

## **Trevor.... if tomorrow there was a cure I wouldn't want it. Having Alopecia has made me who I am and damn it, I don't want to have to shave everyday.**

As a youngster my family moved out of the big smoke of Melbourne to North-East Victoria and from the first day I was victimised and bullied for years then just as the girls started to be interested my hair started falling out.

The doctors didn't seem to have any answers to my question 'of just what the hell was going on' as my hair loss continued at an increasingly rapid rate and I wasn't sure what I was going to lose next, an arm...leg? No-one else seemed to have what I had and with no support at all I just didn't know what was happening, I certainly felt alone.

Various treatments failed to hold back whatever was going on leaving me psychologically devastated as bald 19 year old, I struggled to find work. I always found it hard to make friends and build relationships especially with members of the opposite sex but did enjoy a few serious relationships and was able to witness one of life's true miracles seeing a life force me and my then partner had created go from breathing liquid in one breath to air the next one as she entered the world. I was twenty five at the time and immediately worried if I had given my daughter something that would haunt her in the future. It wasn't until around this time that someone told me, not a doctor by the way, that I had Alopecia. Ironically at about this same time for reasons I will never understand my hair started to grow back and while over the next ten years or so I enjoyed something close to a full head of hair my eyebrows never returned while the virtual complete lack of hair on arms and legs has provided some level of humour with some of the women I have shared a bed with who in the morning seem to find it amusing that they have more hair on their legs than me, funny huh?

For various reasons I was forced to leave the house I had lived in for years putting all my things into a storage area and ended up on the streets sleeping inside my small van. I thought I would only be inside it for 12 months, 18 months at the most this was at the start of 2008.

In 2013 while still living in my small van on the streets of Melbourne I returned to school to study V.C.E. certification and finally have those important lines etched on my resume. I was lucky to find some public showers so I could be clean each day and again had students staring at me and laughing when I wore my shorts. But I knew if I walked away I would never try again so just focussed on my studies. During this time my first article about my time on the streets of Melbourne was published in the "Big Issue Magazine" then another before a friend helped me out and slotted me into a house with a couple of house-mates and finally my time on the streets had come to an end. I was photographed in my new home for an article published in the AGE newspaper in November and described as a "Perfect advertisement for mature age education" who would have thought?

But when it is all said and done, now as a 44 year old, if tomorrow there was a cure I wouldn't want it. Having Alopecia has made me who I am and damn it, I don't want to have to shave everyday and just how much is shampoo anyway?

Over the last few weeks I have sorted out some other issues and next year, 2015, I maybe in a zone I never thought I would get to as a University student studying to improve my writing even more. So at the end of the day, I have the last laugh as now I'm a published writer, more articles have been published and more on the horizon including finishing my first book and even have been on ABC Radio, 3CR Radio and LighFM89.9 recently.

My future looks better than I ever expected. I am also about to start volunteering with an organisation that helps those on the streets and does it matter that I still don't have any hair, well I don't care and my true friends take me as I am and that's the way it should be.



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