



From Restaurateur to Aromatherapist

Lynette Lovelace closed her bistro to launch a beauty line that helps women find something to smile about.

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Lovelace opened a restaurant outside Chicago. A cozy bistro that also sold high-end clothing, Kafe Kokopelli was a local favorite. Then in 2001, the unthinkable happened: Lovelace's 2-year-old son, Logan, was diagnosed with a life-threatening liver abscess that required major surgery. Lovelace spent September 11 at his hospital bedside, watching the Twin Towers fall on television as the boy's fever climbed to 107. "I had no ability to process what the rest of the world was going through," she admits.

As Logan recovered, Lovelace juggled caring for him with the demands of her business, which she moved in 2005 to a larger space and rechristened Embrace, eventually hiring a staff of 50. But in 2008 came more terrible news: Her 12-year-old daughter, Kenna, had a brain tumor. Suddenly the family was back at the hospital—and in the most terrifying kind of limbo. But Lovelace tried to remain upbeat, whether by writing in her journal or wearing a soothing scent. "When my son was sick, our pediatrician told my husband and me that we could choose whether to give up or stay strong," Lovelace says. "I always remembered that."

The Christmas after Kenna's successful surgery, Lovelace felt overwhelmed with gratitude—and ready for a change. She decided that her next venture, in addition to allowing her more time at home, would



promote the healing powers of a positive attitude. "There is positivity in all of us," she says. "Sometimes we just need a little something to bring it out." A self-professed product junkie, Lovelace began working with a local chemist on a line of fragrances that would spark pleasant memories and conjure far-flung fantasies, helping wearers take charge of their outlook. She used her savings to painstakingly source ingredients, partnering with a manufacturer to produce a perfume, body wash, scrub, lotion, and creams. In 2009 she bid a teary goodbye to Embrace's

staff. Then she started cold-calling retailers like Henri Bendel—and was soon in New York showcasing her brand, Lifetherapy, at one of the store's popular trunk shows.

Now Lovelace's line is sold all over the country, but it has made the biggest difference at home, where she says she relishes weekends "lying around in my pajamas with my kids"—both now healthy. "A body wash won't change anyone's life," Lovelace says, "but it can boost your mood. I want to share what a little determination and positivity can do." —ARIANNA DAVIS