

My Love for Romania

Whether you admire or skeptically question my wanderlust, let me be honest – I have my own moments of doubt. Like when the fifth plane required to reach Cluj-Napoca, Romania, was delayed. I stood in line beyond the gate, my forehead pressed up against the glass, and watched the sky suddenly turn black. Sheets of rain pummeled the tarmac, and my fellow passengers let out a collective sigh. Not allowed to return to our gate – and certainly not allowed to dash through the lightning and downpour – we all waited. This pause in nowhere-land, neither departing nor arriving, was just the encouragement my inner critic needed to come alive.

Questions poured in at a rate as fierce as the rain outside. Is this trip really necessary to share my message? What will it serve? Is this a resourceful way to use my energy? Am I getting ahead of myself? The whirling doubt took center stage, accompanied by the tangible ache in my heart that appears when traveling so far from my husband and children.

Then, just as quickly as the storm appeared, it was gone. Sunlight broke through the dark sky, and we were allowed outside to board. The forward motion shifted my doubt, and my own inner wisdom found its voice. A journey in the right direction – the one guided by our sense of purpose – isn't always comfortable. Brene Brown's words rang in my head: "You can choose courage or you can choose comfort. You can't have both." Really? Well, okay then. Because my greatest lesson over the past year has been that within discomfort lies my most profound opportunity for growth. As I buckled my seatbelt, I thought, "Bring it on," ready to accept whatever this leg of the journey would deliver.

And deliver it did. The gifts of this journey continue to arrive, right up into my final hours in Cluj. Seeing my dear friend, Carmen, fills my heart with joy. Carmen was my primary

liaison with our parent company, Plant Extrakt, and with the Romanian Association for Gemmotherapy and Homeopathy (ARGH). And then, I had the opportunity to reunite with my mentor in Gemmotherapy, Dr. Sorina Soescu. What a delight it was to be in her company. She was at my side as translator and co-presenter for my weekend seminar on Restoring Emotional Immunity. Bringing my new ideas on Emotional Immunity and micro-dosing extracts to a room full of physicians and pharmacists could have been intimidating, to say the least. That might have been true in any other circumstances – but not here, not among this group of openhearted and open-minded individuals, all searching for new ways to help their patients. I was so richly rewarded by their enthusiastic response. And at the end of the two days, Romania no longer felt so far from home.

But my time in Cluj didn't end there. Pushing a bit beyond my comfort zone, I found two reasons to stay for a full ten days. First, I committed to intensive lessons and discussion with Dr. Neli Olah, Plant Extrakt's chief biochemist and professor of pharmacology at two local universities. I've dreamt for years of finding a way to integrate my holistic clinical experience with Neli's pharmacological knowledge. Moving to Cluj and enrolling where Neli teaches seemed a bit drastic, so I suggested we collaborate on a book. And to my great surprise, she agreed!

This week, fueled by green tea and local cherries, Neli and I were successful in our work together on 25 extracts. I think we were both concerned that the gap in our languages and scientific knowledge could get in the way. Instead, it fueled fantastic discussions that I regret were not recorded. I am so grateful for Neli patiently sharing her wisdom and time so generously. I hope this experience has opened the door for many future discussions.

My next goal was to support the start of a Romanian Gemmo Moms group. What a delight it was to gather with health coach

extraordinaire Dumitrita Margineanu, pediatrician Dr. Dana Campaen and the first twelve Gemmo Moms of Cluj-Napoca. There is so much to be gained by empowering mothers to care for themselves and the immunity of their children. I know Dana and Dumi will grow this group into something beautiful.

The truth is, I really don't know what it is with me and Romania. After all, it is really far away! It's far from Texas both geographically and culturally – and I don't speak a word of Romanian! When I am here, I do feel worlds away from my family and life in America. Because I am worlds away. As a coach, I would be prompted to ask how that feels. Truthfully, the answer isn't so clear. I feel one part frightened, and another part free.

If I am not connected with my family as a wife and mother, then who am I? Well, how about a 59-year-old woman passionate about sharing what she knows about health and healing, even if it means traveling solo and sitting out a thunderstorm before boarding her fifth flight to reach a destination? It sounds like the truth, and I wouldn't have missed this experience for the world.