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My 50th Birthday in January 2011 was life changing and my wish as I cut the cake was that my hair would stop falling out.

I'd noticed a patch missing two weeks prior to my birthday and it was only two weeks after that I'd lost all the hair on my head. The greatest loss was yet to come and that was the loss of my eyelashes and eyebrows.

I had never experienced such stress, uncertainty, despair or alienation as I felt when I realised that there was no cure for Alopecia Areata Universalis.

For some reason I also felt embarrassed, this is an illness that isn't always talked about especially amongst women. The stress of not sleeping and feelings of utmost misery meant that after some sick leave I left my long term job.

During the past three and a half years I have been treated by 3 different dermatologists, 2 here in Adelaide and one interstate in my quest to grow hair. I have experimented with lotions, medications, injections and vitamins and my hair has grown back 3 times only to fall out again when I stopped prescribed medication due to reactions. I have visited naturopaths, tried meditation and gluten free diets and researched this condition endlessly.

My ever supportive husband says I've tried harder to grow hair in 3 years than most people would try in a lifetime. Now I feel I may have to try acceptance. Acceptance for me though does not mean liking, wanting or choosing this condition but somehow finding a way to live with it.

I have maintained my social life and commitment to family whilst trying to stay positive and I have learned empathy for people with any illness or condition. I value each day more than ever, I'm thankful for all I have and I've learned to focus on the positive and live in the moment more than worrying about what tomorrow will bring or what happened yesterday.



Me in my wig nursing my first grandchild, special new love, she's just the tonic I need.

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