



Losing your hair isn't easy to come to terms with, now more than ever. Our image-obsessed, selfie-crazed society leaves even the fairest faced amongst us insecure. It's no surprise then that when you lose your hair many experience depression and fear. Worst of all, you don't accept yourself.

I'm here to tell you that acceptance will come if you want it, with time, but first there is a grieving process. Me and thousands of women like me live very happy lives and our lack of hair doesn't stop us from doing or being anything we choose. In fact we are grateful to our alopecia for the positive changes it has brought us. I know it might sound very hard to believe but trust me, it is possible.

The Grieving Process

Hairloss doesn't hurt you physically however, it can be one of the most traumatic experiences you will ever face.

Losing your hair is devastating. Your hair represents your personality, your identity and health and this is one of the reasons I post lots of pictures showcasing different styles; to demonstrate how different you appear by just changing your hair. To lose it utterly transforms your appearance.

The grieving process is the same kind you will experience for any kind of loss and there is no right way or wrong way to feel and no particular order. A certain feeling or stage will sit longer with some than others and these stages include denial, anger, bargaining, depression and finally, acceptance. It's worthwhile reminding yourself that you can't control your feelings, they are not good, bad, right or wrong. We are not supposed to feel a certain way. Your feelings are controlled by your biology and your life experiences. What I'm trying to say is that you can just accept them and know that they are transient and always moving. There is no point in punishing yourself or feeling guilty for something that is out of your control.

Only our actions can be wrong. Never our thoughts or feelings.

Taking Control

It's not your fault your hair has fallen out and you will probably never know why it happened. The future is uncertain now and feels scary and out of control, you will waste a lot of time and tears trying to control life.

The only thing that we can truly control is our commitment to something and doing something will give you your life back so what you do next determines how you're going to handle it. You can decide to let it take over your life or you can use that panic to fuel your recovery. When I'm talking about recovery, I mean going on to live happily in your own skin even if, like me, you were never happy in the first place. Losing my hair, ironically, taught me to love what's on the outside and even better, it's helping me to really value who I am inside too.

It's extremely self destructive to believe we should be more than we are however, when we make the most of what we have, it turns into more. The ultimate aim is to give up our fictitious sense of identity so we can do and be whatever we choose to be.



How to Feel Better

It's time to start caring for yourself and working on that confidence!

It's not selfish to spend some time focusing on yourself and you mustn't feel guilty as everyone around you benefits if you're happy. Often doing just one thing will have such a positive effect it snowballs and you'll find you want to do more things for yourself.

Here are some suggestions for a starting point

- Meet others like you. Online forums are a fantastic way to realise that you are far from alone. Many thousands of women live with hairloss and understand what you're going through. Alopecia UK is an amazing charity with a fabulous Facebook forum and I highly recommend the face-to-face meet ups which happen in many areas throughout the country.
- Clothes, accessories, makeup and skin care can totally transform how confident you feel. You can learn about makeup, colours and styling very easily and it's a lot of fun.
- Small acts of generosity give you a buzz. Even if you don't feel great, doing something for someone else can really help to restore your sense of self worth.
- Investigate stress relieving activities like massage, meditation, therapies and exercise.
- Start a new hobby or do more of what you enjoy. It's good to try and externalise your thoughts and focus more.
- An obvious one, but improving what you eat and drink and how much you sleep will give you more energy to focus on feeling better again.
- Spend lots of time with friends and family (the positive relationships). It's extraordinarily humbling how much those who love you want to help so let them, it's good for both of you.
- Decide if and how you are going to cover your hair loss. There are lots of options and when you find something that works it can be transformational. It's even better when you can do it with a sense of humour and a smile!

My Hair Gives Me Confidence

There are women who are proud to be bald, who are happy to be natural and look absolutely amazing with it. They don't consider themselves as inspirational, it's just who they are and they can't pretend to be anything else.

I am not one of those ladies. Being bald really isn't me. But I'm not ashamed of my alopecia and like those bald beauties I have to be totally honest, I am not courageous, just someone who has learnt to quite like herself. I don't wear wigs to hide what I am, I wear them because they are a part of my identity. My alopecia doesn't define me, but it's very much a part of my life too. As unbelievable as it may seem it's totally cool for me; social permission to play dress up every day if I choose to. The fact my hair doesn't actually grow out of my head is merely a technicality. I know it looks great and it gives me the confidence to feel pretty good about myself.

If you're not enhancing any part of your look then I give you permission to judge me!

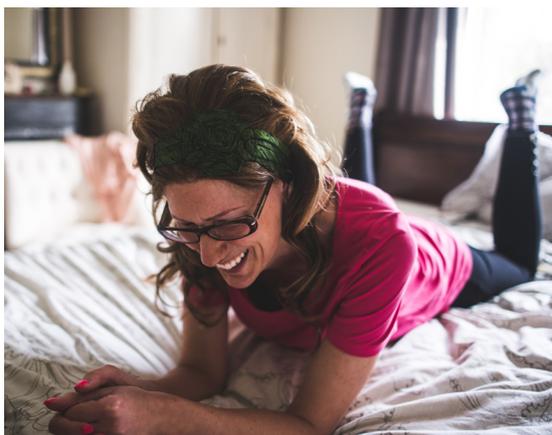


What to do if You Hate Wearing Wigs?

I meet women every day who tell me they hate wearing wigs and who are desperate to feel normal again, but going au naturel is simply not an option and hats/scarves just don't do it in the sexy department...

I'm the first to admit there are a lot of awful products out there; I've fallen victim to most of them! The wig feels uncomfortable, it looks unnatural and your life is restricted in so many unimaginable ways, but there came a moment for me when I realised that if I didn't take ownership life would simply take over. If you're not clear about what you want (and take no action) you become shackled forever to a person you no longer like.

My work began and following months of research I began to discover lots of options. I tried out new things and was amazed to discover how fantastic it felt to step out of the shadows. Not only ARE there products comfortable and natural, they look amazing. Whatever label you want to give wigs (hair additions, extensions, volumiser etc) you can't say you hate them until you have sampled the vast array of goodies. It's time to take action and release your inner goddess!



Am I Vain for Covering Up?

Everyone knows that society favours the beautiful and it's not a recent phenomenon, only our interpretations of what we think is beautiful changes through history and geography.

Whether you like it or not we are programmed to notice what is different and we all discriminate; it's part of our internal defence system. In evolutionary terms it's called survival of the fittest. Being drawn to the most attractive is instinctive and simply part of our constitution and as a result, hours and billions of pounds are spent on grooming, makeup and plastic surgery. It's well documented that better looking people have considerable benefits in all aspects of life, overall you earn more, are more successful at work, have more attractive and educated spouses etc.

So, it's hardly surprising that women still do not talk about hair loss because our crowning glory is a sign of beauty, health and success and although we have become accustomed to male baldness because we see it all the time, we are not so used to seeing bald women. I accept it is still very hard for men but at least it's acceptable... so, as women, surely we should make a stand and show the world how often women have hair loss too? We should be supporting each other and making it easier for others to come out. Show our heads, be proud and courageous and show the world beauty comes from within? I have massive respect for women who are comfortable to do just that. I look awful with no hair and it does not make me feel good.

Wanting to make the most of your appearance is not vanity. Vanity is an ugly word used to describe a conceited, over admiration of yourself. It is not vain for wanting to be slim, wear make up, highlight your hair or shave your legs. The point is that you should be able to do whatever makes you feel confident and better about yourself - do what you like and have fun with it!

How to Find A Man When You Have Alopecia

When you hate your own appearance you can't imagine that anyone will ever find you attractive again...

Single women fear they will never find another partner and married women worry their husbands will go off them. Sadly if you stay too long in a depressive state you will self fulfil these prophesies. The key to it all is confidence: when you know you look good, you feel confident and if it's only your hair keeping you down there are plenty of options.

You never have to show your partner, anyone or even yourself if you don't want to by choosing your fantasy hair and permanently attaching it. Personally I think it's healthy to accept yourself but that comes later... There are thousands and thousands of people wearing hair systems, but do you ever see any? No, because you can't tell.

Looks are important when attracting a man. They are important to you. Most husbands will love you regardless but I guarantee they show a lot more interest when you're looking and feeling good so find the right product and you'll get your confidence back by the bucket load. Go date and be honest about it when the subject of your amazing hair comes up. If it doesn't bother you it shouldn't bother your partner and he/she will take their cue from you. You have thin hair, you cheat, so what? Everyone's cheating with something.

