



Patti Darragh lives by a credo: "Take care of your clients; take care of each other; take care of yourselves." This approach to life radiates as Darragh, the owner of RejuvInEssence Day Spa in Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania, describes her approach to the skin care industry. I want my team to nurture and care for clients, but also each other. In the spa business, professionals don't always care for each other, and that's what is so special about our spa. The caring spills over, and clients see it and want to be a part of that atmosphere, she says.

After enrolling in cosmetology school in 1983, Darragh quickly realized she enjoyed skin care, even though it wasn't very popular at the time. Seeking a well-rounded education, she explored other areas of the industry, including massage, to provide the most service choices to her clients. After working in a number of spas, training with other professionals and educating about

product information, Darragh decided to start her own business based on her 20 years of experience. I wanted to use some of the philosophies that I've learned and to create a place where clients could come in and relax while receiving quality skin care, she notes.

Soon after opening the spa in 2002, Darragh learned that she was in for the fight of her life. "Six months after I opened the spa, I was diagnosed with breast cancer, she says. Surviving it helped me to become more understanding, caring and nurturing. I relate to my clients and cancer patients on a more intimate level.

Her spa team proved to be an invaluable asset and a testament to Darragh's focus on compassion. When I got sick, they helped so much to keep the business together. They are really good people, and we've all grown together. That's really why I stay with the industry, she explains.

During her recovery, Darragh tapped into a part of herself she never had felt before. She created a CD called *RejuvInEssence* that focuses on guided relaxation and breathing to create a space in which the body and mind can heal. I learned to appreciate every day, every minute and everything I have to do. I try to teach my clients these same techniques, she adds.

Along with her responsibilities at the spa, Darragh works with the American Cancer Society's I Can Cope program a

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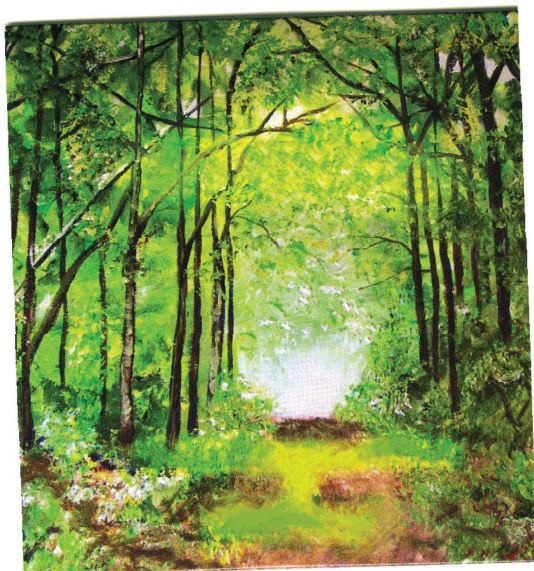
Patti Darragh

RejuvInEssence Day Spa,
Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania

commitment she honored even before she was diagnosed. She also has created a seminar called Inner Peace, Inner Power that teaches resilience through a four-step plan. Breath work, meditation, affirmations and intentions are emphasized, while psychologist Christine Beardman, PhD, inspires participants and individually works with attendees on specific difficulties.

Throughout the years, Darragh's hard work and dedication have paid off. The spa has established a presence in the community winning the Best of Philly Award in 2003 from *Philadelphia Magazine* and has developed a loyal clientele. We seem to attract those who need nurturing, yet still want the best skin care, she notes. I think women need a lot of encouragement. They're caring for everyone else their kids, their parents, taking care of everyone in the home. They need to step back and take care of themselves.

Focusing on the overall client continues to be Darragh's main goal, as well as fostering a nurturing atmosphere that benefits team and clientele alike. "We try to take care of every aspect our clients need, she says. We're a small spa, but spiritually we're big. ☺



Darragh painted this image for the cover of her CD, *RejuvInEssence*.