

## **Linsey — Sometimes we have to brave and bold with our alopecia and it really helps to have people who can offer love.**

When we moved to Cairns four years ago the last thing on my mind was meeting a group of ladies with alopecia and forming lovely friendships.

I had never intentionally sought out anyone with alopecia before, certainly never while I was in high school, during my toughest years of having to cope with being bald. Before coming to Cairns I had only ever known two other people who had alopecia.

We all met through our gorgeous hairdresser. Angela, from Angel Wigs in Melbourne, treks up to Cairns regularly and offers haircuts, wig fittings and support.

On this particular occasion she asked me if I would mind a couple of ladies coming to my house to have their wigs cut. Time was tight and it would be easier if we could meet all in one place.

I said, 'Yes'.

What followed was an amazing time of sharing, building friendships, emotional support and a sense of belonging.

Having this beautiful group of ladies has been an immense blessing.

We laugh and talk and are a physical reminder to each other that we are not alone, that there are others who have alopecia, there are others who understand and know what it's like living with this hard 'thing' called alopecia.

We tell each other that we're beautiful and talk about a day when it won't matter if we wear our wigs or not because everyone will know that it's not hair that makes us beautiful.

We laugh at stories— a wig being petted by an unsuspecting relative who mistook it for a cat.

We commiserate about the nerve-racking \$5000 haircut!

We talk about the best place to get eyebrow tattoos or what is the best make-up brand to wear is. It's Bobbi Brown by the way, shhhhh.

And we share which is the best water bottle to use as a wig stand when we're travelling and our normal wig stand won't fit into hand luggage.

## **Linsey — Having this group is like being surrounded with encouragement and support.**

Sometimes we have to brave and bold with our alopecia and it really helps to have people who can offer love.

Having this group is like being surrounded with encouragement and support. We can be real and honest with in our struggles, we can discuss our strict diets or nail issues. We empathise and give advice. We celebrate bravery and success and know the weight of worry and anxiety and give hugs when the tears flow.

I have a lovely friend with alopecia who lives in Tasmania. We chat over the phone or message on facebook. We encourage and support each other from opposite ends of Australia.

Our little group here in Cairns is changing. Sondi has moved interstate and I'm heading off overseas for six months. But we've made the connections now, we know each other exist and we can keep in touch whether it's over lunch or over the Internet.



From Left to Right: Linsey, Claire, Sondi and Jane