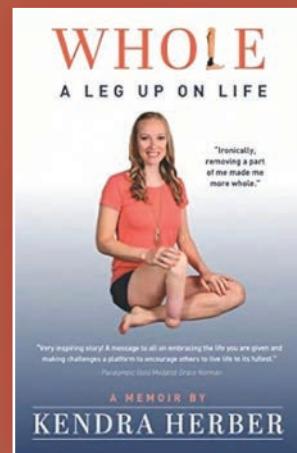
Whole: A Leg Up on Life

by Kendra Herber

A speaker, disability advocate, amputee athlete and high school English teacher, Herber's memoir is honest, warm, conversational, and pragmatic for readers wanting everyday perspectives on life after limb loss. She extinguishes common stereotypes and challenges for readers to start seeing beyond outward appearances. She blends practical advice with the everyday textures of rebuilding a life.

Available at kendraherber.com in paperback and eBook. 2020. 218 pages.

"The body changes; the life that follows is not smaller, only different."



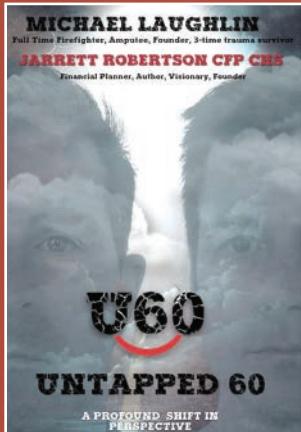
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Phantompains by Therese Estacion

A visceral poetry collection by a Canadian survivor who lost both legs below the knee. A Toronto-based amputee poet, this collection uses verse to navigate body loss, identity and the echoes of pain and presence in everyday life. A literary and deeply personal voice from within the amputee community. Place beside a cup of tea and read a few lines at a time.

Available at bookhugpress.ca in paperback, EPub, Pdf and Audio. 2021. 96 pages.

"Loss becomes language – and language turns out to be a way to stand."



Untapped 60: A Profound Shift in Perspective

by Michael Laughlin and Jarret Robertson

This compelling book takes readers on a journey through the author's harrowing experiences, from life-threatening accidents and traumatic events to the everyday struggles we all face. Laughlin, Canada's only above-knee amputee full-time firefighter, shares personal stories and insights, and advice, to encourage readers to confront their fears, embrace vulnerabilities, and find strength within adversity.

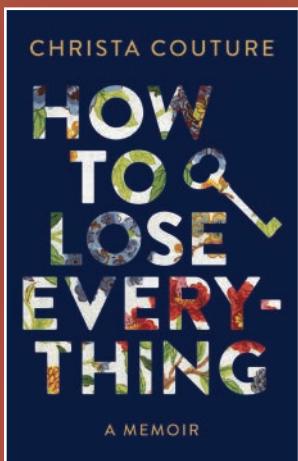
Available at untapped60.com in hardcover. 2024. 166 pages.

"Have you ever wondered how to rise above life's most daunting obstacles? Untapped 60 holds the answers."

3

12

MUST-READS FOR AMPUTEES



How to Lose Everything by Christa Couture

A memoir that situates limb loss inside a larger story of identity, music and resilience. From a Canadian singer-songwriter who, in her book, writes about tragic losses in her life far beyond her left leg. At the same time, she evokes the joy and lightness that eventually follow grief. "This isn't a 'triumph over adversity' book," says Couture. "It's also not the sad story you think it is."

4

Available at christacouture.com in paperback and eBook. 2020. 188 pages.

"When everything shifts, the work of making meaning begins."

Shine On: The Remarkable True Story of a Quadruple Amputee

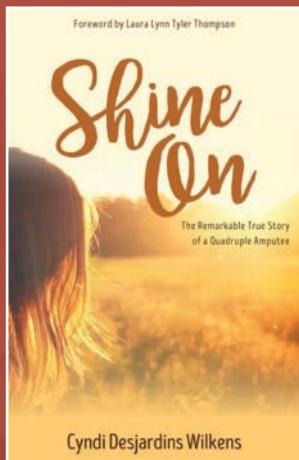
by Cyndi Desjardins Wilkens

An inspiring Canadian memoir about surviving catastrophic limb loss and rebuilding life. A profoundly resilient life story with a narrative arc that moves from crisis through recovery to public life and emphasizes determination and the social networks that enable recovery.

Available at indigo.ca in paperback and eBook. 2000.

"I did not choose this path – but I choose what to do with it."

5



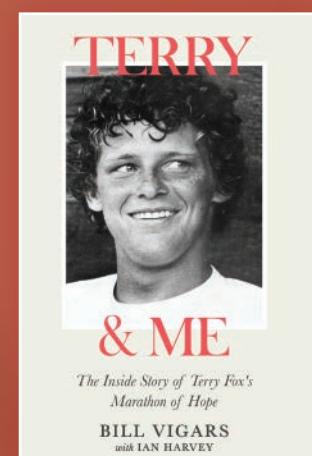
Terry & Me

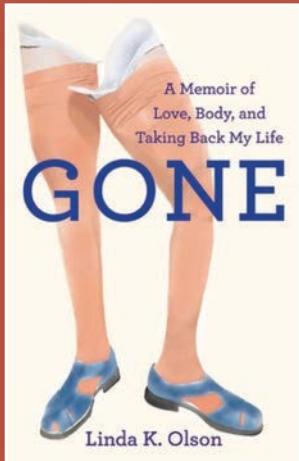
by Bill Vigars with Ian Harvey

There has never been a Canadian quite like Terry Fox and there's never been a story quite like The Marathon of Hope. A 22-year-old cancer survivor and above-knee amputee, Terry set out from St. John's, Newfoundland, in 1980 to run across Canada to raise money for cancer research. Here's a bestseller about the logistical nightmares, boardroom battles, and moments of pure magic.

Available at sutherlandhousebooks.com in paperback and eBook. 2024. 260 pages.

"Running from coast to coast is less about distance than about belonging."





7

Gone: A Memoir of Love, Body, and Taking Back My Life

by Linda K. Olson

This memoir considers adaptation and the quieter rhythms of life many years after limb loss from a long-time triple amputee. Thoughtful reflections about long-term adaptation and aging with limb loss. A young doctor when she lost both legs and an arm, Olson asks readers to find not only courage but also laughter in the unexpected challenges that we all face.

Available at [simonandschuster.ca](https://www.simonandschuster.ca) in paperback. 2020. 256 pages.

“A lifetime later, I am still gathering strength.”

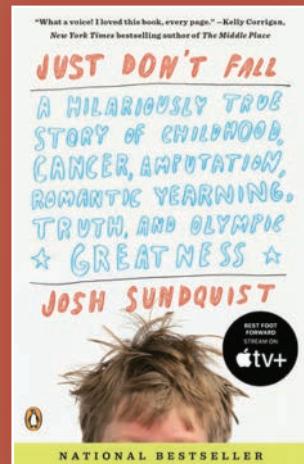


Just Don't Fall by Josh Sundquist

Part memoir, part laugh-out-loud survival guide, Sundquist's signature wit makes complex emotional territory accessible. His book is ideal for younger readers or for a lively “giftable”. Entertaining and candid, Sundquist, an amputee and childhood cancer survivor, mixes humour, sport and identity into a make-you-smile read.

Available at [penguinrandomhouse.ca](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.ca) in paperback and eBook. 2010. 352 pages.

“You can learn to move through the world with joy and mischief.”



8

10-33: An Officer Down Steps Back Up

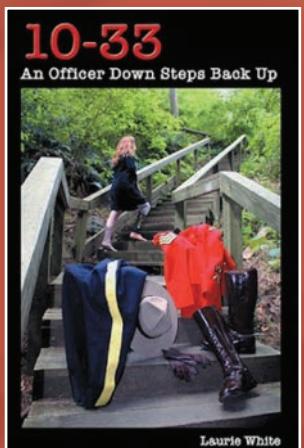
by Laurie White

A memoir by a Canadian first responder and amputee about trauma, recovery and life after limb loss. An RCMP officer, White's reflections speak to first responders, veterans and anyone whose limb loss is entangled with occupational trauma. It's a strong pick for a focus on mental health, identity after service, or the unique needs of amputees who worked in public safety.

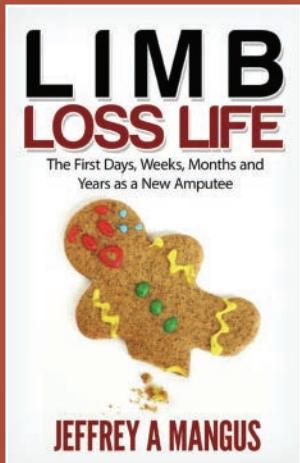
Available at [books.friesenpress.com](https://www.books.friesenpress.com) in paperback and eBook. 1998. 240 pages.

“The uniform changes, but the will to serve remains.”

9



10



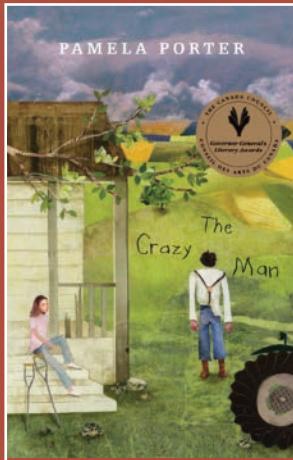
Limb Loss Life: The First Days, Weeks, Months and Years as a New Amputee by Jeffrey Mangus

A practical, straightforward, survival-guide style resource for new amputees. A compassionate, no-nonsense guide aimed at the immediate post-amputation period. It's best used as a starter-pack reading list for amputees and their families. *Limb Loss Life* will shed much-needed light and help readers through dark days to reach bigger and brighter ones as a new amputee.

Available at [barnesandnoble.com](https://www.barnesandnoble.com) in paperback and eBook. 2019.

“The first year is shock and learning; the book is your steady hand.”

Young Readers



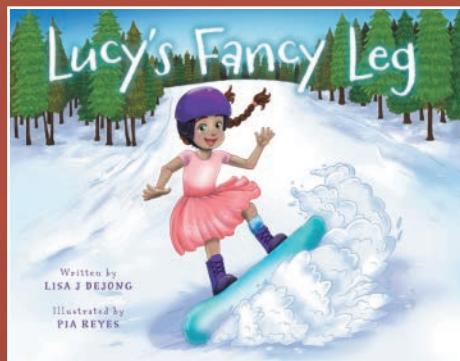
The Crazy Man by Pamela Porter

Although not a memoir, this award-winning Canadian children's novel (ages 9-12) centers on a young protagonist who loses her leg in a farm accident and must navigate disability, social stigma, and family breakdown. It's a sensitive and compelling fictional entry point for younger readers or families.

Available at [houseofanansi.com](https://www.houseofanansi.com) in paperback. 2005. 214 pages.

11

12



Lucy's Fancy Leg by Lisa DeJong

Written by Canadian Paralympian Lisa DeJong, this children's picture book celebrates a child amputee who invents custom prosthetic legs for every occasion – a joyful, representation-forward story perfect for families and young readers.

Available at books.friesenpress.com in paperback and eBook. 2024. 28 pages.

Amputee Zines and Anthologies

Across Canada, a number of amputee support groups and grassroots communities feature first-person accounts and personal essays by amputees which highlight emerging voices, often deeply relevant to lived amputee experience. For example, the Amputee Coalition of B.C. has a “Stories and Wisdom” section with personal pieces: amputees.ca.

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Finding Your Travel Agent

Why the Right Match Matters

By Tanya Rabe, Right Foot Adventures
Travel Consultant & Accessibility Specialist
ACTA DEI Committee Member

When you're planning a trip as an amputee or a traveler with accessibility needs, the process can feel like navigating an unfamiliar city without a map. There's excitement, sure, but also the pressure of making sure that every detail truly works for you. That's where the right travel agent for you becomes a game-changer.

But here's the truth that no one really says out loud: "Finding the right travel agent – the one you click with – can be surprisingly hard."

Accessible travel isn't just a specialty. It's personal. It's emotional. It's layered. And honestly? It takes one to know one. Someone who understands not just the logistics, but the lived reality behind them – the little things that make or break a trip, the questions you ask yourself before anyone else even thinks to ask you. That level of understanding comes from experience, empathy, and someone who truly sees you.

Ask Questions... Lots of Them

A good travel agent will never make you feel like your questions are inconvenient. In fact, your questions help them understand exactly what you need to travel comfortably and confidently. Ask about their experience. Ask how they handle accessibility challenges. Ask what resources they use, what destinations they understand well, and how they advocate for clients. This is your trip – your comfort matters.

Interview More Than One Agent

Here's your permission slip: you don't have to settle for the first agent you meet. Think of it like choosing a prosthetist or a physiotherapist – the relationship matters and we all know how personal we can get with our prosthetist! Meet a few. Compare how they communicate. Notice who listens, who rushes you, and who treats accessibility like a checklist instead of a conversation. Choose the one who makes you feel heard.

A New Resource for Canadian Travellers

One of the biggest barriers has always been finding travel advisors who truly understand accessibility, not just claim to. Until now, there hasn't been a reliable, centralized way to find someone with real accessible travel experience.



That's why ACTA (Association of Canadian Travel Agencies and Travel Advisors) is launching its brand-new Accessible Travel Advisor Directory, a resource designed specifically for Canadian travellers. This directory lists ACTA-member advisors across Canada who have demonstrated that they meet accessibility-focused criteria. And, as the program grows, education around accessibility within travel and everyday life, will grow too!

For me, now a member of ACTA's DEI (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion) committee, I'm proud to help shape this directory from the ground up. Applications are ongoing, and advisors must outline exactly how they qualify. More requirements will be added over time to ensure that the directory remains credible, supportive, and genuinely useful.

You Deserve the Right Match

Accessible travel is personal, and so is choosing the professional who helps you plan it. Take your time. Ask the hard questions. Trust your instincts. And know that resources like ACTA's new directory are here to make the search a little easier. Because when you click with the right travel agent, the entire world opens up in a way that feels possible, supported, and wonderfully yours.

For more information on accessing ACTA's Accessible Travel Advisor Directory, contact Tanya at tanya@rightfootadventures.ca. Do you have a travel story, question, or tips that you'd like to share? Send Tanya an email. Looking for accessible destinations? Visit www.rightfootadventures.ca.



Photos courtesy of CAN Fund

ATHLETE CHAMPION

CAN Fund Founder JANE ROOS

By Jeff Tiessen, PLY

For the majority of the best athletic talent in Canada, the ability to afford the resources that they need to reach their full potential is one of the biggest hurdles that they face. The need, in fact, is paramount. This year alone, 905 athletes from communities across Canada applied to CAN Fund for direct financial support.

Since 2003, CAN Fund – Canadian Athletes Now Fund – has been helping make athletic dreams achievable. “We believe in giving an opportunity to everyone who has the courage and fortitude to dream big,” says the charity’s founder Jane Roos. “When our athletes wear the maple leaf, they unite a country and inspire us all.”

CAN Fund was created to provide financial support to athletes directly to offset the costs of new equipment, coaching, proper nutrition, extra physio and travel to training camps and competitions. And with no government funding, CAN Fund is building a community for its athlete recipients through not only corporate and individual donations, but personal connections between them.

"Every athlete relying on the generosity of CAN Fund donors has a courageous story of resilience and determination," shares Roos. "We encourage the athletes to tell their unique stories and use our platform to do that. I, myself, have a unique story in that the worst day of my life is probably the reason why CAN Fund exists."

Roos was a promising track athlete before a devastating car accident took that and the life of her best friend away. She was just 19 at the time. Despite such tragedy, the crash stands as the impetus for CAN Fund. With her best friend and her athletic and modelling careers gone, the Grade 13 student was soon to "hit rock bottom," as Roos describes it. That's when she began to look for something bigger to come from her loss.

"I was in a Toronto hospital for a second back surgery when I started raising money," she explains. "I got

the nurses involved and we started contacting companies basically saying: 'we have no idea what we're raising money for, but we'll do something great with it.'"

Roos's first fundraiser, at Toronto's Bohemian Café, raised \$40,000 and forced her toward a cause. "I thought, 'why don't I help some athletes who want to compete for Canada?'"

And so she did, in the beginning by way of athletes coming by her Toronto apartment with receipts that she'd reimburse. This was the 1990s and since becoming a bona fide organization twenty-plus years ago, CAN Fund has directly supported 80 percent of Canada's athletes who have competed at Olympic or Paralympic Games, raising over \$40 million to date.

"Athletes don't want handouts," Roos qualifies, "but they need someone to be there to champion them and what we do differently than most in the sports system is fund the athletes like they're our clients."

That mindset has not gone unnoticed. At the 2006 Olympic Games, Roos was honoured with the Live Olympic Award, an international honour given to only 19 people. For the past seven years, she's been recognized by Canadian Women & Sport as one of the most Influential Women in Sport and she is a Canadian Sports Awards recipient of the Leadership in Sports award.

Paralympian Katie Combaluzier can attest to that influence. "CAN Fund made me feel part of something bigger than myself," shares the Para Alpine skier from Toronto. "It meant feeling the impact of generosity in a system where support can



Jane Roos receiving the Athlete Support Award, 2025 Canadian Sport Awards

be hard to find. It reminded me that there are people willing to invest in athletes and their dreams."

Oakville's Greg Westlake, a four-time Paralympian and former captain of Canada's Para Ice Hockey Team, agrees. "CAN Fund has been a consistent supporter. Chasing sponsorships can be exhausting and difficult to be successful. It can be discouraging. CAN Fund understands that every athlete deserves help. It was incredibly helpful to have them in my corner. I wish that more people knew how integral that organizations like CAN Fund are for amateur sport in Canada to be successful."

And, as Wallacetown, Ontario's James Dunn readies himself for the 2026 Winter Paralympic Games Para Ice Hockey competition, he shares that, "CAN Fund's support gives me the opportunity to chase my dreams of gold in Italy... to do everything I can to be my best version."





As one way to increase women donors, CAN Fund launched CAN Fund #150Women in 2017. For donations of \$150 or more, members support a specific female athlete and join a national network of women which now totals

over 5,000. There are events, giveaways and classes that are all part of helping female athletes as part of a community. "The cool thing with CAN Fund too," says Roos, "is that with every donation you know which athlete you helped and will likely get a personal call to say, 'Thank you'."

CAN Fund is not all about the podium, which

Roos feels is respected by the athletes. "We want to help athletes feel empowered. We teach athletes how to build their brands so that they can work on their business, and not just in it." And what's been a really big thing for Roos is witnessing athletes wanting to help each other.

Two-time Paralympic gold medal thrower Greg Stewart raised \$15,000 for CAN Fund through his network. Paralympic kayaker Brianna Hennessy raised money for her fellow CAN Fund athletes in the spirit of the organization's "no one gets left behind" mantra. When Trinity Lowthian returned home from the Paralympics she needed surgery related to her disability. She put a poster on her hospital door about supporting female athletes through CAN Fund's #150Women initiative. "I had people calling me saying they are at a hospital in Ottawa and there's



Roos elaborates by confirming that the organization always puts the athletes first but wants donors to feel the impact too. She and her team do that with connections to the CAN Fund community. "What's the benefit for a donor? There are 86,000 charities in this country. Why should one care about these athletes that we see only every two years at the Games? That's the biggest issue. That's the problem."

Photo courtesy of Canadian Paralympic Committee



a poster on a door about my charity and wanting to know more," Roos remembers. "That's what really lights me up. Getting people to care and show up for other people. We all have incredible opportunities to help each other, right?... whether it's musicians or academics, or whatever the talent. For me it's the athletes."

Roos is also a successful artist, the owner of the Jane Roos Gallery in downtown Toronto, selling her paintings globally. She has created numerous commissioned paintings for corporate Canada and many charities. Every year, Roos selects 10 charities to which she donates a painting to support their fundraising efforts.

While she doesn't cross over to CAN Fund too often, she does present a stylized Maple Leaf painting to each CAN Fund athlete who becomes an Olympian or Paralympian. "Donors buy them," she says, "to essentially say: 'This part of the journey has been achieved. Congratulations. You are going to compete for Canada at the Paralympic or Olympic Games.'" Roos has painted about 900 of them and counting, an ongoing reminder of the remarkable achievements of CAN Fund as well.

To learn more or to donate, visit www.MyCANFund.ca. @CANFund. @150Women. @JaneRoosGallery.

RALPH HODGSON

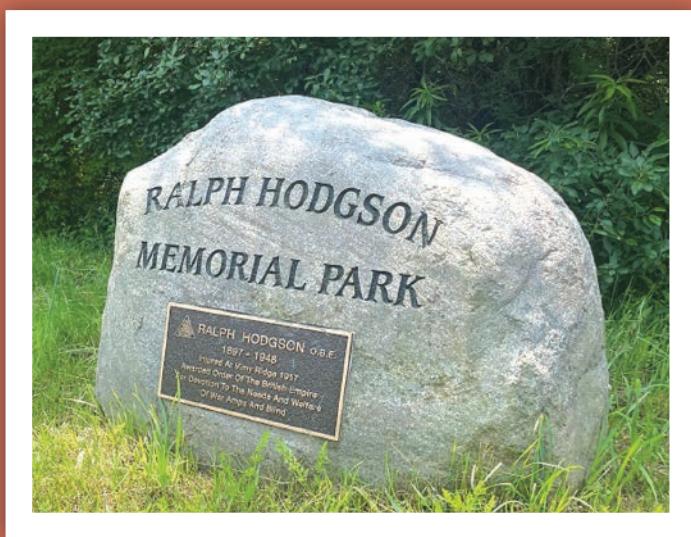
(1895-1948)

Ralph Hodgson is one of the most important yet overlooked figures in Canadian amputee history. A First World War veteran, Hodgson lost his leg in combat at Vimy Ridge in 1917. Like many wounded soldiers returning home, he faced social isolation, discrimination, and limited employment opportunities.



Hodgson became a tireless advocate for injured veterans. He worked vigorously to unite amputee veterans across Canada, and in 1918 he helped create what would become The War Amps of Canada. Hodgson believed that amputees deserved dignity, opportunity, and a strong collective voice.

For his service, Hodgson was awarded the Order of the British Empire, but his greatest legacy lies in the living community he helped build. Today, countless thousands of amputees have benefited from his advocacy through The War Amps.



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BrailleDoodle Art and Learning System

The BrailleDoodle is a two-sided tablet for Braille learning and art with a surface that refreshes repeatedly. No power or internet needed. \$179.00 at <https://www.touchpadprofoundation.org/>.

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03. Silo One Touch Vacuum

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The LapStacker is the world's first and only retractable carry system for your wheelchair. Options for your manual or power wheelchair. LapStacker is easy to use. Simply pull the straps, clip the buckles together, and roll with confidence and control. From \$119.00 at adaptdefy.com.

04. Domitree ALT Sit & Stand Desk

Switch effortlessly between work, study, gaming, and leisure modes with a single button. No hassle, no distractions, just smooth transitions. Thoughtfully placed convenient built-in lighting and storage help you work smarter, not harder. From \$399.00 at www.domitree.com.

05. SoCool Refrigerated Smart Feeder

SoCool is the first refrigerated feeder designed to keep your cat's food at 40°F and below, ensuring fresh, safe meals anytime they need them. Whether your pet has a complicated condition like IBD, diabetes, or simply eats a fresh food diet, this refrigerated feeder ensures they get fresh meals whether you're at home or away! App control timer and lock stops even the sneakiest cat snackers. \$625.00 at <https://happyllamatech.com>.

06. Rescue Oxygen Kits

These Oxygen Kits for Dogs are an ideal solution for pet owners who want to be prepared for emergency situations, during transportation to a care facility or when administering oxygen to their dog at home for a health condition. The kits contain everything you need to administer oxygen on the spot to your pet, just select their weight range. No veterinary prescription required. From \$225.00 at pawprintoxygen.com.

FINAL WORD

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gain meaning
with shared
experience.”

– John Dewey



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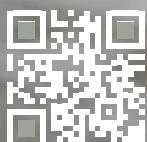
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