

Linda — I look for the joy in each day and I'm grateful for all the good things in my life.

January 2011 will always be burned into my memory...my darkest days.

Two weeks before Australia Day when I was to reach midlife and turn 50 years old my hair started falling out rapidly. By the time my Birthday arrived my hair was noticeably thinner.

Steroid treatment for a few months halted the loss but after coming off the Prednisolone I lost all my hair, eyebrows and eye lashes. My fingernails were pitted, weak, splitting and breaking. Everything that make me feel female and feminine had been stolen by Alopecia. The definition my dark hair, eyebrows and lashes had given was gone, I felt I had disappeared almost overnight, who was that sick looking person staring back from the mirror? While most women worry about aging on their 50th Birthday my thoughts were only on my hair.



How did Alopecia make me feel? Initially my overriding emotion was FEAR!!! Where would it stop? How much would I lose? What if I lose my eyelashes? How would I cope? What if it never grows back? How will this affect my family who love me? What would my friends and work colleagues think? So many questions and sadly no answers. I had no way to cope with the shock. I also felt devastated, sad, alone, distraught, lost, angry, scared, depressed, ugly, emotional, sick to my stomach, bad nerves, disbelief, helpless and guilty. Why guilty? Because I knew there were people worse off, sicker than me and I felt I should toughen up and get on with life.

Not only had Alopecia rocked my world it turned it upside down. I couldn't sleep, I gave up working, I attended doctors and specialists, trawled the internet looking for answers, shopped for wigs and even travelled interstate looking for a cure.

Some people like me are very stubborn. I have always confronted problems in my life and solved them. My purpose was to help my kids solve their problems – give me a problem and I'll try to find a way to fix it. Well not ALOPECIA!!!

Linda — Alopecia has made take a closer look at making healthy choices

Six years on and after trying every medical treatment, spending thousands of dollars flying to Melbourne for trials or treatments, and trying different diets and natural therapies available I'm feeling defeated.

I've always had a fairly healthy lifestyle and diet but Alopecia has made take a closer look at making healthy choices. I hire Yoga DVD's from the library and practice in the privacy of my own lounge room, I have tried guided meditation and my focus this year is to control stress. I want to have a happy, balanced and peaceful life. I walk my dog every day, routine for me to consistently exercise is important. I'm concentrating on good gut health and on controlling my thoughts to be positive and uplifting. I look for the joy in each day and I'm grateful for all the good things in my life. Now I control what I can and don't worry about things that are out of my control.

This competition is very cathartic because even if I don't win, I have told part of my evolving alopecia story and honesty and sharing are also part of the healing journey.

