

THEA CHASSIN

November 30, 2009

Dear <First name>,

I began writing this letter to you while I was on a flight to Florida.

I was headed down to Fort Myers to lead a “lunch event” for Bald Girls Do Lunch, the nonprofit I started. In my head I was double-checking my to-do list: coordinated with restaurant, sent thank-you notes to people who helped with PR and PSAs, planned seating chart for best conversation, packed my demonstration materials...

...and for the hundredth time it occurred to me: if friends like you knew what I was doing, you might want to help.

“Guys my age don’t date me because they can’t get past that I don’t have hair.”

“People assume you have cancer and when they find out you don’t, they think there should be something the doctors can do for you.”

“Society is cruel and I have anxiety just thinking about it. I wish I could be normal.”

These are a just a few of the comments women have sent me since I hosted the first lunch in 2007, a decade after I was diagnosed with Alopecia Areata, or AA. If you don’t already know, AA is a skin disease in which the immune system mistakenly attacks hair follicles, leading to total hair loss or loss in patches. There is no cure.

Of course, it’s normal for women with AA to feel embarrassed and alone, ashamed and even depressed, especially when they first lose their hair. Should I wear a wig? Hats? Scarves? How can I make eyebrows that look natural? What do I tell people?

Being a bald woman can be devastating — *until you figure out how to accept yourself.*

It’s incredible to me how, simple as it sounds, there’s often just one thing standing between a woman feeling *bad* about herself and feeling *good* about herself: having lunch with others like her!

“As someone who is new to alopecia, Bald Girls Do Lunch has played a pivotal role in my acceptance of this condition.”

"It was amazing to sit around at a table in a restaurant and be surrounded by beautiful women who also happen to not have hair just like me!!"

"It is no accident that my daughter has a full and healthy life today as opposed to a self-destructive lifestyle that people choose when they feel alone and angry."

"It was not a pity party but a day to come together, hold our heads up high and know that life goes on after hair loss."

I hope you agree it's a beautiful thing to help guide people toward higher self-esteem and a more rewarding life. In my opinion, the more people we can help, the better.

The tally so far? I've been to 35 cities, connected **XXX women** with AA with each other, led **XX** demonstrations (including how to wear various wigs, hats, scarves and make-up), talked with hundreds of women by email, started an online community and have been featured in more news articles, broadcasts and online forums than I can count.

The *Today Show* even joined us and taped one of our lunches in July — the women loved it! You can see the segment that aired nationally at www.baldgirlsdoLunch.org.

The tremendous response to the *Today Show* made it clear we've reached a critical juncture. So now, despite my hesitation to ask you, I'm reaching out for your help after having done almost everything myself, including funding the program.

Will you please consider giving a gift of **\$100** to Bald Girls Do Lunch? Your gift is 100% tax-deductible. And it is truly a gift that keeps on giving. Your contribution will go to good use immediately by helping Bald Girls Do Lunch:

- Bring our programs to more women in more cities — our current request list includes **XX** cities in the US and Canada.
- Promote our new membership program.
- Roll out our multi-tier corporate sponsorship program — we just got our first major sponsor.
- Build our board of directors (please let me know if you're interested... I would LOVE to have your participation).
- Upgrade our website and increase our social networking presence to engage more people and strengthen our community.
- Spearhead the first Women With Alopecia Month, July 2010 — I'm thrilled to report we now have several team leaders in cities across the country.

I would be happy to send you an information kit that also has information about our 2009 Golden Triangle Award from the American Academy of Dermatology. Or please

call or email me if you have questions. And I encourage you to visit the website and take a look at what we're doing now and the photos of who we're helping.

Next week I'll be on a plane once again — no surprise to you, I'm sure — this time headed for Salt Lake City to have lunch with **XX** more women, some of whom have never met another person with AA.

On behalf of these women and all those we have yet to reach, I thank you for any gift you choose to give Bald Girls Do Lunch this holiday season. Please know that I also sincerely appreciate the time you took to read this letter.

Sincerely,

Thea Chassin
Founder & President

P.S. Remember: Every time you see a bald woman, please give her a big, warm smile!



<First Name, Last Name>
<Address 1>
<Address 2>
<City, State ZIP>

YES, I want to help **Bald Girls Do Lunch** empower women with Alopecia Areata by connecting them with others in a casual, fun environment where they get support, guidance, advice, tools and strategies for living a full and rewarding life.

I have enclosed a check for:

\$100 \$200 Other _____

Please send an information kit.

You can also donate online at www.baldgirlsdolunch.org.

Thank you so very much! ~ Thea

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