

"A beautifully written account by a physician son describing his father's decline from *Alzheimer's*, *Memory Lessons* is a wise and lasting treatise about sickness and health, life and death, and the redeeming power of love."

—Abraham Verghese, author of *My Own Country* and *The Tennis Partner*

MEMORY



LESSONS

A Doctor's Story

JERALD WINAKUR

Jerald Winakur

Memory Lessons: A Doctor's Story



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The story to become a doctor, and being truly a son. Jerald Winakur is normally a doctor who cares for, and about, the elderly. Dedicated and compassionate, he's a surrogate son to many. Yet, all his years of program helping patients and their families adapt to the difficulties of aging didn't prepare him for getting father to his own dad, who experienced become as needy as any kid. We all want to perform the right point for our parents, but few of us know very well what that right matter is. Winakur writes about what it's like to be medical counselor to countless patients, while disclosing his personal heartbreak at viewing his 86-year-old father descend into disability and dementia, his mom at his part. In both these roles--highly competent professional and loving son--he finds he's hard pressed to improve a course that devastates his dad and tears at his family members. A health care provider who does his best to listen cautiously to each patient in turn, who efforts to confront every problem with, as he says, "an acceptable fund of knowledge, a modicum of good sense, and a large dosage of honesty," Dr. But he will what he can. Winakur knows that there surely is much we can do by loving and hearing. We all seek out answers; In Memory space Lessons--a tender and provocative book--Dr. Who'll look after him--and how? These are urgent questions, and they're faced head-on in Memory Lessons with unflinching honesty, hope, and, most importantly, love. Faced with caring for a growing ocean of elders, Dr. Winakur displays on his thirty years in the medical profession to consider the personal and immediate questions asked by families every day: What are we going to do with Dad?



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The Unsure Expert Winakur reaches his most effective when he weaves collectively stories of his dad, his own medical practice while a gerontologist, and the ethical dilemmas that rise with the treatment of the debilitated and the great elderly. It's really difficult how living beyond our meaningful lives affects so many. Memory Lessons is an eye-opener and a must-read for all those with elderly parents. Dr. Winakur isn't only a dedicated doctor who cares about and takes care of his patients, he is also a really good writer, offering us insights about finding old and dealing with our elderly parents because they journey into old age with its medical trials and challenges. Exactly what will happen when he can no longer be cared for at home? Exactly what will happen if his mind gives way therefore severely that he no longer remembers anyone, or that he no more responds in any way? His family weathered the fantastic Depression with difficulty, and he offered five years in the Army Surroundings Corps during WWII, and came back to the family business after the battle. Winakur recalls the situations of Karen Quinlan, Nancy Cruzan and Terry Schiavo--and their outcomes, a couple of which amazed me. And it addresses most of the complications we are facing in our healthcare system today, and displays us the need for immediate reform. "Clearly, there is no easy answer to these and additional difficult questions about older people. A "must read" for every American! Dr. Both of these parts are intertwined through-out the book, like a climbing rose vine covered around a wrought iron fence, each assisting and enhancing the other. He finds nightsitters to alleviate his exhausted mother--but his dad hates to keep these things in the house, and they seldom last. A long-term care facility is a possibility, but neither of his parents wants that. Passages are challenging to read -- particularly when the author's father, sinking into dementia, is verbally abusive to his wife -- but are illuminating. The writer has years of encounter with the problems now faced by his own family members. I am so pleased with him not only for his great works as a health care provider which I did not know about until I browse his publication, but because he's my outdated friend and an excellent person. Winakur walks us through an array of stories about the elderly. Many are interesting, and I quickly came to trust him. I trust his knowledge and devotion, and in addition trust him when he's unsure. When you go through his book, you will trust me. It includes the territory, I believe, and Winakur makes a difficult job seem totally engaging. Must read!! Great story about Dr. A must read! Winakur's journey as a health care provider and son. Eloquent and thoughtful. When the son of an Alzheimer's patient is a health care provider focusing on geriatric medicine, you'd think things would go efficiently. All this comes into play when he tries to figure out how to proceed about his father's worsening dementia. His publication is full of examples drawn from his personal encounters with his patients and also his suffering his dad as his father's dementia progressed. It really is inevitable that anyone reading this wonderful book will have an "ah second." That is when you say, yes that's happening at this time to my dad or my aunt or my grandmother. And now I will let you know the rest of the tale. Jerry Winakur, as I understand him, and I had been high school classmates back the 1960's. He knows the technology and the literature--but when his father's stress and anxiety can only be controlled through medicines that stun the individual and make him wobbly, who knows of the best path? That's what I sensed frequently when caring for my own father: unsure. It got courage to create this book. I had not been disappointed. Allan Kaufman Must buy for folks with aging parents. I shed my parents when I was in my own 20s. I was having trouble understanding all of the troubles my wife was having with her parents (both in their late 80s) as I didn't need to know it. This book actually helped me related to the trials folks have with maturing parents. This story can bring comfort to those who find themselves caregivers. As a geriatric physician who has treated a large number of the "old aged"--patients over 85--Winakur may be expected to possess a clearer watch than the majority of us on such queries of care. But one of the engaging areas of this book is how unsure the author is with regards to his own dad, who is continuing to grow cantankerous and sharp-tongued. Winakur's book is crucial. Read for each American. It is certainly a separate and caring tale of a devoted doctor. He reminds us that in 1975, when he was completing his residency in inner medicine, the AMA "took the position that the withdrawal of a

respirator from an individual who needed one was a kind of euthanasia, tantamount to murder. Many thanks so much for taking part in the national discussion board that was on c-span, and for your reserve. You are certainly an motivation to us all, and also have been a big help most of us who are going through the same difficulties with loved ones! Beautiful Memoir This book is beautifully written by an extremely experienced tenderhearted doctor. I possibly could not put it down. It made me laugh, cry and provided great information. A geriatric expert writes about his father's dementia and medical care system That is both a memoir and memorial of Winakur's father and his decline into dementia, and a memoir of the author's medical career. Winakur makes decisions, but can never be certain he's doing the right factor. In the biographical section we learn of Jerald Winakur's father, who was the boy of Jewish immigrants. His dad died when he was 7 years outdated, and at 16 he and his old sister worked well to rebuild the family's pawnshop business to support their mom and ten siblings. Or if the only way to maintain him alive has been a respirator and a feeding tube? He kept it operating successfully for a long time, until, when he was in his fifties, it was wantonly destroyed in the Baltimore Riot of 1968 (this is his second shop, the first had been taken by the city in an act of eminent domain, ironically, taking his store for the new area of a medical school). Having lost everything, and too depressed to attempt to rebuilt another business, he takes solace in his art, a talent he previously set aside to support his family members, and in his bird watching. Living too long interesting and moving thoughts on planning for aging procedure both to get oneself and types parents. This thoughtful publication reminds us that dementia hits every family members hard, and there is much we still have no idea about how best to address it. Part memoir, part treatise on how modern medicine is practiced, Memory Lessons is certainly eloquent, thoughtful and beautifully created. The bottom line is that being truly a doctor doesn't mean that decisions come quickly. I bought 3 copies, one for myself and 2 to provide as gifts. The novel



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