

ELI MARTINEZ-CEDREZ



“Hearing that I had cancer made me enter a realm of uncertainty and loss, depression and anxiety the likes of which I had never before experienced,” said Eli Martinez-Cedrez, who was diagnosed with lobular carcinoma the early November, 2003. “I literally felt the room around me spin around and around and stop when my whole world was upside down.”

From there, there was only one way to go... upwards. True to form – to make lemonade out of lemons – Eli says her immediate reaction to her diagnosis was to pick herself up and try to make sense of what her world had become for the

immediate future. She credits her health care team at Miami’s Mt. Sinai Hospital with introducing her to the Look Good...Feel Better (LGFB) program.

“I thought that attending a class that would potentially help me look better at a time when I was expecting to forget about appearance, would be a good thing. I looked at it as an opportunity” recalls Eli. “My thought was that now that I was a cancer patient, my appearance was one of the things I would have to tackle as well, so why not right away?”

Eli says that LGFB helped her keep her sense of self during her treatment. Although she admits she was hesitant on her way to the session, thinking what it might be like and who would be there, she says it was nothing less than a total success. “I had a great time” she says of her experience at the LGFB workshop. “I felt then and still feel very fortunate that I had the opportunity to participate. I also am thankful that such a program is available to women all over the country.”

“For me, LGFB was my first step forward. My friends, family and people I work with were very happy to see me looking ‘good.’ Everyone was very relieved after I started chemotherapy and I still looked and acted like myself. I was still me.”

If you ask Eli what she has learned from her cancer diagnosis, and to sum up how she has been enlightened from this experience, she says that she learned to turn a negative situation into a positive one. “I would have to say that I don’t just go through life, I live life because no matter what, every day of living is a chance at everything.”

Eli Martinez-Cedrez is the director of guest experience at The Palms South Beach in South Beach, Florida. She enjoys the continued support of her family - her husband, Claudio and daughter, Isabella. Today, Eli says, "I am a happier, more flexible, more patient, and more understanding person. I have a positive outlook on life, and look forward to every day!"