



Maja Kazazic

When she was **16 years old**, **Maja Kazazic's** life changed forever. In the summer of 1993, two years into the Bosnian War – a **genocide that killed 250,000 people and injured millions** - a rocket propelled grenade exploded in her courtyard destroying her home and killing five of her friends. Her legs were shattered in the blast, and her face and arm were peppered with shrapnel.

Maja was treated in a local **makeshift basement hospital** that lacked medical supplies and antibiotics. Her left leg became infected and over the next couple of months flesh was cut from her leg until she eventually underwent an **amputation** – all without the benefit of anesthesia.

Kazazic lay close to death when she was selected to be one of three children **evacuated for treatment**. She left her home and her family with only a teddy bear, a t-shirt and a rock. As people in Maja's new hometown of **Cumberland, Maryland** learned of her story, the community volunteered their time, money, and effort to make her whole again.

Maja was determined to succeed; she had the will to **overcome any obstacle**. Despite the challenges presented to her as a below-the-knee amputee, she was able to **build a new life beyond anyone's expectations**. She learned how to walk again, finished high school and college, and eventually started a very **successful software company whose clients included Fortune 100 companies**. She has since learned to windsurf, play tennis and golf, and even run. She completed her first 5K in 2009.



As a result of the tragedy she endured, Maja was left with **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder** which left her living through constant panic attacks and night terrors, rendering her unable to function at times. On the recommendation of her clinician, **Maja adopted Rosie, an amputee Great Dane**, and they have been an inseparable pair ever since. With Rosie's help, Kazazic's PTSD symptoms have abated. **Kazazic and Rosie have given hope and inspiration** to countless people with limb loss and those struggling with the adjustment and depression.

Kazazic has been featured in **Reader's Digest, Good Housekeeping, Woman's World, the Los Angeles Times**, the Philadelphia Inquirer, as well as **ABC, NBC, CBS, Fox News, CTV, BBC News**, and on the **Discovery Health Network**.

Maja's keynote addresses the questions we all have during these challenging times: **What should we be doing? Where do we go next? How should we be feeling?**

Maja uses her insights to make sense of the chaos, **live a purpose-driven life**, and **lead purpose-driven organizations** and teams in the midst of an ever changing workspace.