

# Overcomer: Rising Above the Challenges of Poland Syndrome

Melissa Amaya

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Growing up is tough. Growing up with a visible birth defect raises the challenge to a new level. Born with a congenital birth defect known as Poland Syndrome, the author transparently shares her experiences; enduring childhood, surviving adolescence and numerous surgeries, until finally thriving in adulthood with a new perspective on life. Written to be an encouragement to anyone effected by a birth defect, you will not be disappointed. Poland Syndrome creates a life that has one challenge after another. Whether learning how to open a door or tie my shoe or put my hair up in a pony tail, my childhood was spent adapting and seeking to not only keep up, but excel in everything. Yet it all took a tole. Over the years I have struggled with extreme self-consciousness about both my hand and my chest. In many regards I was the same as everyone else: doing well in school and excelling in sports, but at the same time I always felt different. During my early years at college I began to acknowledge and deal with the various ways that PS had impacted my life. Out of that experience I began compiling my thoughts. I began to write as a means of my own "self-help." Over the years I continued to write and began to categorize my writing in a way that would fit a book form, so that my experience might become a help to others. It was a slow process. A humbling process. An uncomfortable process. And a HUGE step to make it public!! So this book was 10+ years in the making. I wish I knew then what I know now. I wish I could have coached myself through so many hard times with the wisdom and perspective I now posses. I cannot go back in time, but I can share that wisdom and perspective with YOU. Whether I parent seeking wisdom for a child or one with Poland Syndrome still trying to make sense of it all and desperately wanting to NOT feel alone -- may this book, may my feeble efforts -- be a help, an encouragement and a source of comfort.



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