

A Review of

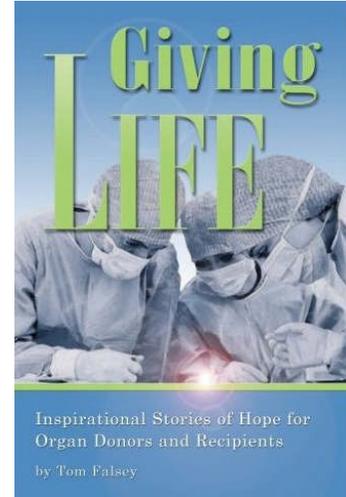
Giving Life

Inspirational Stories of Hope for Organ Donors and Recipients

Author: Tom Falsey

Reviewed by Jim Gleason, heart recipient

As someone who is passionate about organ donation awareness, Tom Falsey has gone beyond being a living kidney donor, beyond being a long term blood donor and bone marrow registrant, beyond active leadership with many local and national organizations and compiled not only his own and his family's inspiring stories, but also collected another 26 amazing stories (28 in all) into this book. Covering the full range of living and deceased organ donation of every type, he connects the stories of many recipients to their corresponding donor story, providing the full picture of this life saving process.



Don't expect every story to have a "happy ending" as he provides insight into the joys and pains of what sometimes isn't a smooth sailing experience given the complexity of transplant surgery that is only performed on critically ill patients who often lack any other option besides death. While he is obviously promoting the benefits to both donor and recipient, especially in the living donation scenario, these tales also share, on a gut wrenching and very emotional level, brutally honest human sacrifice and disappointment. Reading this would be a good reality check for anyone contemplating living donation to be sure they are fully committed, for, while the rewards are many, such gifts are not without personal risk and he achieves a good balance in sharing such facts of donation and transplant life. The events shared will inspire, and as was my own experience, bring tears of joy as the events unfold and you journey along with families facing real life uncertainties, doubts, hope and for most, joyful triumphs. You will meet celebrities and the unknown, for life through transplant is truly the equalizer in a society too often balanced in favor of the rich, but not so here as you will read in story after story. This book belongs in every medical waiting room for those waiting to read and enjoy, offering hope as they face their own medical challenges.

Beyond the stories, most chapters are followed with a brief summary of UNOS based data about the organ need and process related to the story just read, a very powerful education dimension of this book. Another interesting addition is the beautiful artistic pencil drawn portraits of the main personalities which introduce each chapter, adding a "face" to the narrative that follows. Don't miss the author's Epilogue in which he offers advice for anyone considering the decision to be an organ donor, including his personal experience advice to the living donation decision often portrayed in these collected experiences. Another added resource are the closing pages listing most major religions' view on organ donation, a useful reference for both the reader and anyone who is out speaking on the subject since it is such a common question and misconception held by such audiences.

Note: Giving Life is available in hard cover (269 pages) directly from www.GivingLifeBooks.com or at Amazon.com.

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.