

# PASADENA NOW

## Caring for the Invisible Women

*Dr. Lois Frankel gives sick, struggling women the means to Bloom Again*

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When life gives you lemons, how can you make lemonade if you can't afford a pitcher to hold it with?

Pasadenan Dr. Lois Frankel, best-selling author and founder of Bloom Again, makes sure those who are faced with lemons don't need to worry about pitchers.

Frankel started Bloom Again four years ago after her own bout with cancer. While recuperating, she had a realization: "I am really very lucky, I have all the resources I need to heal at my own pace; I have my own business and I didn't have a boss telling me if I don't come to work I'm going to get fired."

"There were so many working women who don't have that luxury," she says. Women "who are working at minimum wage trying to support families and for them, even one missed day of work can make the difference between being evicted and staying on their home."

When Frankel's housekeeper's sister "was dying of breast cancer while I was going through my own, of course she wanted to spend time with her sister," Frankel says.

"Who wouldn't want to be with a family member who's dying of cancer especially if you're the only one in this country?" Frankel asks. This was the defining moment when Frankel realized how lucky she was and had to do something for the less fortunate.

Vowing to help these less fortunate women, Frankel started planning her organization. When a friend "came in to visit me, my hair and eyelashes were growing back. She said, 'Lois, it looks as if you're blooming again,' and then I said, 'Oh, I have the name of the organization,'" Frankel recalls.

From there, after attending workshops and learning all there is about starting a nonprofit, Bloom Again was born.

Understand though, that Bloom Again does not do charity in the strictest sense.

"This is only for women who work," Frankel explains. "I understand there are people who don't work, who are very deserving. But the women that I engage with are all professional women, working women, and we want to help women just like us but who don't quite make as much as we do."

As a nonprofit, Bloom Again does accept donations, but there are other ways people can help. Some can be ambassadors, where a person can host a “fundraiser” where “we come to your home, meet with a few of your friends and just tell them about Bloom Again,” Frankel says.

“If you have a corporation that has matching funds, you can link us [with] them and make a donation, your donation is up and doubled, so it goes twice as far,” Frankel adds.

Donors can also contribute their unique skills. For example, publicity experts can come in and help with the publicity. Depending on what the organization needs, unique skills are always welcome.

And, of course, there are the fundraisers.

This May 5th, Bloom Again will be celebrating its 4th Annual Lunafest, to be held at Descanso Gardens in La Cañada, where viewings of short films for and by women will be showcased.

In addition to the viewings, a Mother’s Day Contest will also be held at the event with prizes that include a pampering package from Harmony, a weekend stay at Langham Hotel, and a free meal at Villa Sorriso.

Finally, there will also be a wine and cheese reception with book signings by local authors.

Tickets can be availed for small \$75 donation.

Dr. Frankel also does her part for the benefit of her foundation. As a best-selling author and employee development coach, Frankel is often invited to do keynote speaking for corporations. In exchange for a donation to Bloom Again, she gives clients a good deal on the keynote speech.

“For example, Nestle in Glendale has donated \$15,000 and I gave them three keynote speeches which is less than what I normally would charge for three keynotes,” Frankel says.

Juggling her full-time job with her role with Bloom Again has made Dr. Frankel extra busy these days, but it’s all worth it. After all, it’s for the invisible women.

“They are invisible. Do you remember the person who gives you your McDonald’s over the counter, or who’s like vacuuming the floor at Barnes & Noble? You don’t look at them and you don’t remember these people and yet they are just like you and me, they just need a hand,” Frankel says.

A hand that helps turn lemons to lemonade.

For more info about Bloom Again, you can visit <http://www.bloomagain.org> to learn more how you can help.