

A Lesson from the Universe

Although I have been working on myself for a very long time, I am still having problems dealing with others. I want to change them. I want them to be who I want them to be rather than who they are. I am learning a lot, but not enough. The Universe, as I now call my higher power, has another lesson for me to learn. I have been diagnosed with Breast Cancer.

Today is February 2nd, 2005. I am going in to get my regular routine mammogram at Suburban Radiology. The next day I get a call from the Southdale Breast Center saying that they would like me to have an ultrasound as there is a small spot on my left breast that doesn't look right.

As the ultrasound technician is finishing up he says, "It is nothing to worry about. I have never seen Cancer look like this" and gives me two choices. Either I can wait six months and have a re-check or have a biopsy. right away. Are you kidding? I want a biopsy tomorrow! I couldn't imagine anyone waiting. What do people do that feel they have no choice? The little old ladies and young women that do and believe everything their doctor tells them. I knew I could make choices for myself. There are so many that can't or don't. I had no symptoms, no physical pain at all, not even a twinge.

I haven't told anyone I am having a biopsy done. Ed is in the Bahamas golfing and is coming home on Thursday, the same day as the

biopsy. I had a biopsy about thirty years ago which turned out fine in my right breast, so this didn't seem like a big deal.

I am lying on the table with a hole in it for your boob. How strange. Then they put a small mammogram machine on to hold it still. From an X-ray, they find the spot and line up the needle. The hardest part is holding still for a half hour on my stomach. I have to wait a week for the results.

I have an ice pack inside my bra to help with the swelling. I am supposed to change the pack every hour for approximately six to eight hours. I want to go to a retirement party for a friend tonight so the nurse told me most restaurants have crushed ice. Just ask for a glass, go to the bathroom and put fresh ice in the pack. As it starts to melt, I ask for crushed ice and of course they don't have it. About twenty minutes later the water started running down my side. I am sitting with another friend. and finally tell her what was going on. We are trying not to laugh.

Today is February 14, 2005. Dr. Radcliff calls me about 3:30. "Happy Valentine's Day. Your biopsy is positive. "you have Breast Cancer."

I don't quite know what to do. She is going to call me back in a few minutes after scheduling the doctor appointments I will need the next day. When she calls back I am really scared. I ask her if I should call Ed at the shop and have him come home? No, too much of a shock!

Dr. Radcliff tells me to call a good friend and stay on the phone as long as I need to talk. I call Kathy; she is a nurse. We talk and cry for about forty five minutes. She is wonderful, very supportive and positive.

I am waiting for Ed to get home from work and I am going to be very strong and tell him. Then we will talk about it. Ed is coming up the stairs. The second I see him I burst into tears, the kind of crying when you can't catch your breath. As Oprah would say, "the ugly cry."