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Getting Back What was Lost: A Journey to Foreskin Restoration

(<http://www.thewholenetwork.org/twn-news/a-journey-to-foreskin-restoration>)

12/28/2010



A heartfelt story of circumcision, loss, and the will to overcome.

Written by: James Mac

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I'm a regular guy who's been blessed with good fortune in this life. Successful career, long and happy marriage, three wonderful children, and recently, a grandchild, good friends and have traveled extensively. Of course there's always ups and downs in life and some events have been

emotionally challenging at the time, like relationship breakdowns, retrenchments and the loss of loved family and friends to aging, illnesses and accidents.

Beyond all of this, there has been something which has had a profoundly negative impact on my life since I was a young boy. Something which left me physically and emotionally scarred. Something which left me feeling damaged, violated and incomplete as a man. Something which has impacted my self confidence throughout life. Something which I've only just begun to speak about in the last few years.

As a young boy of around 8 years old, I discovered that an important part of my penis was missing. It would be some years later that I discovered what had happened to me had a name: Circumcision. Yep, circumcision. The 'little snip'. Removing that 'useless flap of skin'.

This was my 'big secret' and I was acutely embarrassed about it. How on Earth could something so common, socially acceptable and supposedly beneficial have such a negative impact on my entire psyche? Why did I freeze and go into a cold sweat at the mere mention of 'circumcision' or 'foreskin'...?

Several years ago I discovered a paper written by Australian Professor Greg Boyle (1 Male Circumcision: Pain, Trauma and Psychosexual Sequelae) which addresses the psychological impact of circumcision upon men. It described my feelings accurately and gave me the confidence to finally discuss my 'big secret' with my wife of over 15 years. There were lots of tears, hugs and a great sense of relief to have this out in the open. I've since discussed these feelings with my mother and a trusted male friend, which has been extremely helpful and cathartic.

Soon afterward, together, with a fair amount of trial and error, my wife and I worked on a



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home-made foreskin restoration device, which, after 4 years of sustained effort, delivered me a replacement foreskin and a penis virtually indistinguishable from an intact penis (even the family doctor was most surprised that I'd once been circumcised and that restoration was even possible). Restoration is an amazing process using well established tissue expansion techniques which reverses much of the damage of circumcision. Over time, the exquisite, frictionless gliding function gradually returns, along with a degree of lost sensitivity. Foreskin restoration has been an absolute God-send for me and has provided a great deal of physical healing and helped me to more effectively deal with a lifetime of emotional distress. Of course, much of the damage caused by circumcision can never be undone, as the excised structures and erogenous tissues are lost forever.

Unfortunately, for all the progress made, it seems part of my very being was irrevocably crushed - along with my foreskin - on the day some nameless, faceless, emotionally-detached doctor performed a medically-unnecessary surgery on the genitals of my voiceless, defenseless, infant self. While I do have much better perspective on the whole issue these days, my original hopes for complete emotional healing may have been too optimistic, as I cannot escape a recurring intrusive thought; a wish that I'd simply been left alone as a baby.

I am comforted by the knowledge that circumcision is gradually being exposed for the medically-useless and brutal act that it truly is. It is also comforting to know the cycle of violence ended at my generation in my own extended family. My participation in the world-wide Intactivist community, a community of passionate, committed and gentle people has given me hope that respect for basic human rights will ultimately overcome a range of dark forces when it comes to protecting the most vulnerable in our society and I look forward to the day that doctors place ethical practice before financial gain. I look forward to the day that legislators place human rights and children's welfare before the sensitivities of vocal religious minorities. This will happen, I'm just not holding my breath.

I remember once reading; "What circumcision did to my body is bad enough, but what it did to my mind is worse." I wish I didn't feel this way, but I just do and it's just who I am. I share these very private thoughts to help raise awareness that circumcision is never in the best interests of the child and to provide some insight into how the harm of circumcision often extends beyond the more obvious physical harms.

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Mikey S.

8/15/2011

Thank you for sharing this!

Jenna

8/15/2011

Thank you for sharing your story. You are the voice of many men.

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mary Lanser

8/22/2011

Thank you for your honesty. I believe that most men feel as you do, but many just cannot talk about it. My husband is fully aware of the circumcision dilemma, and he has a visible scar to prove it, but he just doesn't want to discuss it. He will talk about it here and there, but I guess he feels that what's done is done, and that's that. People need to be better educated on the negative effects of a circumcision. The loss of sensitivity and sexual function is very real, but a lot of people are just in a state of denial about it. Thank goodness for the intact "whole" movement. I sure hope, in time, that circumcision becomes illegal for boys, like it is with girls. What a horrible case of discrimination! Good luck.

Anje

8/24/2011

Thanks for your article, James. The more that adult men are able to openly talk about this issue, the better the chances that change will happen to protect baby boys from circumcision.

Alfred Schram

8/24/2011

Thank you for overcoming the natural reticence to talk about such a personal topic. There are a lot of men who feel the way you do, but are afraid of being ridiculed. With more openness and more information made available, routine infant circumcision is bound to finally be regarded as the harmful surgery which it is.

Valkyrie

11/4/2011

Thank you for sharing your feelings about this. I've been involved in intactivism for many years, and I can assure you (sadly) you are not alone, and you have a right to the feelings you have.

louie

12/22/2011

thanks for your story. however, my situation lacks the understanding of family and friends that you have been able to enjoy. my own parents and siblings have openly criticized me for objecting to this mutilation. they are so firmly rooted in ignorance and arrogance, despite my best efforts to enlighten them, that circumcision will continue to be inflicted on their grandchildren. the only saving grace is that i have been able to keep my sons intact and normal. also, i have begun the process of foreskin restoration despite of no moral support around me.

James Mac

12/25/2011

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Hi Louie, the extent to which cultural influences allow people to hurt and damage their own children is truly shocking. Congratulations on breaking free from this collective insanity and protecting your own boys. Very best wishes for your restoration journey. James

James Mac

12/25/2011

Thank you all for your warm and supportive comments.

Julie

1/13/2013

So well put. Thank you for sharing, I wish this was something no one ever had to think about. :(I will continue to share information so that expecting parents will know better.

Gal

1/26/2013

Im an atheist jew from israel, so I have been circumcised. For years I debated with myself about circumcising my children in the future (when I'll have one) or not. My morals and justice scence indeed triumphed over the fear that my children won't be accepted in the very religious and superstitious society in Israel. Now I am proud to say that when I'll have children I will put their human rights and physical perfection over my unjustified fears. Best regards and good luck in your private journey. I hope that your children will appreciate your humane actions.

John

4/19/2013

I was told I had been circumcised and believed it until my early 20s, when I found that the reason for the prominent ring of loose skin behind my corona was that my foreskin hadn't been removed; only my frenulum had. There was no foreskin restoration movement in the 60s, and I proceeded by instinct to stretch y foreskin to make up for the growth missed by not being forced by a frenulum to keep up with shatf growth. When I married soon thereafter, I was opposed to circumcising the first child, a boy. Against all odds, and all the women who sided with my wife, I prevailed. When the second one, also a boy, was born, there was no argument. It still angers me vhen circumcision is touted as a preventative from AIDS, when the statistics show that in Europe, where circumcision is rare, the AIDS infection rate is significantly lower. It makes me wonder if circ. actually promotes the spread of AIDS!

Mutilated Englishman

6/4/2013

I am 20 years old and live in England, I'm circumcised and it's messed me up mentally in ways I can't even describe. It's not common in England and so I feel

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really alienated and deformed... although, I had phimosis when I was a child and (apparently) it was really bad so there was no choice.

Although, considering I was only 3 and it can take a lot longer than that for the foreskin to be pulled back in a normal healthy boy, I just don't know and it drives me insane.

Not just that, I have a skin bridge on the underside connecting to the left part of my glans, it has a lot of sensitivity but looks insanely disgusting, I think it might contain remnants of my frenulum. I'm stuck with the shitty options of "remove and look better" or "keep and look disgusting, but have a fair bit of sensitivity".

The fact that this is done to healthy boys all the time enrages me to no end. What the hell is wrong with this planet, it's fucking infuriates me...

John

6/4/2013

See my story above. My suggestion to you is, if possible get the skin bridge cut loose on one end but not removed. However, it is now thought that the important nerves in the frenum are not in the delta, which is the part usually removed, but under it in the shaft. My delta is gone, but the frenar area is very sensitive. After you do that, I suggest restoration. Although mine wasn't really restoration but repositioning and a little stretching, I used only cross tapes and let nocturnal erections do the work. It can be done with a suspender, which is good because it permits constant application of a gentle tension. See James Bigelow's book, "The Joy of Uncircumcision," and/or [www.NORM-Phoenix](http://www.NORM-Phoenix.com), the best reconstruction website I've seen. It will do wonders for your self-esteem!

Audra

6/13/2013

I'm saddened by the emotional impact this has caused. My boyfriend has said "how can I miss something I never had". And think that is his way of coping with it. Luckily we as a couple are on the same page, of no not going to happen. Best wishes to you.

Vance Austin Neely (<http://https://www.facebook.com/XVanceX>)

9/2/2013

Thank you for speaking up against this barbaric cultural practice James.

Non-consensual genital cutting of male, female and intersex infants violates Medical ethics (Do No Harm), and Human Rights under the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 5) and the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 13).

It is medically unethical to cut a healthy body part off a non consenting individual, Doctors have known this since the 1950's but some continue to ignore it.

Genital cutting is risky, painful and unnecessary, and there are modern alternatives

to circumcision in most cases but a lot of Doctors are oblivious to them.

Religious freedom ends where someone else's body begins, the law banning
Female Genital Mutilation proves this.

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