

Cards from the Heart

By Jessica Takach

Elizabeth Murphy had a life-changing awakening eight years ago. "When one gives love freely from the heart, miracles can happen," Elizabeth says meaningfully. Her aunt had been in the hospital and was given little time to live. Elizabeth wanted to give her aunt something personal that couldn't be bought in a store. Since losing a son years before, Elizabeth had not picked up a pencil. "I prayed that I could do this, knowing I hadn't been able to draw in the many years since my son died. It was incredible. It felt like energy was flowing through my body onto the page. It all came together within an hour. The words poured out."

Elizabeth sent the card to her aunt, who got better and was able to leave the hospital. Her aunt lived for another year. Elizabeth calls this first card "The Spirit Healer," because it opened her heart, and began a healing process for both herself and her aunt.

Since then, Elizabeth has made a business of creating cards, prints, portraits and commercial work. "I really love it," she says. "I wouldn't do it if I didn't enjoy it. You come to a certain period in your life when you want to do things only if you really enjoy them." Elizabeth also offers an extensive line of unique photography cards. She has won numerous awards.

Elizabeth has taken a winding and rewarding path to reach this point in her life. After studying art at college, she moved to Bangkok for four years. She taught English as a second language, worked in Public Relations for a large silk and cotton company, and illustrated a children's book while doing work for UNICEF. After returning to the States, she started several businesses. She eventually settled in Maine because "it seemed like a great place to live and raise children."

When asked whether Maine has influenced her art, Elizabeth responds, "I don't think I have ever taken so many pictures anywhere else in my life!" Some of Elizabeth's most popular images are of boats, taken along the coastline of Maine. "Maine is nature, and I think living here brings that out in you," Elizabeth says.

Elizabeth could not be happier doing the work she loves. She admits it isn't always easy, though. "I'm a single mom, and it's really hard to follow my passion because it's not always where the money is." But one thing that has become particularly clear to her, especially in the past eight years, is "if you absolutely love something, then you've got to do it. Never give up. If you do, you're cheating yourself and your soul. Live life, open your heart, and feel it all."



Jessica Takach received her BA in English from Wheaton College in Norton, Massachusetts. She is the Publications Coordinator for Maine Writers and Publishers Alliance and serves on the Board of Directors for Literacy Volunteers of Saco/Biddeford. Jessica is currently working towards her MFA in Creative Writing from the Stonecoast Graduate Program.

