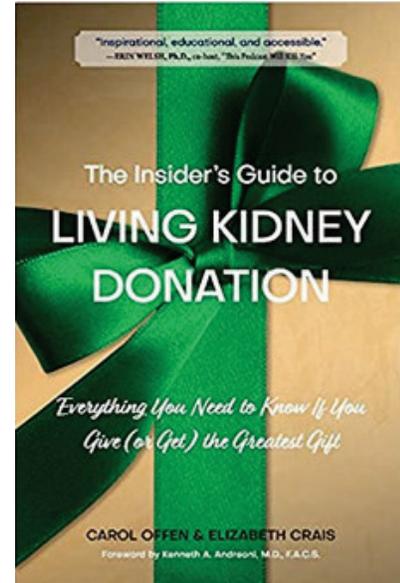


A Review of  
***The Insider's Guide to Living Kidney Donation: Everything You Need to Know If You Give (or Get) the Greatest Gift*** (2021)  
Authors: Carol Offen & Elizabeth Crais

Reviewed by Jim Gleason

How to describe this exceptional book? Maybe as the layman's encyclopedia of living kidney donation. No, their chosen title does it best. It is a good summary of everything one needs to know about living kidney donation, written to be easily understood by non-medical readers, family, candidates, and potential donors. If it were in my power, I would make this book a handout in every kidney transplant program when the patient and family first consider the too often daunting subject of a kidney transplant.



Co-authors Carol and Elizabeth bring together personal insights from one being a living donor while the other, as a recipient of a live kidney donation. Their stories, shared in similar writing styles, cover the full range of topics in a very logical reading structure that makes for easy and very understandable reading. Even when using medical terms, they expand and explain the acronym and procedure at a patient and family reading level making for enjoyable reading about this complex subject at a time of considerable stress.

The book offers five logical sections with twenty-three chapters of facts and insights, often built on the authors' personal experiences, life stories, and lessons learned. They delve into family dynamics and often not discussed but the very important emotional side of the transplant experience, especially when family and community members volunteer to be living donors. An exciting epilogue looks into recent and upcoming developments in this constantly evolving field, bringing hope to the reader who may be facing a long wait for that kidney even with the living donor option. Seeing both sides of the experience gives a fuller understanding of everyone's role and challenges in the living donor process.

Rounding out those 23 chapters, the authors conclude with handy additional sections covering frequently asked questions, an appendix of valuable resources, a glossary of terms, additional notes, a selected bibliography, and even more suggested readings. In the FAQ's, they included several very up to date COVID-related questions for both donors and recipients. As I said up front, a VERY complete and comprehensive guide.

As a book reviewer of literally hundreds of transplant-related books, I found this read to be unique and a much-needed resource for the ever-growing patient population challenged with the need for a kidney transplant.

**Note:** *The Insider's Guide to Living Kidney Donation* is available in paperback and Kindle formats from major booksellers.

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**Brief bio:**

Jim Gleason, received a heart transplant Oct. '94, retired after 37 years with Unisys Corporation in 2005, is a volunteer with **The Gift of Life Donor Program**, UNOS, president of TRIO 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 viewed on-line at <https://www.rjwitte.com/changeofheart/GiftFromTheHeart/>.