

FORGET-ME-NOT SPOTLIGHT

Review by Shannon Nosbisch, co-founder of Effingham Area Alzheimer's Awareness

Healing Your Grieving Heart When Someone You Care About Has Alzheimer's 100 Practical Ideas for families, Friends, and Caregivers

By Alan D. Wolfelt, PH.D. and Kirby J. Duvall, M.D.

The diagnosis of Alzheimer's of your loved one was not what you were expecting. Your loved one's life is forever changed and your life is altered also. Whether you are family, a friend or a caregiver, there are now things you need to adjust in your life. The authors hope that this book can be a guide to the emotional and stressful journey of helping someone you love with Alzheimer's. By focusing on the abilities your loved one still has, you can have a meaningful relationship and share joy and love. As the disease progresses in your loved one, they experience loss – loss of memory, difficulty performing everyday tasks, language problems, disorientation, and changing mood and behaviors. You may experience loss, too – loss of a close, personal relationship, loss of ability to enjoy the same things, and role reversal. As you experience these losses, you will grieve. You will need to mourn this loss, because, while the person is physically here, they will become more emotionally, cognitively, spiritually and socially absent. This book will help you acknowledge your feelings and ways to express what you feel. This book is divided into four sections:

*Acknowledge your new reality – you will find tips to come to terms with the diagnosis and help yourself deal with the new reality you are in.

*Allow Yourself to Mourn – suggestions on getting in touch with the feelings you are having. Mourning is allowing the pain you are feeling to flow outward.

*Join Your Loved One's New World – ideas for focusing on the abilities that your loved one still has.

*Live with Meaning and Purpose – ways to move forward with a sense of meaning and hope. Embracing what matters to you and living life as fully as possible.

The last paragraph says it all. It states “Finally, invite hope into your journey through Alzheimer's. No, there is no cure on the horizon for this devastating disease. But, if you mourn your losses and move towards a life of meaning and purpose, your remaining days with your loved one can still be full of special moments, new memories, and even fulfillment in your relationship. Remember that your loved one still loves you. Love is not a function of the brain. It cannot be eliminated by a brain disease. Faulty chemicals and circuits in the brain cannot affect love. Love is in our hearts and in our souls. Love endures.”

This book is available at the Effingham Public Library, Flora Public Library, Evans Public Library, Newton Public Library, Greenup Township Public Library and the Mattoon Public Library in the Forget-Me-Not Resource Center. If you do not have a library card, ask at the main desk how you can check it out.

