

You have a life!

You don't have a good life or a bad life. You have been given a life. If everything was always good in your life - you would not know, how good it was.

I had a good life - After I retired from my able-bodied taekwondo career - finished law school, I married my husband Kristian and we had two kids - two girls who are now 14 and 12!

In 2007 I discovered some pain in my left hand. As an old athlete I probably waited too long to go to the doctor. Because after some examinations and surgery we found out it was cancer. Years of surgeries after that did not stop the cancer, and my left hand and underarm had to be amputated in 2012.

I will never know why I had cancer or what the situation could have been, if I had gone to the doctors earlier or they could have found the cancer earlier. It doesn't matter now. But it was also o

2012 was the year of the Olympic and the Paralympic Games in London. I was so inspired.

I was training on rehabilitation with my prosthetic and finding myself being a person with a disability. It was difficult for me. I had always been strong and able. Able to do what I wanted to do. Now I was at home and thinking of all the things I could not do anymore.

Then I saw the Paralympics.

I saw people with far more disabilities than I had.

These people were more than their bodies. These people competed.

These people cried, were angry at themselves, or happy and proud of themselves.

I knew then immediately that I could never again feel sorry for myself.

I knew then immediately that I wanted to do something like them - I wanted to do sports, and my biggest dream was to be able to go to the Paralympic Games in one way or another.

I discussed this with my dear friend and old national coach Bjarne Johansen. He told me that he had seen parataekwondo at international competitions. There was no point of return. I wanted to go for this. I needed a goal in my life. And I am very happy that Bjarne would follow me with this dream.

The people I saw compete at the Paralympics had given me this hope and this motivation and inspiration.

I have now been fighting parataekwondo for 8 years now, and my very big goal, that spired inside me in 2012 to take part in the Paralympic Games, is now very close. I cannot believe that the dream has actually come true.

I still know the place I was standing when I got the call in January 2015 - that Parataekwondo had become a Paralympic sport. I cross all my 5 fingers that the situation of the Covid-19 will not stop this great event.

I have been a part of the journey of Parataekwondo becoming a Paralympic sport for many years. I am so humble and proud to be a part of the World Taekwondo Federation as I know how much effort, resources and energy that are put into this.

It has been such an inspiring eyeopener for me to see and get to know so many other athletes and people from all over the world with disabilities of all kinds.

I have seen how differently the nations around the world support these athletes.

I have seen, that athletes and the people who get the opportunity to join competitions and be a part of this, get a better life, and I believe they and I have a more happy life all around.

I am not sure that I saw this so much when I was in the universe of the able bodied-sports. It is like I see life with clearer eyes now.

I am so fortunate that we - in parasports - in Denmark have the same opportunities and support from the national sport federation. Women and men, girls and boys - equally in gender. This is so important.

To be at the highest level in parataekwondo and in all the other sports means hard work. But no one can do it by themselves. I am so grateful for all my big team of support from my family, coaches, team members, sponsors, federations. To have all this in your life and have people support you means, that you have to work hard to show them, that you appreciate the efforts and that you are willing to sacrifice time, sweat and tears to go all the way.

But no matter how hard one person fights for his or her dreams - there need to be foundations to support these dreams and efforts. To make it happen. The World Taekwondo Federation have succeeded with this on such a high level - as well as I am fortunate to have good support in Denmark. I now really hope and encourage other nations, governments and sport federations to brace and support this. There are still so many countries that I know have people doing taekwondo, and they must have people with disabilities who will gain in life from this. If not taekwondo, then other sports.

I would like to have my hand back - but I would not be my journey through parataekwondo without - it has been a big part of me and given me so much quality to my new good life.