

inMotion

A magazine dedicated to living well with limb loss

A Publication
of the



A Virtual Room of One's Own

*Can Virtual Technology
Advance Amputee Support?*

Mirror Therapy:
Seeking Relief
Through the
Looking Glass

Savvy Surfing for
Health Information

The Thin Line
Between
Devoted Friend
and Devotee





Reaching Out... through blogging

by Cindy Charlton

Becoming an amputee wasn't on my bucket list. It wasn't something I envisioned or planned for myself. I have thought about estate planning and investment planning. I have planned for my future. But not limb loss. Writing a blog – a series of writings posted on the Internet – about the tools I've used to survive wasn't on my bucket list either, but I find that it connects me to those who want to know how I have survived extraordinary loss, including three limbs, over the past 15 years.

Popular Blog Sites



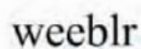
Blogger.com



Simple-Press.com



Tumblr.com



Weeblr.com



WordPress

WordPress.com



Xanga.com



Blogging Tips

After I lost my limbs, I found myself in a whirlwind of unknowns. I desperately needed information. I wanted to know how other amputees coped with amputation. My prosthetist provided me with information – but she had all of her limbs. It was difficult for me to hear from her that “things would get better.” Fortunately for me, her technician was an above-knee amputee; I found his information and experiences valuable. What made the biggest impression on me, however, was that I didn’t realize he was an amputee until he told me. I was equally surprised and inspired.

“Communication” became my battle cry. I started an amputee support group, and facilitated it for many years, but as my life became busier I found it necessary to leave the group. I still wanted to stay connected to the amputee community – I just needed to do it in way that fit my lifestyle. The freedom of giving (and receiving) support on my own time, from the comfort of my own home, was very appealing.

After looking at my options, I felt that blogging was a good choice. It intimidated me at first, as I’m not a natural “techie,” so I needed something easy to use. I perused many blog sites until I decided on the site I wanted to use. The blogs I most closely connected with offered useful information and made me feel something. My blog is written to be useful and to deliver hope and inspiration.

With my blog site chosen and my purpose established, I was ready

to look at the design – the visual component for my blog. I wanted my blog’s design to evoke emotions of optimism and joy. It was important for the background to align with the content. I found that I didn’t need a class in graphic design to accomplish my goal. Blog sites provide many templates from which to choose.

After setting up my blog (thesurvivorshandbook.blogspot.com), I was ready to “roll it out.” I began marketing it by sending emails to everyone in my address book. I have established Facebook and LinkedIn pages, so when I post a new blog, I send an email and put the link to my blog on those pages. Social media is a great way to promote blogs. However, I’ve learned the hard way to check my posts before publishing them. In my very first blog post, I used the term “cruising altitude” but wrote it as “cursing altitude.” One of my friends asked how high she needed to be before she could start cursing. I quickly learned how to edit a post online.

Blogging has provided a wonderful vehicle for me to continue helping people. I’m connected to the amputee community by virtue of my membership in our exclusive club – the one I never planned on joining. I hope that, through my blog, I can reach other amputees to let them know that it really does get better and to provide the information and inspiration that I so desperately needed 15 years ago. After all, what are we, if we are not here to help one another? 🌀

1. *Find Meaningful Content – What’s Your Passion?*

The best way to decide what to blog about is to ask yourself: “Would I do this for free?” If the answer is yes, then you’ve found your topic.

2. *Update Often*

This is where your passion comes in. Blogs that aren’t updated at least every two weeks are perceived as static Web pages.

3. *Get to Know Your Readers*

Your blog’s design and content should reflect your readers’ expectations. Blogging is a two-way street; it’s about forming relationships.

4. *Make an Impression With Your Design*

It’s important to choose the appropriate design; it should relate to your content.

5. *Be Grammatically Correct*

This sounds like a no-brainer, but it’s important if you want to be taken seriously.