

Mya Menges

Drowning. This is the feeling I get every time I feel the stress and anxiety wash over me like a tidal wave. This feeling didn't get any better when I discovered that I had a condition that couldn't be cured. It's called Alopecia.

Alopecia is an autoimmune disease where sudden hair loss occurs. It causes multiple large bald spots and is brought on by severe stress and anxiety.

"What if people see?" "Will they treat me different because of this condition?" These quickly became the thoughts that would flood my mind every time I stepped out into public. Concealing what I had was hard enough, but others seeing and asking was even worse. As I got older, I started to find ways to help cope with all the worry and fear that was built up inside of me.

Going to Pom practice everyday became a safe haven for me to release all the toxic energy that built throughout the day. I get to surround myself with amazing coaches and teammates so it allows me to forget about the struggles, I can be myself and I can be happy. "Always be yourself" soon became the mentality I was guided by to help me get



through these stressful moments.

Even if I struggle deeply with anxiety and stress, I could not let that get the best of me, especially with Alopecia.

Although Alopecia can never be cured and my anxiety and stress will give me the feeling of drowning all over again at times, I always make sure to remind myself that giving up is not an option. I strive to stay myself as long as I believe that it doesn't matter who sees that I have Alopecia or how bad I'm feeling. What matters is how I treat others and myself.

