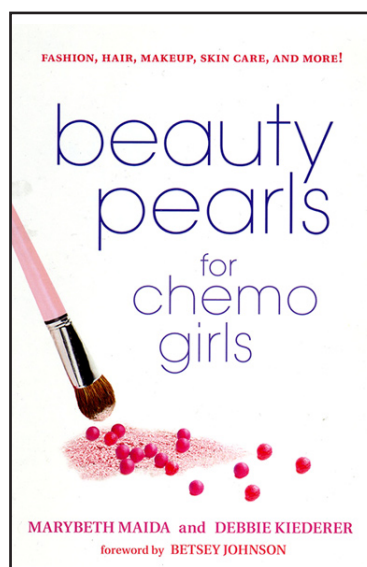


PROLOGUE --
THE SURVIVOR'S STORIES
(page 21)



Surviving cancer is a fantastic triumph. We've been there. We know.

From the moment of diagnosis until the day you put your wig away for good, life as you know it will change. Some of these changes may last forever – and most of them will be for the better. You'll be stronger. You'll know who your biggest supporters are. You'll understand your body and your mind in ways that prior to cancer might have been impossible. You won't sweat the small stuff. Every day, you'll find something to be happy about. It's inevitable. Facing this terrifying diagnosis, you'll come away from the experience with an insight unique to we who have been up the cancer mountain, and made it safely to the other side.

We know this journey will be difficult. We understand the ups, downs and radical shifts cancer treatment creates. Our hope is that by reading about our experiences, you will take our hearts and courage and join them with your own.

No one wants to feel alone during this challenging time. Believe that no matter where you are, or what you are feeling, there is an enormous community of strength and support waiting to be called on. Take advantage of this support. Lean on those who want to help. Use our stories to inspire your own.

It is a great honor for us to share our experiences with you, our sisters in arms.

We salute you, chemo girls. We wish you every blessing as you make your way up the cancer mountain. We await your arrival on the other side.

CHAPTER 1 – THE POWER OF MAKEUP (page 37)

Wearing makeup for the first time is a powerful experience.

Applying that first bit of lip gloss or mascara to her face, a young girl suddenly sees the beautiful possibilities of her life staring back at her from the mirror. Her eyes sparkle. Her lips shine. Her confidence soars.

Whether or not makeup is an important element in your daily life, few women will argue with its allure. Cosmetics highlight our best features and camouflage our perceived flaws. A bit of eyeliner, some well applied blush, a bit of cream on the mouth and voila! We take what we've been born with and make it better.

Make up is fun. Who doesn't enjoy being fussed over in a department store by an aesthetician brushing powder over our cheeks? What woman wouldn't be thrilled to win one of those magazine makeover contests, where professionals take her skin and hair and clothing and create a whole new look?

For a majority of women, appearance is vitally important. It projects to the world how we feel about ourselves. It creates the external shell through which our inner beauty radiates. Through our style in hair, and clothing and makeup, we project an essential element of our personal power – the way we want to be seen.

Imagine how hard it is when cancer strikes, treatment begins, and the carefully cultivated look we've spent our lives developing suddenly disintegrates. Think of the difficulty losing your hair, or your eyelashes, or your shape would create in your life.

Go deeper. Picture yourself too nauseous to eat, too frightened to sleep, or too tired to get up. Imagine your skin breaking out, your clothes not fitting properly, and those who care about you unable to retrieve what you've lost.

CHAPTER 2 – THE MANE EVENT (page 42)

THE PEARLS

Once the shock of a cancer diagnosis wears off, fear of baldness usually sets in. Hope and disbelief commingle. Our hair, after all, is such an essential part of our self image. No woman wants to believe hers will fall out. No one wants to imagine herself bald.

“There’s a lot of unreality when people are told they’re going to experience hair loss,” says Deann Geary, founder and owner of Tiffany Wigs. “They don’t really want to think about what they will look like without hair, or think about how, when it’s growing back, their hair will be very short.”

Amy Gibson agrees. “Hair is such an important part of us. Most women are taught that it’s our crowning glory, our mane, our sensuality, our sexuality.”

But Amy, who lost all her hair to alopecia at age 30 and developed her own wig line featuring unique designs, material and hair that combine style, comfort and security, says the key to dealing with its loss is to always remember that femininity is in our essence, not our tresses.

“Remember, girls,” she tells us, “We’re more than our hair.”

CHAPTER 4 – CHEMO STYLE (page 124)

Marilyn Monroe in the Park

Now that you have some basic concepts of how to make the most of your wardrobe during treatment, remember that when it comes to how you're perceived, your power isn't in your clothes, or your makeup. It's in you.

“I once read a story about Marilyn Monroe,” Francine says. “She supposedly was not comfortable in her own skin. She was being interviewed by a reporter in Central Park, and she had on dark sunglasses and a kerchief and had her image completely pulled in. And at one point the reporter said to her, ‘it’s astonishing that we’re here, in the middle of Central Park and nobody recognizes you,’ and Marilyn replied, ‘That’s because I don’t have “her” out there.’ She was well aware of her power. To prove her point, she started walking her famous walk, and smiling, and laughing, and projecting her incomparable image. Within moments, they were mobbed by fans.”

“What I love about that story is that whatever style Marilyn had didn’t come from what she was wearing,” Francine says. “It was inside her. She turned it on.” We all have the ability to do what Marilyn did. The way we project ourselves determines how people see us. When it comes to getting dressed when we’re undergoing chemotherapy, the key is to pick out whatever is comfortable and relaxing and makes us feel good, and then go out into the world with confidence.

Projecting your inner beauty, your spirit, your radiance, will do more to enhance your look than anything you could possibly put on. Do whatever you wish to look as good as you can. The guiding fashion principle is to hide, distract, and pull attention away from trouble spots, and to seek, encourage and create an attractive focal point with your clothes and accessories.

Cast yourself as the director of your image and make yourself your very own star. Wear things that inspire tranquility and comfort, and let your own amazing life force be the power that ensures your beauty.

If you use your indomitable spirit as your essential foundation, no matter what you wear it will be more than fashionable, it will be fabulous, and you will move through your chemo confident in yourself, at ease with your situation, and in control of your image.