**Script:**

If your life were a book and you were the author, how would you want your story to go? That's the question that changed my life forever. Growing up in a hot Las Vegas desert, all I wanted was to be free. I would daydream about traveling the world, living in a place where it snowed and I would picture all of the stories that I would go on to tell. At the age of 19, the day after I graduate high school, I moved to a place where it snowed and I became a massage therapist. With this job, all I needed were my hands and my massage table by my side and I could go anywhere. For the first time of my life, I felt free, independent and completely in control of my life. That is until my life took a detour. I went home from work early one day with what I thought was the flu and less than 24 hours later, I was in the hospital, on life support with less than a 2% chance of living. It wasn't until days later as I lay in a coma that the doctors diagnosed me with bacterial meningitis（**细菌性脑膜炎）**, a vaccine preventable blood infection. Over the course of 2-1/2 months, I lost my spleen（脾）, my kidneys, the hearing in my left ear and both of my legs below the knee. When my parents wheeled me out of the hospital, I felt like I have been pieced back together like a patch work doll. I thought the worst was over until weeks later when I saw my new legs for the first time. The cads（**计算机辅助设计=computer-aided design）**were bulky blocks of metal with pipes bolted together for the ankles and the yellow rubber foot with the raised rubber line from the toe to the ankle to look like a vein. I didn't know what to expect but I wasn't expecting that. With my mom by my side and tears streaming down our faces, I strapped on these chunky legs and I stood up. They were so painful and so confining that all I could think was how am I ever going to travel the world in these things, how was I ever going to live the life full of adventure and stories as I always wanted and how was I going to snowboard again? That day, I went home, I crawled into bed and this is what my life looked like for the next few months. Me passed out（昏倒）, escaping from reality with my legs resting by my side. I was absolutely, physically, and emotionally broken. But I knew that in order to move forward, I had to let go of the old Amy and learn to embrace the new Amy. And that is when it dawned on me, that I didn't have to be a 5 foot 5 anymore. I could be as tall as I wanted or as short as I wanted depending on who I was dating. And if I snowboard again, my feet aren't going to get cold. And the best of all, I thought I can make my feet the size of all the shoes that are on the sales rack and I did. So there were benefits here. It was this moment that I asked myself that life defining question, if my life were a book and I were the author, how would I want the story to go? And I began to daydream. I daydreamed like I did as a little girl and I imagined myself walking gracefully, helping other people through my journey and snowboarding again. And I didn't just see myself carving down a mountain of powder. I could actually feel it. I could feel the wind against my face and the beat of my racing heart as if it were happening in that very moment. And that is when a new chapter in my life began. Four months later, I was backed up on a snowboard although things didn't go quite as expected. My knees and my ankles, when it bend and at one point, I traumatized all the skiers on the air lift when I fell and my legs still attached to my snowboard with(which was?) flying down the mountain. And I was on top of the mountain still. I was so shocked. I was just as shocked as everybody else and I was so discouraged. But I knew that if I could find the right pair of feet that I would be able to do this again. And this is when I learned that our borders and our obstacles can only do 2 things. One, stop us in our tracks or two, force us to get creative. I did a year research, still couldn't figure out what kind of legs to use. I couldn't find any resources that could help me. So I decided to make a pair myself. My leg maker and I put random parts together and we made a pair of feet that I could snowboard in. As you can see, rusty bolts, rubber, wood and neon pink duct tape and yes, I can change my toe all polished. It was these legs and the best 21st birthday gift I could ever receive a new kidney from my dad that allowed me to follow my dreams again. I started snowboarding then I went back to work then I went back to school. Then in 2005, I co-founded a non-profit organization for youth and young adults with physical disabilities so they could get involved with action sports. From there, I have the opportunity to go to South Africa where I helped to put shoes on thousands of children's feet so they could attend school. And just this past February, I won 2 back to back World Cup gold medals which made me the highest ranked adaptive female snowboarder in the world. 11 years ago, when I lost my legs, I had no idea what to expect. But if you ask me today, if I would ever wanna change my situation, I would have to say no because my legs haven't disabled me, if anything they've enabled me, they forced me to rely on my imagination and to believe in the possibilities and that's why I believe that our imaginations can be used as tools for breaking through borders because in our minds, we can do anything and we can be anything. It's believing in those dreams and facing our fears head on that allows us to live our lives beyond our limits. And although today is about innovation without borders, I have to say that in my life, innovation has only been possible because of my borders. I've learned that borders are where the actual ends but also where the imagination and the story begins. So the thought that I would like to challenge you with today is that maybe instead of looking at our challenges and our limitations as something negative or bad, we can begin to look at them as blessings, magnificent gifts that can be used to ignite our imaginations and help us go further than we ever knew we could go. It's not about breaking down borders. It's about pushing off at them and seeing what amazing places they may bring us. Thank you.

**Questions:**

1. Growing up in a hot Las Vegas desert, what was the speaker’s dream?
2. What does it mean when the speaker says that her life “took a detour”?
3. What was going on in her mind when she strapped on her fake chunky legs?
4. The speaker had to let go of the old Amy and learn to embrace the new Amy. It dawned on her that there were benefits of the catastrophe. What were they?
5. What was her dream now after she suffered from bacterial meningitis?
6. The speaker learned from her skiing that our borders and our obstacles can only do two things. What are they?
7. What kind of organization did the speaker co-found in the year 2005?
8. What has the speaker learned about “borders” from her life experience?

**Answer for reference:**

1. Her dream was traveling the world, living in a place where it snowed and she would picture all of the stories that she would go on to tell.
2. She was diagnosed me with bacterial meningitis that made her lose her spleen, my kidneys, the hearing in her left ear and both of her legs below the knee.
3. All she could think was how she was ever going to travel the world in these things, how she was ever going to live the life full of adventure and stories as she always wanted and how she was going to snowboard again.
4. She didn't have to be a 5 foot 5 anymore. She could be as tall as she wanted or as short as she wanted depending on who she was dating. And if she snowboard again, her feet aren't going to get cold. And the best of all, she thought she can make her feet the size of all the shoes that are on the sales rack.
5. She dreamed that she could walk gracefully, help other people through her journey and snowboard again.
6. One, stop us in our tracks or two, force us to get creative.
7. A non-profit organization for youth and young adults with physical disabilities so they could get involved with action sports.
8. She has learned from her life experience that borders are where the actual ends but also where the imagination and the story begins. Life is not about breaking down borders; it is about pushing off at them and see what amazing places they may bring us.