

Full Blooming: Selections from a Poetic Journal

About the poems:

Eleven years ago I began a poetic journal, writing down my life as it unfolded. This was surprising to say the least! My Ph.D. in microbiology from the University of Chicago had prepared me for a career in molecular genetics research and teaching. Healing from serious illnesses profoundly transformed my life in ways I could not have imagined. My science background was not wasted; it was the foundation for how I saw the world, for my confidence in myself, and ultimately, for my poetry and photography. Although the details of my story are unique, I believe we all have untapped potential; it is this hidden resource I want to release in all of us. More about me, my writing, and photographs can be found on **FullBlooming.com**.

With love, Margaret

Tracks 2-38, 46, and 59 are from my book, *As Easy as Breathing: Reclaiming Power for Healing and Transformation*. Poems in the last section (tracks 37, 42-44, 48, 50, 53, 56-58, and 60) are from my second book, *Letting Go and New Beginnings: A Mother's Poetic Journey*, and a few are unpublished poems. "I Come Back," "Individuals," "Cast Off," "Oh the Webs," "to Dance Is to Be," "Idle," "We Are Not All Like Corn," "Bird Poop," and "Why" are also in my **Life Support Cards**TM.

"Promise" was in *Poet's Process*, Nat'l Assoc. for Poetry Therapy, 2000; "Reason" and "Breathing" appeared in *Moon Journal*, 2002, 2005; "Absolution (11/3/04)" was published in the 25th conference collection for the Nat'l Assoc for Poetry Therapy and *WomanMade Gallery News* in 2005, and on poetsagainstthewar.org in 2006; "Thinking of the Conference" appeared in *The Self-Helper*, 2005.

About the songs:

"I Know That" was written during chemotherapy, when I was afraid of losing my hair, symbolic of losing myself. When my aunt died of breast cancer, I realized she belonged in the song too. This is a song of empowerment, life purpose, and conscious choice.

I wrote the line "I Let Go of Fear (and love remains)" in a poem in 1996 (found in *As Easy as Breathing*). A few years ago was another fearful time for me. I remembered this phrase and began repeating it as an affirmation. Music came to me, and as I sang it I felt calmer, more peaceful and optimistic. It is a chant I have sung with audiences in a call and response form; the melodies come out a bit different every time.

When I first read the Buddhist *Metta* or lovingkindness meditation in *Pocketful of Miracles* by Joan Borysenko, Ph.D., music came to me. I picked out the notes on my piano and wrote them down, adapting the lyrics. In 1996, I sang this song with my surgical team before breast cancer surgery. Since then, I've sung it at healing services, funerals, workshops, talks, and poetry readings. This year, I was asked by Rev. Susi Roos, RN to sing the words in present tense. This powerful, combined version of "Prayer of Lovingkindness" is much needed at this time of great tumult and also great opportunity in our world. Peace, tolerance, awareness, healing, and love starts with each of us, every day rippling outward.