

# To my cousin Wensdy

– FROM MELISSA WHITNEY

Wensdy was born on a Thursday, not a Wednesday. I don't remember the origin of her unique name, maybe I never knew. Wensdy was so intelligent and talented. She accomplished so much in a too short life. She received a full scholarship to study computer science at Cornell. She spoke fluent German, certified by the Goethe Institut. She had two patents for software design engineering of Interactive Program Cable Guides.

She was also a creative genius. As a child, she could solve a Rubik's cube in a couple minutes. I realized that this geometric skill was the same spatial wizardry that she later applied to her Origami. Our family knew that Wensdy loved Origami and could fold paper in ways beyond our comprehension, and that she had exhibits in museums. But I didn't realize until she had died in May, and I met her Origami friends that she was a renowned Origami savant, beloved by the Origami community.

While sorting her belongings and cleaning out Wensdy's apartment in May, I found some writings about her philosophy of Origami. This is a rough draft from her writing on the back of a piece of paper with instructions for "Make your own origami crane!"

*"Origami bridges engineering and art. Unlike many creative arts, little opportunity to add or subtract material when creating—only in starting from another shape of paper or working with a different number of units in a modular design can one gain or lose material. The engineering aspect of allocating paper to each part of the intended design provides a continual tug-of-war between the engineering and the art that pulls me in to be more creative and artistic than when I approach other art projects."*

—Wensdy Whitehead

That sums her up, an artistic engineer.