



At 24 years of age I was an ambitious college student, budding professional actress and radio disc jockey in Albuquerque, New Mexico. I had always been an ambitious person, and planned to go to California to pursue my career goals. I left New Mexico to begin broadcast school in Los Angeles in 1981. My life would take a dramatic turn due to health problems that would take 20 years to correctly diagnose.

In 1979, at 22 years of age, I had begun to experience unexplained gastrointestinal disorders that doctors attributed to stress. Sometimes I couldn't keep food down. By the time I left New Mexico for California I had become allergic to foods, chemicals, and other substances that I was never allergic to before. Those allergies that were pre-existing became

magnified to the point of being deadly. I had difficulty fighting off infections as my immune system was dangerously weakened.

Being the determined person I am, I strove to accomplish my career goals anyway. I worked odd jobs such as health food store salesperson and as a waitress to support myself through college.

Gradually I found myself unable to go into college classrooms and most buildings due to my sensitivity to floor wax and other cleaning products. I had begun working as a bit film actor but I soon became unable to use the hairsprays, perfumes, and make-up required by the jobs. My memory and concentration became poor and I was unable to memorize a script. This along with other problems caused the loss of my broadcast, college, and acting careers. My dreams were shattered as my health deteriorated gradually over the years. I suffered financial ruin due to insurmountable medical bills and eventually to my total inability to work. I lived on food stamps and fell into mounting debt.

Eighteen years into my illness I developed neurological problems that progressed to seizures. A doctor in Dallas, Texas finally offered me a diagnosis when I was 43 years of age. By this time I had been to about forty doctors in three states who had never figured out the cause of my health problems. This physician told me he had several patients who had symptoms similar to mine, and that all of them had high levels of mercury in their systems. Testing confirmed his suspicions.

I had mercury poisoning from my dental amalgam fillings. My life had become a horror of not knowing which food, medicine, dental material, or chemical substance I could tolerate that wouldn't kill me.

I have been under medical treatment for a while now. I am improving though my immune system is impaired. At 49 years of age I am now trying to recover a life lost to mercury poisoning.

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