

That Time 235 Men Grabbed Their Balls in Public

November 14, 2017 By [Justin Birckbichler](#)

I went to college at Shippensburg University in Pennsylvania. While I almost transferred out of there after my freshman year, I ultimately decided to stay and I'm so glad I did. It became a huge part of my identity (including [my current hairstyle](#)), helped me find some of my best friends (read [Brett](#) and [John's](#) HBA posts here), and led me to the path I'm on today.

Since graduating in 2013, I've been back on campus a handful times to speak at the request of my college professors about different topics in education. On November 6th of this year, I once again found myself on Shippensburg's campus to speak to a group about an educational topic, but this time the balls I was focused on weren't my classroom's yoga balls. I spoke to a room full of men planning to do the largest simultaneous testicular self-exam for a world record attempt.

In 2010, a group of 208 men in the United Kingdom did a simultaneous self-exam and are the [current record holders](#) (as of this writing). [Jason Greenspan](#), a fellow testicular cancer survivor and soon-to-be Shippensburg University graduate, decided to break this record. Jason and I initially connected through Instagram when I noticed one of his pictures was taken in the Rec Hall at Shipp.

While texting in the midst of my chemo, Jason asked me if I would speak at his Ship's Got Balls event. Full disclosure - this was in the height of my [chemo brain](#) and I don't recall this conversation, so I'm glad he messaged me again closer to the date to ask me again. This time, with a more normal brain, I was amped up and ready to help.

I didn't want to just share my cancer experience at this event; I wanted to weave my story in with a call to action. My ABSOT post "[No Time for Excuses](#)" fit the bill, so I began reworking it into a speech. In true form, I made sure it contained numerous ball-related puns. Sometimes, I amaze even myself that I haven't run out of phrases to show how nutty I am.

At the event, Jason organized a "mingle room" with a No Shave November event (which I've discussed the [importance of here](#)) and other fun, social activities. There were TV reporters there, and I got to talk about the importance of balls on live TV - check out the segments on [FOX43](#) and [Local DVM!](#)

Around 8:00, we shifted into the event room. Jason started with opening remarks and shared a bit

of his story. I was struck by how similar our stories are (finding a lump through random chance at the peak of our lives, having to endure surgery and chemo, and coming out with a desire to spread awareness), although he was diagnosed at a much earlier age than I was.

After he spoke, Bruce Levy, a retired high school principal and another survivor, came to the stage to share his journey. His story was much different than Jason's and mine - he had a lot of pain and other symptoms (irregular bowel movements for one, a problem I never have) before being diagnosed. I think it's good to share that not all roads start the same, but each testicular cancer survivor ends up riding a unicycle at the end.

Then it was my turn to talk. While I've spoken at numerous educational conferences, including a keynote in front of about 300 people, this audience was significantly different - a large gathering of frat boys. Nonetheless, I had a mission to do and I began sharing my story, along with the common excuses I hear. I had to be on the ball from the start.

Click to read the rest of this blog entry on [A Ballsey Sense of Tumor \(ABSOT\)](#).

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