

Support, insights and self-help tools for treating Trichotillomania!



After years of struggle going through life again with beautiful eyelashes!

Case study – breakthrough coaching

Fighting the urge to pull out my hair for 11 years

Fighting the urge to pull out my eyelashes was something I struggled with in my life for more than 11 years. Quite often I would consciously search for rough – uneven kind of hairs, hairs that were standing out from others. Once I discovered one of these typical hairs, I would simply pull it out. With an inner drive of something I had to do, an urge that was so strong that I did not seem to have any control over it.

Taking the detour in life with Trichotillomania

This hair pulling habit or disease caused me to live my life kind with a kind of detour. Because I did not consider myself to be totally free in all of my actions. Wanting to stop, but simply couldn't. Causing me to feel differently from other people, and at the same time realizing it was me who was causing the bold spots that appeared around my eyes as a result. That was the strange part about the whole situation, that I was fighting myself not do something which I simply kept doing against my own will.

Not doing all I wanted because of my hair pulling habit

I was very ashamed of this and never dared to wear my hair in a ponytail the way I preferred, because you could than clearly see my eyes. And on birthdays or other social occasions with people around I would never to sit in the middle, preventing that the attention would be placed on me and people could see the bold spots around my eyes. But also going out the door without wearing makeup was something I would never do.

So never leaving the house unprepared or go swimming or to a wellness centre, which I loved doing. But instead, doing all I could to hide my eyes and hair pulling habit. So as a result not living my life fully the way I really wanted. And of course all this required an enormous amount of planning and made it very difficult to do something spontaneously with others that I had not prepared for.

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Tried everything before to overcome Trichotillomania

Previously I had tried everything I could think of to stop this hair pulling habit on my own. I had tried wearing a lot of cream on my hands and fingers, making it very difficult to pull out the hairs around my eyes with a pair of tweezers, the device I always used for this purpose.

Unfortunately without any success, because I simply kept pulling. Same for putting plasters around my fingers tips. Or forming a mental image the way I would look like with long eyelashes, hoping that would motivate me to stop. But whatever I tried, nothing gave me lasting success to actually stop with pulling out my hair.

If others can overcome Trichotillomania, maybe I can too

I kept looking for treatment for Trichotillomania and finally heard of someone else who also suffered from compulsive hair pulling and was successfully treated for this by Rik. So I thought, what works for someone else, can hopefully also work for me.

So I called Rik to discuss my situation and quickly decided that I wanted to make an appointment. I have to admit that during the time leading up to the appointment I was very curious about what we would do when we would meet and if this would actually work for me as well. Although he had explained what to expect, I was excited to experience it myself and longed that it would work for me too.

Finally freeing myself from the urge to pull out my hair

On the day of the appointment, my boyfriend was such a sweetheart to be my chauffeur that day, so I could simply lean back and relax on my way to Almere. After meeting Rik in person for the first time, some coffees and teas later, the first thing we did was to send my boyfriend away. So he could discover Almere and its surroundings 😊.

Something we discussed before, so I could use all my concentration for working on this hair pulling habit of mine. And then we simple went ahead, doing all kinds of exercises that at first seemed a little strange but quickly became quite clear to me. Exercises that had little to do with why I did this behaviour of hair pulling, but simply allowed me to understand how I did this before and how I now could learn to stop with this. And before I knew we were done and 5 hours had passed by.

During those 5 hours, besides working on overcoming my habit for hair pulling, I had also worked on overcoming my habit for biting my nails. So when Rik encouraged me at the end of the day to bite my nails, all I could think of was: 'why would I do that, I don't want to 😊'.

Hair pulling free, the experience after the coaching

Also on our way back home I was very much aware on the things outside the car, the beautiful sun, the cold – misty air that was hanging above the meadows. It seemed I was much more aware of the beautiful things that surrounded me.

When I arrived at home later that day, I noticed that I was quite tired from the whole experience. Because working on yourself this way can be quite intense, but very much worth it as I would soon discover.

Because already the first night when I removed my make-up to take a warm shower, I noticed that I was no longer investigating my eyelashes in front of the mirror the way I used to. This time I was much more looking at myself as a whole person and at both of my eyes in general. No longer searching for typical hairs around my eyes that were standing out and had to be pulled out.

When I faced the mirror in the bathroom this time, on of the places where I would often pull out my eyelashes in the past, all I could see was a very positive image of the person in front of me, with a wonderful feeling inside.

Changes in behaviour after overcoming Trichotillomania

Also in the weeks that followed after the coaching I noticed several remarkable changes in my behaviour. For example, in the past I would always go to bed wearing makeup. Preventing that I would have to get out of bed during the night unexpectedly and people could see my naked eyes. That´s why I had trained myself to remove the old makeup in the morning, just before I would put on new makeup.

But this time I removed my makeup before going to bed without wanting to put on any new. And being totally ok with going to bed without wearing makeup. Also the pair of tweezers that I used before to pull out my eyelashes have been relocated to another place. No longer laying around where I keep my makeup.

So I am no longer confronted with them but also don't feel the need to get them back. Also another location in my house where I used to pull out my eyelashes is no longer a threat to me. I have noticed that the urge for pulling out my hair has simply disappeared.

And there is something else that is quite remarkable. Before the coaching, hairs that were standing out – different in size or form – used to be very appealing to me. Those were the ones I was always for on the lookout.

But when my eyelashes started to grow after the coaching, and especially in the beginning when they were definitely standing out in size, they were no longer compelling to me for having to pull them out. Quite the opposite actually, I was just very proud that they were growing.

Trich free: feeling much better – more in control

Now I have finally overcome this urge for hair pulling, I have also noticed that I am much better at relaxing and no longer feel nervous when people are sitting next to me who can see my eyelashes.

Now I can also look forward to having facial treatment without having to be ashamed about my eyes. A lot of my friends have facial treatments regularly and often asked me why I never joined them. Now I no longer have to make up an excuse.

And I have also made an appointment with the manicurist now my nails are starting the grow again as well.

Very satisfied with the results

All in all I am just very satisfied with the coaching results. And although I was the one who had to do the exercises Rik asked me to do, it is just very nice to get support from someone who can help you with this when you have struggled for so long on your own.

One final thing I love to share about the coaching experience with Rik is that we had great fun and laughed a lot that day. Initially you have the impression that you will meet a kind of Doctor, but frankly I have never laughed this much way with my own doctor 😊!

Milou