

Dear Dr. Flowers,

It's been nearly seven years since my breast augmentation surgery, and words cannot express how much my life has changed as a result.

As a child I was severely overweight, and during adolescence I lost nearly 30 pounds. I was-- for the first time in my young life-- fit and healthy, however, I was absolutely devastated with the way my weight loss altered my breasts. I was a teenager bearing the breasts of an old, weathered woman. My breasts sagged, they drooped, they were literally lifeless, looking as if I had breastfed three children. This dramatically impacted my self-image and self-esteem, as looking in the mirror was incredibly painful. I felt ashamed, inferior, ugly, grotesque. This was the onset of a rather dark period in my life, characterized by secrecy and shame. My breasts were my dirty little secret, as no one knew what they really looked like. I'd go to great lengths to ensure that no one discovered my "deformity", if you will-- I'd change in private, shower in isolation...I always felt tremendously inhibited. Slumber parties, going to the beach- these were not fun events, but rather arduous tasks that fostered anxiety and at the end of the day, a deep, penetrating sadness. My dissatisfaction with my breasts impacted the way I viewed myself as a woman, and ultimately had ramifications in terms of relationships I engaged in as an adult, interfering with my ability to become intimate.

The burden had become overwhelming, and I decided to opt for surgery.

The day the bandages came off was the beginning of a new life. In essence, it marked the start of a journey toward peace and healing. It's truly amazing how much power we vest in the physical, but I've come to learn and accept how incredibly complex our perceptions are, none being as powerful as our perceptions of Self, which govern and ultimately limit and hinder the ways in which we live our lives.

I am extremely content with my breasts. They're soft, natural, and in every sense a part of me. My husband finds it difficult to believe that they're implants, and the few friends who know about the surgery aren't entirely convinced that they're not my own.

Dr. Flowers, I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your skill and artistry, as well as for the care you've provided over the years. Moreover, I thank you for your talent, which has ultimately allowed me to live life as it was intended- confident, free, and with spontaneity.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

An anonymous but eternally grateful patient.