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For Hani, independence means having the energy and freedom to do more of what she loves, whether that's training, creating art or spending far too long exploring the aisles at her local Bunnings.

Before joining the NDIS, everyday activities could leave her exhausted and in significant pain.

Hani initially resisted applying to access the NDIS because she believed other people needed support more than she did.

‘I thought, if I can still work or I can still do this or that, I can still manage,’ she said.

The Queenslander has bilateral leg metaphyseal dysplasia, a progressive condition that causes her femur and tibia bones to grow bowed.

Hani sometimes uses crutches but relies on a wheelchair for much of her mobility.

Her NDIS funding includes a manual wheelchair, assistance with daily living and occupational therapy.

‘If I didn’t have it, my life would be very, very hard,’ Hani said of her NDIS support.

Her wheelchair was particularly life changing.

When asked what it allowed her to do again, she laughed and said, ‘To go shopping’.

‘I love Bunnings. I’m very hands on. Before, I couldn’t go down the aisles too long. I would have to sit down and take breaks.’

The gym has been part of her life since childhood. Her father was a bodybuilder and lifting weights became something familiar and comforting.

‘I just wanted to be strong like my dad,’ Hani said.

During years of surgery and chronic pain, she also turned to art. She was once challenged to try something she'd never done before and make sure she finished it.

Hani started creating installation artworks from fallen timber on a former family property near Eudlo in Queensland.

She said her favourite piece, The Journey, represented life's twists, difficult patches and a way forward.

Years later, that idea of a journey took on a whole new meaning.as a Para-powerlifter.

She won Commonwealth Games bronze in Birmingham in 2022, competed at the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games and claimed another bronze at the 2026 Glasgow Commonwealth Games.

Now Hani has her sights set on Los Angeles 2028 and Brisbane 2032.

But for Hani, powerlifting is about more than competition. She wants to encourage more people with disability to discover strength sport and feel welcome in gym environments.

‘We want people to be able to go to the gym, feel welcomed, feel like they belong and feel included,’ she said.

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