

AN AMAZING JOURNEY

Twenty years ago, on January 24, 2003, I had my hemorrhagic stroke caused by an undetected malformation of blood vessels on the right side of my brain. We had no idea that I was a walking time bomb and that anything was wrong. Many of you know my story well, and I woke up seventeen days later from a drug induced coma, paralyzed on the left side. Six months later, Dainis lost his job in the aviation industry due to the slowdown after September 11th so we moved from MN to AZ. I was still in a wheelchair for long distances, using a cane, had no use of my left arm or hand, and very dependent on Dainis and my parents as my caregivers. I am so thankful God provided Dainis a job in AZ, away from the ice, snow, and cold weather. It was emotionally a hard move but wonderful for my recovery. We found an amazing therapy clinic and I was one of their first group of patients in Fall 2003. The clinic is called SWAN Rehab and was started by Dr. Kay Wing. I learned so much from my time there and will forever be grateful for my therapists and all they taught me. SWAN now has a second location located only about ten minutes from our house and Dr. Kay Wing has sold the business to a company called Rehab Without Walls. I am thrilled with the new location and can now independently go to therapy on my own. I continue to learn new things, work hard, and am in therapy 3 days a week. Although I still have a physical disability today, I have overcome many obstacles and beat the odds for typical survivors of hemorrhagic strokes. I am thankful that I have been able to regain enough mobility and independence to become an adoptive mom, a published author, speaker, active volunteer, and take care of my family.



Me with Dr. Kay Wing at SWAN Rehab

TWO VIRTUAL CONFERENCES TO START THE YEAR OFF

At the beginning of the year, I had the opportunity to participate in two virtual conferences and am so thankful for these learning opportunities. The first one was sponsored by Abundance Books, who published the recent book I was just a compilation author in. It was a great conference, and I had the opportunity to serve as a workshop speaker, teaching on the use of book signing events as a marketing tool. I am thankful for every opportunity I get to speak and then connect with others and learn new things. The second conference was sponsored by Redemption Press and was a 5-Day writing challenge. I had hoped originally to use that time to finish my devotional but God planted a completely new book idea in my brain during this challenge on parenting and adoption so we will see in the future.

MARKETING RE-LAUNCH

I am very excited about the opportunity to relaunch my book *CHOICES* this May in conjunction with Stroke Awareness Month with the help of some marketing friends at Redemption Press Publishing. We will offer Amazon specials, and I will look forward to continued opportunities to share my story.

CANCER TREATMENT CENTERS OF AMERICA (CTCA)

I learned so much during my time volunteering at CTCA in 2022 and made some amazing connections and friendships. Many of the experiences there changed my perspective, grew me as a writer, provided me with opportunities to share my story and a platform to speak, and gave me a place to passionately help, connect with, and serve others that were facing a difficult medical challenge. As the Cancer Fighters organization is re-designing their volunteer program to align with the hospital's merger with City of Hope, I have stepped away for now but continue to connect with patients that are now considered friends.

LOOKING FOR A SPEAKER IN 2023?

As I have persevered through medical, life, adoption, and parenting challenges, I have learned a lot on my journey and want to give hope and encouragement to others based on my experiences. If you are looking for an in person or virtual speaker, I would love to share with your group. Many times, we do not have control over the challenges that come our way. However, we have a choice how we react to our circumstances. You can find more on my website under the Speaking tab.

BIBLE STUDIES

I love Women's Bible Study and the Women's Ministry at Desert Springs Community Church was the first connection I had to other women and involvement in outside activity after we moved to AZ from MN. Becoming involved in Bible Study was my first step in feeling like I was the "old me" and I have continued my involvement through the years as a table leader. I love this new role and the opportunity to lead a discussion and nurture a new group of women each year. I am leading an in person group, a Zoom group, and we are starting a brand new Women's Bible Study Small Group at our church plant, Mission Church. I am very excited about all three of these opportunities to connect with different groups of women. We are going through an amazing study by Jennifer Rothschild called *Take Courage*.

PODCASTS, BLOGS, ZOOMS

I am still sharing my story and book on podcasts and blogs. If you are a host of a podcast, blog, or zoom and would be interested in speaking to me, I would love to talk to you and have your help, marketing my message. You can find examples of my podcasts, my 3-minute video reel, and speaker one-sheet on my website at www.lorivober.com.