

A Review of  
***Swim: A Memoir of Survival (2010)***

Author: Bill Coon

Reviewed by Jim Gleason, heart recipient

Born with a congenital heart defect (medically referred to as “hypoplastic left ventricular”) in 1989, this young author has lived a life growing up with a heart transplant performed in the first year of life which lasted him through 20 years. Diagnosed with transplant vasculopathy, a transplant related disease that is the cause of death in about 40% of heart transplant patients, he faced a second heart transplant and a kidney too this time. Today, almost two years later, Bill is leading a busy and healthy life as he continues his college education.



*Swim*, his first book, built from his personal journal begun in 2009, is the day-by-day capture of that second transplant experience as he endures the many challenges that life offers during a wait for life or death. This is a very honest (sometimes raw) and insightful account of what goes on in the mind and heart of a young person fighting to survive.

After spending seventy days in the hospital through the Summer of 2009, Bill received his second life extension with a new heart on October 21<sup>st</sup>, followed by a kidney transplant the next day. Ten days later Bill was released and today continues on his life’s journey with renewed energy for raising organ donor awareness, especially in the college aged campus community, but with even more passion through publishing (*Swim* was published exactly one year from the date he was raised to status 1A on the national UNOS waiting list) and promoting this book around the country. The author also maintains an active social networking presence in support of that work.

Reading *Swim* is for everyone who appreciates life and enjoys a will to live life to its fullest. His survival story will serve to inspire and add appreciation to your own everyday gift of life, a life with no guarantee that it will be still there tomorrow, as Bill’s story affirms.

Note: **Swim** is available in paperback directly from the author or [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com). You can learn more from his website blogging at <http://thebillnessblog.blogspot.com/2011/06/wednesday-awesomeness.html>

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**Brief bio:**

Jim Gleason, receiving his own heart transplant Oct. '94, retired after 37 years with Unisys Corporation in 2005, is a volunteer with The Gift of Life Donor Program, NKF and UNOS as well as a nationally recognized speaker and author. His own book, **A Gift from the Heart**, is offered free in thanks to his donor family and can be obtained by contacting him at GLEASONJIM@AOL.COM.