

FROM THE SITTING ROOM SERIES
GRIEF AND MEMORY LOSS

15

First-Year Grief Journal

*Undated Pages for the
Year After a Death*

Stephen Deason

LARGE PRINT



First-Year Grief Journal

This journal belongs to _____

In memory of _____

Started on _____

If you need help right now

Emergency

911

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

Call or text 988, any hour, or chat at 988lifeline.org. For anyone in distress, or worried about someone who is.

Eldercare Locator

1-800-677-1116, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Eastern, or eldercare.acl.gov. A public service of the U.S. Administration on Aging that connects older adults and caregivers with local help anywhere in the country.

From
The Sitting Room Series

BOOK 15 · GRIEF AND MEMORY LOSS

First-Year Grief Journal

Undated Pages for the Year After a Death

Stephen Deason



Alder
Creek
EDITIONS

First-Year Grief Journal

Undated Pages for the Year After a Death

Book 15 of The Sitting Room Series

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The author's accounts of his own family are drawn from his experience.

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Preface

This book is personal for multiple reasons. I have spent about forty years working inside health care. I began volunteering in a hospital at fifteen and was working as an orderly by sixteen, helping care for patients in hospitals and nursing homes while I worked my way through college. Later, I spent more than twenty years building and running systems for hospitals, insurers, Medicaid programs, and other health care organizations before returning to direct care through healthcare staffing, home care, and skilled nursing. Today I am an Administrator of a licensed health care facility that delivers care in patients' homes.

That facility is OPA Home Care, which I founded and run. In Georgia it is a licensed Private Home Care Provider, or PHCP. My healthcare staffing company employed nurses and aides across hundreds of health care facilities around the country, including through the COVID years, and our home care operations have recruited, hired, and managed caregiving staff for hundreds of families. I have watched older adults and their families face what this series covers, often in a hurry and usually at a difficult time.

What I kept seeing was this. Families meet the information in pieces, after they already need it, from people who each answer a different piece. The hospital owns the discharge. The insurer owns the benefit. The home care provider owns its services. Each of them may do that job well. The family still has to put the puzzle pieces together.

It happened to my own family. My mother was found wandering the parking lot of a hospital, looking for her car. She had a urinary tract infection that urgent care and the hospital both missed, and she was sent home with severe delirium and a new diagnosis of mild cognitive impairment. It took two weeks, and a nurse practitioner and a doctor we knew who were willing to look again, before anyone found the cause. She stayed with us for two months and then moved into independent living. She has kept improving, and she is driving again. The infection was ordinary. The months that followed were the cost of catching it late.

Much of the information in this series is already available somewhere. Medicare publishes Medicare's rules. The VA explains VA benefits, and each state explains its own programs. Having information spread across so many places is part of the problem. Families do not meet these questions one provider or agency at a time. The questions arrive together. I wrote this series to put many needed pieces in one place, in the order people tend to need them, with a way to record or otherwise act on each answer.

The few facts in this journal come from the sources listed at the back. The questions in it come from years of doing this work.

This journal belongs to you. Nobody else needs to read it, and nobody needs to see how often you write in it.

This journal will help you keep the year in your own words, a week at a time. Start with Section 1, or with the next blank page.

1. Who This Journal Is For and How to Use It

This journal is for the year after the death of someone you love. It has no dates printed in it. If you miss a week, or a month, start again at the next blank page. Nothing is behind.

How the pages work

Each week has two pages. The first page has a question to write about and a small thing to do. The second page has more room, and a line for one thing that helped. Write the date you start each page, so you can see later how far you have come.

Answer the question, or write about anything else. Do the small thing, or skip it. A few lines is enough. Some weeks you may fill both pages, and some weeks nothing at all.

After every four weeks there is a page for looking back. Read back over the weeks before it and write what you notice.

The other pages

Section 2 is about the person who died. Section 3 is for the people who help you, with their numbers, so you can find them on a hard day. Section 4 is for the dates that may be hard, so you can plan for them. Section 5, at the end, is for the year after this one.

If you need more than a journal

If the person who died was on hospice, a hospice that takes Medicare must make bereavement services available to the family for up to a year after the death. Call the hospice and ask what it offers.

If grief makes it hard to get through most days for a long time, or you cannot take care of yourself or the people who depend on you, tell your doctor, or ask for a counselor who works with grief.

If you are thinking about ending your life

Who to call or ask: The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. In an emergency, 911.

How to reach them: Call or text 988, any hour, or chat at 988lifeline.org. If you are in danger right now, call 911.

What you can say: Someone I love died, and I am having thoughts of ending my life. I need to talk to someone now.

If someone else in the family is struggling in this way, you can call 988 for them too, and ask what to do.

2. The Person I Am Missing

Their full name

What I called them

Born

Died

Where they are buried or remembered

Who they were to me

What they loved

What I want to remember most

3. People Who Help

Write down the people you can call, and what each one is good for: a ride, a meal, a long talk, or company without talking.

Name	Phone	Good for

My doctor

The hospice, if there was one

A faith leader

A counselor or support group

4. Dates That May Be Hard

Birthdays, anniversaries, holidays, and the date of the death can come with little warning. Write them here, and next to each one, what you might do that day and who you might spend it with.

Date	What it is	What I might do, and with whom

The Weeks

*Fifty-two weeks, two pages each, with no dates printed.
Start at the next blank page, whenever you come back.*

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: Write down how you heard the news, or what you remember of the first days.

To do this week: Write the names of three people you can call on a hard day in Section 3.

A Week, continued

More room to write

[illegible]

One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What do you want to remember about the person's face, voice, or hands?

To do this week: Eat one meal at a table, with someone if you can.

A Week, continued

More room to write

[illegible]

One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What did people say to you at the service or in the first weeks that you want to keep?

To do this week: Put one thing that belonged to the person where you can see it, or put one away.

A Week, continued

More room to write

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins or other markings on the paper.

One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What has been the hardest hour of the day, and why that one?

To do this week: Go outside for a few minutes, once a day.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

Looking Back

Date _____

Read back over the last four weeks. What has been hardest?

What, or who, has helped?

How you have been sleeping and eating, and how your body feels

Is there anyone you want to tell how you are doing? Who, and when?

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: Write about a meal you shared.

To do this week: Answer one card, call, or message you have been putting off.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What did the person call you? What did you call them?

To do this week: Ask someone to help with one task you dread.

A Week, continued

More room to write

[illegible]

One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What did the two of you argue about, or never agree on?

To do this week: Make one appointment you have been putting off, your own or the household's.

A Week, continued

More room to write

[illegible]

One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What did a normal Tuesday look like with them?

To do this week: Sit somewhere the person liked to sit.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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How you have been sleeping and eating, and how your body feels

Is there anyone you want to tell how you are doing? Who, and when?

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What made the person laugh?

To do this week: Tell one person a funny story about them.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What do you wish you had asked them?

To do this week: Write the question down, and the answer you think they would have given.

A Week, continued

More room to write

[illegible]

One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What has surprised you about this time?

To do this week: Do one thing this week only for yourself.

A Week, continued

More room to write

[illegible]

One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: Which of their habits do you miss, even the ones that bothered you?

To do this week: Go through one drawer, one shelf, or one box. Only one.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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How you have been sleeping and eating, and how your body feels

Is there anyone you want to tell how you are doing? Who, and when?

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: Write about the last good day you had together.

To do this week: Call someone who knew the person, and talk about them.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What are people getting wrong about how you feel?

To do this week: Tell one person what would help.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: Where do you feel the loss most: at home, in the car, at church, somewhere else?

To do this week: Go to that place once, or decide to wait, and write which you chose.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: Write about a trip, a holiday, or an ordinary outing you took together.

To do this week: Look at photographs for a while, or ask someone to look with you.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

Looking Back

Date _____

Read back over the last four weeks. What has been hardest?

What, or who, has helped?

How you have been sleeping and eating, and how your body feels

Is there anyone you want to tell how you are doing? Who, and when?

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What did the person teach you, on purpose or not?

To do this week: Do one thing the way they would have done it.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What are you angry about, if anything? Write it all down. Nobody has to read it.

To do this week: Move your body for a while: walk, garden, clean, or stretch.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What are you grateful for in the life you had together?

To do this week: Thank someone who helped during the illness or after the death.

A Week, continued

More room to write

[illegible]

One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What would you tell the person about this week, if you could?

To do this week: Write them a short letter on the next page.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

Looking Back

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Read back over the last four weeks. What has been hardest?

What, or who, has helped?

How you have been sleeping and eating, and how your body feels

Is there anyone you want to tell how you are doing? Who, and when?

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: Who has surprised you by showing up? Who has disappeared?

To do this week: Reach out to one person you have not heard from.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What is one decision that is now yours alone?

To do this week: Make that decision, or set a date to make it.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: Write about the place where the person is buried or remembered, or the place you think of them.

To do this week: Visit it, or plan when you will.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What song, smell, or sound brings the person back?

To do this week: Play the song, or find the smell, on purpose this week.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

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Read back over the last four weeks. What has been hardest?

What, or who, has helped?

How you have been sleeping and eating, and how your body feels

Is there anyone you want to tell how you are doing? Who, and when?

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What has been easier than you expected?

To do this week: Make a plan for one evening this week, so it is not empty.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What part of the day is lonely now?

To do this week: Ask someone to call you at that time, once this week.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What did the person worry about? Is any of it still yours to carry?

To do this week: Put one worry down on paper, and next to it, who could help with it.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: Write about the person when they were young, as you knew them or heard about them.

To do this week: Ask a relative for a story you have never heard.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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Looking Back

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What, or who, has helped?

How you have been sleeping and eating, and how your body feels

Is there anyone you want to tell how you are doing? Who, and when?

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What has changed in how you see yourself?

To do this week: Do one thing you used to do before the illness or the death.

A Week, continued

More room to write

[illegible]

One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: Is there anything you need to forgive, in them or in yourself?

To do this week: Write it down, and decide what to do with the page.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What are you looking forward to, even slightly?

To do this week: Put it on a calendar.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What is still hard to say out loud?

To do this week: Say it to one person, or to the page.

A Week, continued

More room to write

[illegible]

One thing that helped this week, even a small one

Looking Back

Date _____

Read back over the last four weeks. What has been hardest?

What, or who, has helped?

How you have been sleeping and eating, and how your body feels

Is there anyone you want to tell how you are doing? Who, and when?

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What do you want the children in the family to know about the person?

To do this week: Write one story for them.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What has the house, or your room, been like?

To do this week: Change one small thing in it, or leave it, and write why.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: Write about a holiday or a birthday since the death.

To do this week: Plan the next one, with one thing kept and one thing changed.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What did the two of you plan to do that you never did?

To do this week: Decide whether to do one of those things yourself.

A Week, continued

More room to write

[illegible]

One thing that helped this week, even a small one

Looking Back

Date _____

Read back over the last four weeks. What has been hardest?

What, or who, has helped?

How you have been sleeping and eating, and how your body feels

Is there anyone you want to tell how you are doing? Who, and when?

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What would the person say about how you are doing?

To do this week: Do one thing they would have told you to do.

A Week, continued

More room to write

[illegible]

One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: Who else is grieving this person? How are they?

To do this week: Check on one of them.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What has helped you sleep, or kept you awake?

To do this week: Tell your doctor if sleep has been hard for weeks.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What part of your life has kept going without them?

To do this week: Spend time on it this week.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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What, or who, has helped?

How you have been sleeping and eating, and how your body feels

Is there anyone you want to tell how you are doing? Who, and when?

A Week

Date I started this page _____

**To write about: Write about the person's hands at work:
cooking, fixing, writing, holding.**

**To do this week: Use something they made, or make something
yourself.**

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What did you learn about yourself in the months of illness or after the death?

To do this week: Tell someone one thing you are proud of from that time.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What are you still waiting to feel, or to stop feeling?

To do this week: Read back over a few weeks of this journal.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: Which of their things are you keeping, and why those?

To do this week: Give one thing to someone who will treasure it, if you are ready.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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Read back over the last four weeks. What has been hardest?

What, or who, has helped?

How you have been sleeping and eating, and how your body feels

Is there anyone you want to tell how you are doing? Who, and when?

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What has faith, or the lack of it, meant this year?

To do this week: Spend an hour in a place that settles you.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: Write about a day this month when you did not think of the loss for a while.

To do this week: Notice that day without judging it.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What would you tell someone whose loss is newer than yours?

To do this week: Write it as a note, and give it to someone if you know who needs it.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: How do you want to mark the first anniversary?

To do this week: Tell the people you want there.

A Week, continued

More room to write

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One thing that helped this week, even a small one

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What, or who, has helped?

How you have been sleeping and eating, and how your body feels

Is there anyone you want to tell how you are doing? Who, and when?

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What are you carrying forward from the person into your own life?

To do this week: Do one thing this week that they would recognize as theirs.

A Week, continued

More room to write

[illegible]

One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What has this year asked of you?

To do this week: Rest for one full afternoon.

A Week, continued

More room to write

[illegible]

One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: Write to the person about the year.

To do this week: Read it aloud, alone or with someone.

A Week, continued

More room to write

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

One thing that helped this week, even a small one

A Week

Date I started this page _____

To write about: What do you want the next year to hold?

To do this week: Write one hope in Section 5.

A Week, continued

More room to write

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

One thing that helped this week, even a small one

Looking Back

Date _____

Read back over the last four weeks. What has been hardest?

What, or who, has helped?

How you have been sleeping and eating, and how your body feels

Is there anyone you want to tell how you are doing? Who, and when?

5. After the First Year

The end of this journal is not a deadline. Many people keep writing. If you want to, start a notebook, or print more pages from aldercreekeditions.com.

What I know now that I did not know a year ago

What I want to keep doing

A hope for the next year

Sources

Every source used in this book is listed here once, under the organization or author that published it, with the sections that use it. A list that matches each fact to its source is free at aldercreekeditions.com. Websites were checked in October 2026. Pages move and change, so search for the title if a web address no longer works.

U.S. Administration for Community Living and its programs

Eldercare Locator, U.S. Administration for Community Living. “About.” eldercare.acl.gov/Public/About/Index.aspx Used in Where to Get Help.

Eldercare Locator, U.S. Administration for Community Living. “Contact Information.” eldercare.acl.gov/Public/About/Contact_Info/Index.aspx Used in Where to Get Help.

Code of Federal Regulations

Code of Federal Regulations. “42 CFR 418.64, Condition of participation: Core services,” paragraph (d)(1), bereavement counseling. law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/42/418.64 Used in Section 1; Where to Get Help.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (988)

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. “Get Help.” 988lifeline.org/get-help Used in Section 1; Where to Get Help.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.
“Crisis Help.” Updated June 3, 2026. [samhsa.gov/find-support/
in-crisis](https://samhsa.gov/find-support/in-crisis) Used in Section 1; Where to Get Help.

Where to Get Help

In an emergency, call 911. The people who answer the other lines can tell you what is available where you live.

Emergency

911

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

Call or text 988, any hour, or chat at 988lifeline.org. For anyone in distress, or worried about someone who is.

Eldercare Locator

1-800-677-1116, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Eastern, or eldercare.acl.gov. A public service of the U.S. Administration on Aging that connects older adults and caregivers with local help anywhere in the country.

Bereavement support from a hospice

If the person who died was on hospice, a hospice that takes Medicare must make bereavement services available to the family for up to a year after the death. Call the hospice and ask what it offers.

If you need more than a journal

If grief makes it hard to get through most days for a long time, or you cannot take care of yourself or the people who depend on you, tell your doctor, or ask for a counselor who works with grief.

After a death: who to tell

Book 2 in this series, Who to Contact, lists the offices to tell after a death, such as Social Security and the VA. It is free at aldercreekeditions.com.

My Own Numbers

The Sitting Room Series

Guides, workbooks, and journals for older adults and the families around them. More titles are on the way. The current list is at aldercreekeditions.com.

1. *When More Help Is Needed* Available

A Guide for You and Your Family

2. *Who to Contact* Available

Free Help for Older Adults and Families

3. *Emergency Information Sheet* Free printable

One Page by the Phone, and the Details Behind It

4. *Before It's Urgent* Free printable

A Workbook for Papers, Decisions, and Conversations

5. *Things I Want You to Know* Free printable

A Journal of Stories, Wishes, and Words for Your Family

6. *While You Can Still Decide* Forthcoming

After a Diagnosis of Memory Loss

7. *Arranging Care at Home* Free printable

A Workbook for Arranging Care in the Home

8. *Care Partner's Log* Free printable

A Daily Record for the Person Giving Care

9. *Grieving Someone Who Is Still Here* Forthcoming

When Someone You Love Has Progressive Memory Loss

10. *Visit Journal* Free printable

A Shared Record for Everyone Who Visits

11. *Choosing a Place to Live* Free printable

A Workbook for Comparing Senior Living and Care

12. *The Move and the First Months* Forthcoming

For Families and the Person Moving

13. *Before the Last Weeks* Forthcoming

When Treatment Stops Working, for You and Your Family

14. *After a Death* Forthcoming

The First Year, for You and the People Around You

15. *First-Year Grief Journal* This book

Undated Pages for the Year After a Death

Also by Stephen Deason

The Operational Reliability Series

The Weakest Link

A Story About the Systems We Never See

By Stephen Deason

A family health care crisis unfolds through a chain of reasonable decisions and unowned handoffs. The story is followed by an interpretation and practical resource guide for recognizing where information gets compressed, what families can ask, and how care can slip through the gaps.

The Invisible Architecture

A Story About Senior Care as a System

By Stephen Deason

A quieter story about the work families carry after an acute crisis has passed. The book examines changing care needs, family coordination, and the practical details that must move between providers, insurers, and home.

The Family Integrator's Handbook

By Stephen Deason

A practical workbook for the person who has become the place where a family's appointments, documents, medications, and next handoff collect. It includes care-team questions, transition checklists, planning pages, and a section for the person receiving care.

The Mile Marker Library

Recovery books from Alder Creek Editions, free to download at aldercreekeditions.com.

Don't Panic: The First Hours After You Stop

What to Do When You Stop Drinking or Using

By Stephen Deason

A practical guide to urgent safety questions after stopping alcohol or other drugs, including withdrawal danger signs, overdose risk, naloxone, and places to find help.

One Day at a Time, Written Down

A 90-Day Gratitude Journal for Adults in Recovery

By Stephen Deason with Melissa Deason

A guided daily journal with morning and evening pages, weekly reviews, a return-to-use plan, and support-group directories.

One Day at a Time, Written Down: Christian Edition

A 90-Day Gratitude Journal for Christians in Recovery

By Stephen Deason with Melissa Deason

A Christian edition of the guided daily journal, using the King James Version.

Free Help Directory

Meetings, Helplines, and Low-Cost Care

By Stephen Deason

A practical directory of recovery meetings, helplines, low-cost treatment and health care, naloxone, food, housing, legal help, and work support.

Tools You Can Use on Your Own

A Guide to Self-Directed Recovery

By Stephen Deason with Melissa Deason

A practical guide to craving skills, daily basics, trigger mapping, written planning, and recognizing when professional care is needed.

Cravings and Hard Hours Workbook

A Companion to Tools You Can Use on Your Own

By Stephen Deason and Melissa Deason

A workbook with fill-in exercises, a daily urge log, and a written plan for difficult times and places.

Medications for Addiction, Explained

What They Are, How to Ask, and How to Pay

By Stephen Deason and Melissa Deason

A practical peer guide to medications for opioid and alcohol use disorders, how to ask for care, and ways to find support without insurance.

Money in Early Recovery

Budgets, Debts, Benefits, and Credit

By Stephen Deason

A practical guide to tracking money, building a weekly budget, addressing debt and credit, understanding benefits, and keeping useful records.

More at aldercreekeditions.com.

About the Author

Stephen Deason has worked in health care for roughly four decades. He began volunteering in a hospital at fifteen and took his first paid hospital job as an orderly at sixteen, working in hospitals and nursing homes while putting himself through college. He later spent more than twenty years building and running systems for hospitals, insurers, and state Medicaid programs before returning to direct care through healthcare staffing, home care, and skilled nursing.

Today, he runs OPA Home Care and Skilled Nursing, which he founded, and serves as an Administrator of a licensed Private Home Care Provider in Georgia, a health care facility that delivers care in patients' homes. His home care operations have recruited, hired, and managed caregiving staff for hundreds of families. He writes The Sitting Room Series from that work and from a lifetime spent around the care of older and vulnerable people.

Deason has spent 31 years running health care and technology organizations. He also founded OPA People, The OPA RASA Group, and The OPA RASA Foundation. The Foundation has helped place hundreds of people from disadvantaged backgrounds into careers.

He earned a mathematics degree from the University of Alabama at Birmingham, an MBA and an MSc in Accounting from Emory University, and completed doctoral coursework in business at Emory, where he was a Sheth Fellow. He also studied for the ScM

in health care administration at Johns Hopkins. His research on accounting and Ponzi schemes was published in Accounting Horizons and covered by Forbes. He writes at StephenDeason.com.