



Recommended Reading: **Books about Organ, Eye & Tissue Donation**

Personal Experiences and Narratives

The Climb of My Life: Scaling Mountains with a Borrowed Heart

Kelly Perkins

When Kelly Perkins learned she needed a heart transplant at the age of 30, she thought the active healthy life she loved was over. From the brink of death to the summit of Mt. Fuji, Kelly, with the support of her husband Craig, not only survived the transplant surgery, but became the first heart transplant patient to summit some of the world's most recognized peaks. *The Climb of My Life* tells the story of Kelly's transplant, recovery, and ascents up such mountains as Mt. Kilimanjaro—all on a borrowed heart.

2007

ISBN-10: 0742558770

ISBN-13: 978-0742558779

Dying to Live: From Heart Transplant to Abundant Life

Gaea Shaw

Dying to Live is about facing challenges. Being miserable. Finding faith. Learning to let go and learning to trust. It is the inspiring story of Gaea Shaw's journey from heart transplant recipient to gold medal winner at the Olympic-style Transplant Games. But Gaea's story is much more than that. Her gift to her readers is that she encourages each of us to see that we all face our own challenges—and that each of us can experience an abundant life, filled with gratitude, no matter the odds.

2005 (116 pages)

ISBN-10: 0974959758

ISBN-13: 978-0974959757

Every Second Counts: The Race to Transplant the First Human Heart

Donald McRae

Many remember the proudly beaming face of South African surgeon Christiaan Barnard after he performed the first human heart transplant. But he was not alone in his quest. In truth it was a four way race, a fierce struggle fraught with passionate rivalry. Three other surgeons were giants in the field, and by early December 1967 all were poised to make medical history.

Each had spent years perfecting his techniques; each monitored his chosen patient's condition, watching the clock, hoping a donor would be found in time. From a dank, under-equipped hospital in Cape Town to a cramped lab in San Francisco, the surgeons worked miracles, testing the limits of both science and nature. Some were friends; others were enemies. Only one would be the first.

2007 (400 pages)

ISBN-10: 0425215229

The Gift that Heals: Stories of hope, renewal and transformation through organ and tissue donation

Reg Green

The stories in this book are about life coming out of death. A police officer, left for dead in a hail of bullets, can golf and fish again; a woman, whose lungs were at one time so diseased that she was dependent on oxygen, has since climbed 5,000 feet to the summit of Half Dome in Yosemite National Park carrying a 25-pound backpack; a man who was fighting for his life went on to become an Olympic champion. On one side, they tell of transplanted human organs and tissue transforming lives and, on the other, the inspiring selflessness of the families who donated them at the bleakest moment of their lives. The Gift that Heals is published jointly by United Network for Organ Sharing (www.unos.org) and the Nicholas Green Foundation (www.nicholasgreen.org). It was written by Reg Green, the father of a seven-year-old California boy, Nicholas, who was shot in an attempted robbery while the family was on vacation in Italy. The story captured the imagination of the world when he and his wife, Maggie, donated their son's organs and corneas to seven Italians.

2008 (200 pages)

ISBN-10: 1434377199

ISBN-13: 978-1434377197

The Match: Complete Strangers, a Miracle Face Transplant, Two Lives Transformed

Susan Whitman Helfgot

Joseph Helfgot, the son of Holocaust survivors, worked his way from a Lower East Side tenement to create a successful Hollywood research company. But his heart was failing. After months of waiting for a heart transplant, he died during the operation. Hours after his death, his wife Susan was asked a shocking question: would she donate her husband's face to a total stranger?

The stranger was James Maki, the adopted son of parents who spent part of World War II in an internment camp for Japanese Americans. Rebelling against his stern father, a professor, by enlisting to serve in Vietnam, he returned home a broken man, addicted to drugs. One night he fell facedown onto the electrified third rail of a Boston subway track.

A young Czech surgeon who was determined to make a better life on the other side of the Iron Curtain was on call when the ambulance brought Maki to the hospital. Although Dr. Bohdan Pomahac gave him little chance of survival, Maki battled back. He was sober and grateful for a second chance, but he became a recluse, a man without a face. His only hope was a controversial face transplant, and Dr. Pomahac made it happen.

In *The Match*, Susan Whitman Helfgot captures decades of drama and history, taking us from Warsaw to Japan, from New York to Hollywood. Through wars and immigration, poverty and persecution, from a medieval cadaver dissection to a stunning seventeen-hour face transplant, she weaves together the story of people forever intertwined—a triumphant legacy of hope.

2010 (272 pages)

ISBN-10: 143919548X

ISBN-13: 978-1439195482

The Nicholas Effect: A Boy's Gift to the World

Reg Green

The Nicholas Effect is the story of the shooting of seven-year-old Nicholas Green. It tells how the Greens' decision to donate their son's organs saved the lives of five Italians and restored the sight of two others. It covers the murder trial, the making of "Nicholas' Gift," the Jamie Lee Curtis made-for-TV movie, the bell sent by Pope John Paul II to the Greens for their memorial tower and their unceasing campaign to bring attention to the tens of thousands of deaths caused every year by the worldwide shortage of donated organs. Running through it, like a thread, is the heartbreaking journey of Nicholas' parents and little sister to make something good come out of a senseless act of violence.

2009 (268 pages)

ISBN-10: 1449008410

ISBN-13: 978-1449008413

The Power of Two: A Twin Triumph over Cystic Fibrosis

Isabel Stenzel Byrnes and Anabel Stenzel

The tragedy of cystic fibrosis has been touchingly recounted before, but this is the first book to portray the symbiotic relationship between twins who share this life-threatening disease through adulthood. Isabel Stenzel Byrnes and Anabel Stenzel tell of their struggle to pursue normal lives while grappling with the realization that they might die young. Their story reflects the physical and emotional challenges of a particularly aggressive form of CF and tells how the twins' bicultural heritage Japanese and German influenced the way they coped. *The Power of Two* is an honest and gripping portrayal of day-to-day health care, the impact of chronic illness on marriage and family, and the importance of a support network to continuing survival. These two remarkable sisters have much to teach about the power of perseverance and about the ultimate power of hope.

2007 (280 pages)

ISBN-10: 0826217540

ISBN-13: 978-0826217547

The Puzzle People: Memoirs of a Transplant Surgeon

Thomas Starzl

Thomas Starzl grew up in LeMars, Iowa, the son of a newspaper publisher and a nurse. Starzl left the family business to enter Northwestern University Medical School where he earned both an M.D. and a PhD. While he was a student, and later during his surgical internship at the Johns Hopkins Hospital, he began the series of animal experiments that led eventually to the world's first transplantation of the human liver in Colorado in 1963.

Throughout his career, first at the University of Colorado and then at the University of Pittsburgh, he has aroused both worldwide admiration and controversy. His technical innovations and medical genius have revolutionized the field, but Starzl has not hesitated to address the moral and ethical issues raised by transplantation. In this book he clearly states his position on many hotly debated issues including brain death, randomized trials for experimental drugs, the costs of transplant operations, and the system for selecting organ recipients from among scores of desperately ill patients.

2003 revised edition (400 pages)

ISBN-10: 0822958368

ISBN-13: 978-0822958369

Taylor's Gift

Todd Storch and Tara Storch with Jennifer Schuchmann

In March 2010, thirteen-year-old Taylor Storch's life was tragically cut short by a skiing accident. With only a few minutes to consider their options, her grieving family made the life-changing decision to donate her organs. Knowing Taylor's caring spirit, they were sure this was what she would have wanted. Over the course of the next two years, Tara and Todd Storch connected with four of the five people who now live because of Taylor's gift. And through these encounters, the Storchs have discovered unexpected blessings that are changing countless lives.

Now Tara and Todd share their inspiring story, shining a light at the end of the tunnel for those enduring the suffering of losing a loved one. Through the stories of the donor recipients, readers will discover hope in the midst of pain. Honest with their struggles, the Storchs show readers that life is a gift and our response to grief is a choice.

2013 (336 pages)

ISBN-10: 0800721888

ISBN-13: 978-0800721886

Fiction

Cutting for Stone

Abraham Verghese

Marion and Shiva Stone are twin brothers born of a secret union between a beautiful Indian nun and a brash British surgeon. Orphaned by their mother's death and their father's disappearance, bound together by a preternatural connection and a shared fascination with medicine, the twins come of age as Ethiopia hovers on the brink of revolution.

Moving from Addis Ababa to New York City and back again, *Cutting for Stone* is an unforgettable story of love and betrayal, medicine and ordinary miracles--and two brothers whose fates are forever intertwined.

2010 (667 pages)

ISBN-10: 0375714367

ISBN-13: 978-0375714368

When Crickets Cry

Charles Martin

A man with a painful past. A child with a doubtful future. And a shared journey toward healing for both their hearts. It begins on the shaded town square in a sleepy Southern town. A spirited seven-year-old has a brisk business at her lemonade stand. But the little girl's pretty yellow dress can't quite hide the ugly scar on her chest. Her latest customer, a bearded stranger, drains his cup and heads to his car, his mind on a boat he's restoring at a nearby lake. The stranger understands more about the scar than he wants to admit. And the beat-up bread truck careening around the corner with its radio blaring is about to change the trajectory of both their lives. Before it's over, they'll both know there are painful reasons why crickets cry . . . and that miracles lurk around unexpected corners.

2006 (352 pages)

ISBN-10: 1595540547

ISBN-13: 978-1595540546

Young Readers

How Will They Get That Heart Down Your Throat?: A Child's View of Transplants

Karen Walton

Karen Walton, a kindergarten teacher, was healthy until she developed a serious heart condition called cardiomyopathy, a weakening of the heart muscle. The only thing that could save her life was a heart transplant. After her transplant she wrote a children's book, whose title was inspired by a kindergartener's question.

1997 (48 pages)

ISBN-10: 1880664992

ISBN-13: 978-1880664995

Now Caitlin Can: A donated organ helps a child get well.

Ramona Wood

Freddie learns his little sister Caitlin's only chance for a normal life is a kidney transplant. In time, a suitable kidney is donated and Caitlin undergoes the surgery that changes her life.

This picture book is based on a true story of a child organ recipient. The colorful cut-paper and fabric illustrations show the before-and-after of the second chance made possible by a compassionate deceased donor.

2004 (32 pages)

ISBN-10: 0975862200

ISBN-13: 978-0975862209