

# SOPHIE POOST

OCCUPATION: Director of Programs, Disability EmpowHer Network



As a small child, Sophie suffered an injury from a lawnmower accident and has been an amputee for over 20 years. In high school, she had a chance encounter with a little girl who was really having a hard time as she was getting fitted for her first prosthesis. Sophie was able to calm her, and it showed her what an impact peer mentorship can have. Here, she shares her thoughts.

## Favorite amputee hacks:

If you don't want to get off the couch at night to let the dog out or refill your water, take your prosthesis off and then look pathetically at your roommate/partner/family member and say "oh darn, I don't have my leg on. I guess I can't \_\_\_\_\_." It works 75% of the time.

## The worst advice you've received as an amputee:

"You can do anything!" People think things like this empower amputees, but I found it made me feel really alone and kept me from asking for help when I needed it. There are going to be some things you simply cannot do. Leaning on your community does not make you weak. Learning to accept a life of interdependence early on saves a lot of energy.

## The worst thing about being an amputee:

Setting off metal detectors EVERY TIME.

## The best things about being an amputee:

The community— there are so many incredible people in the disability community who I wouldn't know if I didn't lose my leg. And the creativity and ingenuity— you learn to come up with solutions and workarounds when you have no other options.

## "I like to mess with able-bodied people by\_\_\_\_\_."

If they ask me how I lost my leg, I ask them to guess and then no matter what they say, I respond with "Oh my gosh, what a great guess, how did you know?"

## The best advice you'd give someone facing amputation:

There are going to be times where things are hard, but you're not alone, there is a whole community that shares your experience and who can help you navigate your new normal.