

Dear Dr. Niamtu,

*I wanted to write a personal letter to you to let you know how much I appreciate what you have done for me. I love the results of the cosmetic procedures and feel so much better about my appearance. I was tired of people constantly asking me if I felt well or if I was I tired. It began to affect me mentally because no matter what I tried to do (makeup, miracle creams, and vitamins) I still looked worn-out, which eventually led me to feel old, tired, and worn-out. I knew I had to do something but didn't know who or where to go to for help and what would be feasible for my specific needs. I met with a plastic surgeon recommended to me by a close friend but her solution wasn't what I was looking for. In the past few years, I heard many people mention your name and was always curious why they thought you were so spectacular. Before I even walked into your office I had this unexplainable sense that I could trust you and that you were going to be the Dr. who would be able to provide a workable solution for me. After speaking with you and voicing my concerns, you recommended a face-lift, upper and lower bleph surgery with laser resurfacing under my eyes, cheek implants, and some lipo-suctioning under my chin. You explained to me why you thought each procedure was needed to achieve the look of renewal I was seeking. You were so sincere and I knew that I could put my total trust in your surgical plan and expertise. This in itself was strange because I have always had a difficult time trusting most doctors, especially surgeons!*

*It has been 4 weeks since my surgery and not only has my life changed on the outside but on the inside as well. I turned 55 this year and have been in a career rut for the past few years. I wanted to do something special and knew I would have to go back to school to make that happen. I have tried to make this change for a long time but only ended up talking about career dreams and never actually doing anything proactive. I kept making excuses. "I was too old to start a new career. Who would hire me anyway?" were my favorite excuses. I basically had lost total confidence in my abilities and talents, yet was constantly told by my co-workers that I should be doing something more challenging and purposeful than my day-in, day-out mundane job. I felt so frustrated almost like I was stuck in quick sand and needed to get free but didn't know how. I was actually to take a chance. This is why the surgery has given me a whole new*

*outlook on life. I have wanted to come alive again and start going after my dream job – working with the rehabilitation of our disabled veterans. Since my surgery I have put the wheels in motion. I am getting my application packet ready to apply for admission into VCU's Graduate School of Rehabilitation Counseling. I have a goal now and a vision for my future. You were the one that helped me begin this transition. It wasn't just a physical renewal that I needed but more of a boost to give me new energy and a desire to begin moving forward with my life. Having this surgery has made me feel like a heavy burden has been lifted and I am anxious about making these changes.*

*You are a very special doctor – not only as an excellent surgeon but also because you truly cared about me as a person with needs.*

*Dr. Niamtu, with sincere appreciation, I want to thank you for all that you have done for me. In a couple of years I will be sending you a copy of the new me holding my diploma or better yet will have a picture taken of the new me holding my diploma standing next to you. (I'm trying to find a way to get my picture into your "Famous People" digital frame in the main lobby!)*

*Once again "Thank you"*

*Marie Hald*