

# HOUKJE ROSS

---

houkjer@gmail.com

301-503-0627

Washington, DC

## PERSONAL OVERVIEW

Over 20 years of experience as a writer and communications professional. Love for —and deep skill in— writing and editing to support public health, science, research, medical, and wellness sectors. Passion for creating clear information that informs and educates.

## KEY SKILLS

- Excellent written and verbal communications, able to turn technical information and concepts into clear and simple text
- Experienced news and feature writer, experience interviewing SMEs
- Able to interface with a wide variety of professionals including researchers, subject matter experts, executives, board members, and laypersons and the public
- Experience working with writers and non-writers to substantially edit documents for organization and clarity
- Flexible: able to write in a variety of styles and formats, includes blogs, web text, emails, newsletters, ebooks, press releases, case studies, annual reports, PowerPoint presentations
- Social media experience includes 10+ years driving user engagement via Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn
- Experienced coach, able to provide feedback and critique of written materials in a productive and positive manner

## PROFESSIONAL STRENGTHS

- ❖ **Strategic.** Big picture thinker, excellent at concept development and storyboarding.
- ❖ **Fostering growth.** Recognize and cultivate the potential in individuals and communities, motivated by collaboration.
- ❖ **Performance Improvement.** Able to spot areas for improvement. Derive satisfaction from taking action to make progress/change.
- ❖ **Storytelling.** Adept at cultivating and using story to empower, build community, and foster inspiration for change.

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### **Freelance Writer/Communications Consultant** | Self-Employed | Mt. Rainier, MD. | 2011 – Present

- Substantive editor for a private client writing a book about parenting a child with special needs. Provide a critical review of writing for coherence, organization, completeness, and clarity; suggest edits to improve the quality of materials; provide copy editing.
- Content writer for an agency focused on consumer healthcare. Includes blog articles and web text, SEO for hospitals and pharmaceutical industries. Patient-centered topics include *Community Resources for Cancer Patients*, *Requesting Medical Records*, *The Importance of Having a Health Advocate*, *Holistic Healing Programs*, *Watchful Waiting Strategies for Bladder Cancer*, *The Importance of Community Support as a Cancer Patient*, *How to Find Mental Health Resources*
- Communications consultant for solo-entrepreneurs in the life coaching/self-development industry. Offer communications strategy and coaching, creative concept, and message development for websites including interviewing subjects to draw out content
- Communications Consultant for USAID's maternal and child health and nutrition programs. Facilitated development of an online portal for capturing and disseminating knowledge of technical working groups.

### **Well-Being Coach** | Self-Employed – LLC | Mt. Rainier, MD | 2011 – Present

- Supporting clients to move toward their goals and make meaningful changes in their lives.
- Fostering courage and confidence, for greater client authenticity, connection, and engagement.
- Creating safe spaces for self-discovery, personal development, and professional growth.

### **Communications Manager** | CORE Group | Washington, DC | 3 years

- Managed day-to-day communications for the organization. Includes acting as in-house editor for executive staff, board members, and co-workers; crafting e-newsletters, emails, and other communications for members and partners, keeping the website up to date.
- Coordinate the development of a communication strategy for members, funders, and the public; includes successfully integrating a new content management system for the organization; manage web and IT consultants, external graphic designers, and other consultants.
- Oversee development of technical publications including curriculums, case studies, and internal documentation. Includes rewriting and substantially editing work of co-workers, public health field staff, managers, as well as technical and subject matter experts.

### **Project Manager** | Public Health Foundation | Washington, DC | 5 years

- Manage the development and production of various public health materials, including newsletters, web content, case studies, press releases, resource guides, postcards, brochures, flyers, and proposals.
- Develop and carry out editorial schedules, timelines, and budgets. Successfully manage freelance graphic artists, workgroups, and committees submitting content for publication development.

- Develop messaging and communications strategies to promote public health materials: epidemiology, vaccines, child and adolescent health, bioterrorism, avian flu, etc.
- Spearhead the development of the Foundation’s internal and external IT communications efforts. Includes successfully implementing an online portal for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to enable 50+ state distance learning coordinators to share and store professional development tools, information, and best practices for managing a state distance learning system

**Senior Writer/Editor** | HHS Office of Minority Health Resource Center | Silver Spring, Md. | 3 years

- Analyze, condense and package large quantities of public health information and statistics.
- Write health news and feature stories for two 16-page bi-monthly publications: HIV Impact and Closing the Gap
- Assist communications manager with public health campaigns.

## **EDUCATION**

**Bachelor of Arts (BA)** – *English Literature* | University of New Hampshire | Durham, NH

## **CERTIFICATES & PROFESSIONAL TRAINING**

Martha Beck Coach Training | Nature-Based Coach Training, Sagefire Institute, NY | Intuitive Arts Training, Intuitive Arts Studio, L.A.

**TECHNICAL SKILLS** Microsoft Outlook, Word, PowerPoint, Dropbox, Google Docs, WordPress, Joomla, Drupal, iMac Pages, Mailchimp, Survey Monkey Social Media (LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) for community building.