

**Amputee Society of
Canterbury & Westland Inc.**
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314 Worcester Street, Christchurch
PO Box 32-074, Christchurch

☎03-366-6189

☎03-379-5939

🕒 9.00am - 4.30pm

✉ dis@disinfo.co.nz



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🕒 8.00am - 4.30pm

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www.nzalb.govt.nz

**Amputee Society of
Canterbury & Westland Inc.**

www.amputeeinfo.co.nz

The Amputees Federation of NZ

www.af.org

Amputee Information

www.mossresourcenet.org

International Diabetes Federation

www.idf.org

Parafed Canterbury

www.parafedcanterbury.co.nz

Disability Awareness in Action

www.daa.org.uk

Amputee News

www.amputeenews.com

Disability Rights Commission

www.drc-gb.org

UN Programme on Disability

www.un.org/issues/m-disabl.asp

WEKA-NZ Disability Info

www.weka.govt.nz



**Burwood Hospital
Hydro Pool**



**6:00-6:45 pm
Every Monday**
See you there for a
Relaxing session!
Funded by Lottery Board.

Thanks to Our Sponsors



 **Amputee Society**
Canterbury & Westland Inc

*doing more
with less!*

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JULY/AUGUST/2011

Quote of the Month

Never deprive someone of hope; it might be
all they have.

[H. Jackson Brown Jr.](#)

Editors Message

Hi everyone and hope this finds you all staying warm and well. It was lovely seeing so many of you at the luncheon and was good catching up on some of your news and happenings.

While I am on the subject of the luncheon, it was a little disappointing that so many of you said you were attending but were no shows and you did not let us know. Margaret has to give the Club a rough estimate of how many to expect, and when almost twenty people don't show up it reflects badly on us. In future please let us know if your plans change and you won't be in attendance. Thanks so much.

As I said in the last newsletter- if any of you need anything in the way of blankets, clothes, wood, etc. just let me know as I have a small support group going on Facebook and Trade Me. Please don't be too proud to ask for help as believe me so many of us are going through such trying times rite now.

I apologize if you had sent me things to be in the newsletter but I lost some of my papers and am slowly catching up, so if there is anything I have missed, please re-submit it and I will include it in the next issue.

The pool at Burwood is up and running once again so perhaps we might see a few more of you there on Monday evening. A nice heated pool sounds good right now doesn't it? And the company is great too. I realize the time isn't the greatest but the beneficial results you can accomplish in the pool far outweigh that. If a number of you are in the same area perhaps you could set up a car pool.

Well Dear Friends that is about all for this issue and thank you for your patience the past while. Hopefully now things are back on track and I will get future issues out on time. Your next issue will be coming to you from Florida-I hope.

Until then please stay warm, safe, and all take care of yourselves,

SUE



**Amputee Society of Canterbury and Westland Inc. PO Box 7424
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Website: www.amputeeinfo.co.nz**

SOCIETY NEWS

1.

As promised here is the contact number for **Keryn (The Vulnerable Peoples Team)** at **CDHB** for issues with chemical toilet emptying for those elderly or disabled living alone: 3378973. I don't know if any of you still need to do this but if you do please don't hesitate to call.

2.

Hi Sue

One of our amputees has found a fitness program which she thought would be good for amputees and has asked me to pass it on. This is specifically for people with physical disabilities and Intellectual disabilities.

Name: Zumba Gold

Venue: Jelly Park

Run By: Christchurch City Council

Day: Wednesday

Time: 2.30pm

Cost: \$4.10

Kind regards

Graham Flanagan

National Prosthetics Manager

3.

Hi Sue (from Graham Flanagan)

I had a patient in the other day that requested I send you some information on her behalf regarding a product she has found that is very good for reducing sweating and the smell associated with it and wondered if you could put it in the Amputee Society newsletter. She has found it particularly good for using around suspension sleeves which a lot of amputees use to hold the limb on.

Manufacturer: Rexon for Woman

Product name: Clinical protection

Lasts: 48 hours and is applied at nite.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Hello Everyone,

I do hope that you are all keeping warm and that your nerves are surviving. I thoroughly recommend that if you can to take a week or a few days away from Christchurch to do so as I did last month to Nelson with 6 nights of blissful unbroken sleep. It really does help lots.

I would like to draw your attention to our asset loan equipment again. We have recently been given a swivel cushion which can be used in your car for ease of exiting from the vehicle. Please contact Mark Bruce Ph: 3764436 if you would like to borrow (at no cost to financial members) any of the items we have for travel or emergency or even just to try out.

The other exciting news is that our website has recently been upgraded with a bright new home page and hopefully much easier to navigate site for all to enjoy and use. There will now be a photo gallery of recent events and ongoing happenings for us so go check it out: www.amputeeinfo.co.nz

Also please do let us know if there is anything that you would like to see on our website or in our Newsletter and we shall do our very best to accommodate your wishes.

Take care of yourselves and I look forward to meeting you all at our next function in November too.

Kind regards,
Ava.

RECEIPE FOR HAPPINESS

Equal parts of healthy, honest work, rest and recreation, mixed carefully with diligence, cheerfulness and an even temper.

Sift through the sieve of determination to get rid of any lumps of idleness or despondency.

Then bring the whole to a cream with the milk of human kindness and spirits of consideration and sympathy, stirring each in gently with an inspiring hand.

Add to the whole a light sprinkle of smiles and colour with laughter.

Cost—a mere thought and a few illusions.

A GREAT TIME WAS HAD BY ALL WHO ATTENDED THE LUNCHEON.



Carlisle amputee's Talkin Tarn walk aids city hospital

By Pamela McGowan

when Carlisle pensioner Jeremy Coulthard had his leg amputated last November, he was determined not to be in a wheelchair for long. He and wife Gillian have always enjoyed walking round Talkin Tarn, near Brampton, so he set himself a target – to be able to walk around it again within six months of the operation. So on May 28, he set off on his prosthetic leg – nicknamed Lionel – around the tarn. Not only did he complete the route in one hour 50 minutes – much less than the predicted three hours – he also raised over £1,250 for the hospital. The money will be used to buy rehabilitation equipment for the disablement services department at Carlisle's Cumberland Infirmary.

Jeremy said: "I decided that if I was going to do it, I should try and get some sponsorship. People were brilliant, coming forward with donations. "I wanted to give it to the department here because the staff were so good. I had nothing but encouragement."

Jeremy, of Linstock, near Carlisle, had to have his right leg amputated above the knee as a result of long-term circulation problems. He underwent surgery at the Freeman Hospital in Newcastle in November, then was referred to Carlisle for rehabilitation and prosthetics. Initially he was confined to a wheelchair, but he was determined that one day he would walk again – and that it would be sooner than later. He said the staff in the disablement services centre were amazing, and really helped him achieve his goal.

At first he used a walking aid to practice with at the hospital, then later had a leg tailor made to fit him. He now uses it all the time and his next goal is to be able to do so without at least one of his crutches.

Jeremy said he now hopes his story will help to motivate new amputees. The money he raised will be used to buy, among other things, a Nintendo Wii, which can help patients regain their balance after an amputation

Eddie Kelly, manager of the disablement services centre, said the equipment they can now buy will make a real difference to other patients.

"It's good to see someone like Jeremy doing so well."

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The Psychological Aspects of Amputation

by Saul Morris, PhD

Regardless of the cause of your amputation, you will probably go through basically the same psychological stages. It is essential that you go through the grieving process, and some people will do it in a short time, while others will take several months. It is important, however, that you acknowledge and understand the process as you are going through each stage.

With the loss of a limb, the two most common types of grief are anticipatory grief and normal uncomplicated grief. Anticipatory grief occurs before a loss and is associated with a diagnosis of a life-threatening illness, and a forthcoming amputation. Here, we will only deal with normal uncomplicated grief, and it is important to understand that this is a normal process.

The Five Stages of the Grieving Process

Denial

Denial is usually experienced by people who go through traumatic amputations, and normally those who have had surgical amputations will not experience it.

Anger

Often people will blame God, the doctors, or others for their loss.

Bargaining

In this stage, patients may attempt to postpone the reality of amputation, and most patients will try to bargain with their doctor or through a higher authority such as a religious figure.

Depression

In this stage, anger is replaced by depression. This is probably the most complicated stage of grief, but it too will go away. This is not clinical depression. It is normal. Common symptoms include sleeping either too much or too little, negative feelings about the environment and the future, feelings of hopelessness, and talking about death.

Depression is not a sign of weakness, however, and should not be seen as such. It is treatable, and you should not hesitate to seek help from your doctor, nurse, family and friends.

Acceptance and Hope

Eventually, you will come to terms with your loss and start living again. This is more easily achieved if you have a visit from a peer counsellor who has been through this entire process and can give you some tips on coping with your loss.

Complicated Grief

Although complicated grief is not common in amputee patients, you should be aware of its symptoms, which include severe isolation, violent behaviour, suicidal ideation, workaholic behavior, severe or prolonged depression, nightmares, and avoiding reminders of your amputation. If you do experience any of these symptoms, please inform the appropriate medical professionals.

Compounding Factors

Along with the loss of your limb, you may also experience other complications, depending on your situation and your support from others.

During this period, you will probably find that stress is at its highest level. There are, however, many ways of coping with this problem. If you speak to your medical professional, perhaps he or she can help you. You may also experience loss of self-esteem, loss of self-confidence, fear of rejection from your mate, questions about your body image, and financial problems. Probably one of the most difficult problems is losing your sense of independence and having to rely on others for some of your most common everyday needs.

You are still the same valuable person you were before this loss. You will find that as time goes by, you will learn to adapt, and your whole attitude will change for the good. Another mistake we as new amputees make is in our perception of our body. After an amputation, it is quite normal to feel that you may no longer be attractive to your partner. Perhaps this might be true in some cases, but if your partner really loves you, the loss of a limb will make no difference in your relationship, sexual or otherwise. Of course, some adjustments may be necessary, but they can and will be made, and eventually things will get back to normal.

If you have these false impressions of yourself, try to work them out. There are many sources of help available, and you should not be afraid to talk about these problems with someone. Most amputees have felt some of these things, but they have gotten through them, and so will you. I am a strong advocate of amputee peer counselling, and if you are fortunate enough to be visited by a trained peer counsellor, he or she will take the time to sit with you alone and inquire about your concerns.

It is important to get these feelings out in the open and communicate them honestly. Otherwise, they will just fester and cause more harm to you, your family and your partner.

We all have the right to be the person we want to be, and the only person who can take that right away from us is our self. As someone who has counselled many amputees, I know that all of your difficulties will pass. It is up to you to think about you and your life in a positive way to ensure that you have a productive future. It is easy to fall into the pit of self-pity, decide that you are worthless, and end up spending some or all of the rest of your valuable life hibernating. Don't let this happen. If you need help coping, there are many resources that can be useful to you. If you have a peer counsellor, talk it over with him or her. After all, he or she made it through the same thing that you are going through. You can too.

About the Author

Saul Morris, PhD, is a below-knee amputee. He is educated in both psychology and medicine. He is a veteran naval commander and has served in both the Vietnam and Gulf wars. He is the founder and director of M-STAR (Michigan Society to Advance Rehabilitation), an organization that provides amputee peer counselling to new amputees. He spends an enormous amount of time educating the medical profession about the value of amputee peer counselling and the psychology of amputation.