

Poems I learned during my childhood are often in my mind; I still know many by heart. And Mrs. Lucas reminded me of one of them recently. I first treated her for breast cancer many years ago, and on a routine follow-up visit I noticed some laboratory changes which I pursued with further tests; we then found that she had kidney cancer.

So she comes in, I tell her about it, and rather than feeling badly, she tells me how she is working on a new project and gives me the first version of a new beautiful printed mug. She then tells me she'll follow my advice to take care of

Aromo

Hay un Aromo nacido
En la grieta de una piedra;
Figura que la rompió
Pa salir de adentro de ella!

...

Pero, con l'alma tan linda,
Que no le brota una queja;
Que no teniendo alegrías
Se hace flores de sus
penas!...

¡Eso habían de envidiarle
Los otros... si lo supieran!...

Excerpts from "Aromo," poem published in 1934 by Romildo Risso (1882-1946), Uruguayan poet known as a great "poeta gauchesco." Aromo or acacia cavenia is a tree with fragrant yellow flowers.



Elizabeth Lucas & Dr. Tchekmedyan

the problem, and she goes home. And I'm left thinking, "she is like that tree," the "Aromo." It's the subject of a poem I loved as a kid. The poem, written in a version of Spanish spoken by the "gauchos" in Uruguay, is about a tree born out of a crack on a rock, on top of a mountain. The tree looks healthy and beautiful, and there is no other plant around it. At a distance, bushes and trees are jealous of it, as they wonder how a tree could be so beautiful and have so much land and space to itself. They do not know how hard life is for that tree as the rock strangles its roots; on top of the hill, winds hit hard, and water does not stay. But the tree is full of flowers, and instead of looking sad it keeps making flowers out of adversity; it makes so many that it drops them around it making the whole mountain top bright and beautiful. *Liz reminds me of that tree; little did I know her company logo is a tree! I was amazed when I found out.*

By Dr. Tchekmedyan

"Making Flowers Out of Adversity"

by Elizabeth Lucas

Adversity in life is often enriching. We may have little control over such overwhelming obstacles as being diagnosed with cancer, but we can choose to react with a positive attitude. It takes courage to face life-altering situations. But, from the new challenges we encounter comes the realization that life is worthwhile in spite of the inconveniences. We must not let fear of the future rob us of the time we have left.

Finding small joys amid the stressful circumstances of daily life makes living worthwhile. And sharing our joy with others through kindness, courtesy and a good sense of humor always enhances our own feelings inside. In fact, it's medicine for the soul!

Gratitude and hard work helps too. There is an old saying, "pray often but continue to hoe." I know first hand that it is important to recognize and appreciate the blessings we are offered daily. Even though I have been diagnosed with both breast cancer and kidney cancer, I am fortunate to be able to carry on to my fullest capacity. I sometimes ask myself "what has this latest spell of trouble taught me and what can I do to renew myself?"

I am inspired and encouraged when I visit the offices of Pacific Shores Medical Group where I am fortunate to have Dr. Tchekmedyan as my physician. I am thankful for Dr. T's professional care and his personal concern for my welfare. He has become my friend as well as my physician. When he informed me that I had kidney cancer and that I would have to have a kidney removed,



"Thank you, I'll take that order."

Elizabeth Lucas taking phone orders at Elizabeth Lucas Designs



Elizabeth & Campbell Lucas

"My continuing goal is to live, laugh, love, hope, dream and believe! How fortunate for me that my path through cancer led to Dr. T!"

Despite cancer, I had to return to my company, Elizabeth Lucas Designs, where I design and manufacture greeting cards and gift products that are sold in retail stores and catalogs throughout the United States and Canada. My logo of a tree blooming with hearts and letters of the alphabet reflects my passion to create new artistic designs and inspirational messages to be shared with others. In doing so, I feel that I am making contributions towards helping the world become a better place.

I also wanted to complete my active duties as Chairman of The St. Mary Medical Center Foundation Board of Trustees during my recent recovery from kidney cancer. The medical center with its doctors, employees, Sisters and volunteers deserves our thanks for their outstanding service to our community and its

patients' needs. As a member of the St. Mary Foundation Board of Trustees and the St. Mary Community Board, I have been privileged to help raise the necessary funds for beneficial hospital projects and to assist in overseeing the high standards we have for medical research and improvements in health care.

The support and love that I have received from my husband, my children, my friends, my employees, and Dr. T and his team has made the harsh realities of facing cancer easier. Thankfully, my daily work beckons me. My continuing goal is to live, laugh, love, hope, dream and believe! How fortunate for me that my path through cancer led to Dr. T!