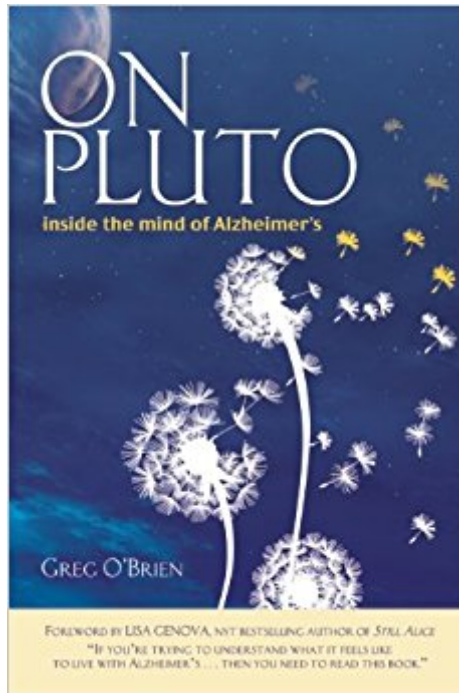




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# On Pluto: Inside The Mind Of Alzheimer's



## Synopsis

This is a book about living with Alzheimer's, not dying with it. It is a book about hope, faith, and humor—a prescription far more powerful than the conventional medication available today to fight this disease. Alzheimer's is the sixth leading cause of death in the US—and the only one of these diseases on the rise. More than 5 million Americans have been diagnosed with Alzheimer's or a related dementia; about 35 million people worldwide. Greg O'Brien, an award-winning investigative reporter, has been diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer's and is one of those faceless numbers. Acting on long-term memory and skill coupled with well-developed journalistic grit, O'Brien decided to tackle the disease and his imminent decline by writing frankly about the journey. O'Brien is a master storyteller. His story is naked, wrenching, and soul searching for a generation and their loved ones about to cross the threshold of this death in slow motion. *On Pluto: Inside the Mind of Alzheimer's* is a trail-blazing roadmap for a generation—both a how-to for fighting a disease, and a how-not-to give up!

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"The book is excellent! It's sad, it's beautifully written, it's humorous at times—really a good read for anyone heading down this path, or knowing someone who is going down this path." —Anthony Everett, *Ch.5 Chronicle*. "Told with extraordinary vulnerability, grace, humor, and profound insight, *On Pluto* is an intimate look inside the mind of Greg O'Brien, a journalist diagnosed with young onset Alzheimer's. But the real gem of *On Pluto* lies in its unflinching look inside Greg's heart. If

youâ™re trying to understand what it feels like to live with Alzheimerâ™s, and you are because youâ™re reading these words, then you need to read this book." --Lisa Genova, New York Times bestselling author of *Still Alice*. In *On Pluto*, Greg O'Brien has given us a priceless gift: an honest, funny, heartbreaking, and powerfully poignant look into the world of an Alzheimer's sufferer, written by a man who suffers from it himself. Greg O'Brien is a brilliant observer and superb writer, and he is at the top of his game in this book. It's as if he has willingly dropped himself into a mental tornado so that he can tell us what it looks like from inside. You have never read a book quite like it, and probably never will again.â• -- William Martin, New York Times Bestselling author of *Cape Cod*, *Back Bay*, and *The Lincoln Letter* âœ Greg Oâ™Brien writes with the consummate knowledge of a guide and the courage of a pioneer. In this important and transcendent book he serves both roles as he folds back the veils of fear and traverses the treacherous territory of early-onset Alzheimerâ™s. *ON Pluto: Inside the Mind of Alzheimerâ™s* glows with honesty, intelligence and compassion and, given the subject, is a surprisingly spirit-renewing book.â• --Anne D. LeClaire, author of bestselling *Listening Below The Noise*, *Leaving Eden*, and *The Lavender Hour* âœ Never before have we been offered such a clear understanding of how Alzheimer's disease effects day-to-day perceptions. Greg O'Brien's first-hand account of his own disease process will force us all to rethink the way we deliver care, and is a must addition to the libraries of all professional and family caregivers.â• âœ "Suzanne Faith, RN psych, Clinical Director, Hope Dementia & Alzheimer's Services âœ *On Pluto: Inside the Mind of Alzheimerâ™s* is destined to become a vital resource that Alzheimerâ™s organizations and senior centers across the country will turn to in assisting those with Alzheimerâ™s and other forms of dementia. Greg Oâ™Brienâ™s personal battle against Alzheimerâ™s is an everymanâ™s fight; he is the quintessence of the lead character in the epic New York Times bestselling Alzheimerâ™s novel, *Still Alice*. Oâ™Brien, through faith, humor and journalistic grit, is able, like the master artist, to paint a compelling, naked work picture of this progressive, chronic disease for which there is no cure, and a sickness that will swamp a generation. This is not a misery memoir; Oâ™Brien bluntly offers the Baby Boomers and generations to come a riveting guide in how to live with Alzheimerâ™s, not accede to it.â• âœ "Alisa M. Galazzi, co-founder of Dementia Care Academy, former Executive Director, Alzheimerâ™s Services of Cape & Islands

Greg Oâ™Brien has more than 35 years of newspaper and magazine experience as a writer, editor, investigative reporter, and publisher. Over the years, he has contributed to, among other publications, the Associated Press, UPI, USA Today, Arizona Republic, Boston Herald American, Boston Metro, New York Metro, Philadelphia Metro, Providence Journal, Cape Cod Times, Boston

Irish Reporter, and Boston Magazine, where he was senior writer. He is former editor and publisher of the Cape Codder and Register newspapers, former editor of Cape Cod Life, and was a founding managing director of Community Newspaper Company in Boston. He is the editor/author of several books, has published 17 books by other writers through his publishing affiliate Codfish Press, has written/produced documentaries, and has been a scriptwriter. Oâ™Brien is the editor and president of Stony Brook Group located on Cape Cod in Brewster, MA, through which he runs local, regional, and national political and corporate communication strategy campaigns. He and his wife Mary Catherine have three children: Brendan, Colleen, and Conor. Lisa Genova, PhD, is the New York Times best-selling author of Still Alice, Left Neglected, and Still Anthony.

This is a book I was eagerly reading, expecting a really insightful view inside the mind of a person who was diagnosed with early onset Alzheimer's. In fact, the book is a mixture of reminiscences on a long journalism career and descriptions of the experience of Alzheimer's from the inside. I found the former to be boring, and the latter fascinating. I ended up skimming through the reminiscences and then picking up reading again when the author got back to Alzheimer's. Speaking specifically about the Alzheimer's material, the book is a very frank and insightful look at what it feels like to be in the early stages of Alzheimer's. The author describes vividly times when he couldn't do various activities of daily life, and how it felt to him. Personally, I have never read a description like this from the inside-- it gives me a lot of sympathy for people going through this scary disease. It's actually quite amazing that he was able to write this book at all-- a feat of will and determination. Something like a message from the future for all of us baby boomers who have an excellent chance of developing Alzheimer's ourselves. Fascinating and scary!

I work in a Dementia facility, and like to learn as much as I can about this terrible disease. This book is fantastic, as it tells what it is like to experience dementia from an 'insider's' perspective. Greg O'Brien is a journalist who has written this book as the disease is gradually affecting him. It is heartbreaking and yet so important to understand what it feels like to experience the gradual decline of dementia. Greg uses many coping skills and strategies to "outrun" the disease. Actually, running and exercise are two of his many ways of dealing. He talks of going to Pluto as what happens when the disease seems to flood his mind. He goes away to Pluto in his mind, because it seems easier than staying with reality. Pluto is a pleasant place for him. It seems natural and easy. Then he "comes back from Pluto". But as he states "One day I will not come back from Pluto, and I want my family to know where I am." That made me cry. Very good read.

For those who criticize the amount of personal reflection in this book and yearn for more "Alzheimer's stuff," I would commend the flagship 36 Hour Day. But--for what Greg O'Brien tackles, this is top-notch material. The whole purpose of this book, I believe, is for the reader to come to know and love Greg and his family--and to find their struggles heart-breaking and unacceptable. It is my own husband's struggle, and Greg gives words to what my husband often cannot voice. Frankly, the Resources section in the back is so good, it's worth the price of the book.

I got this book out of some curiosity and hoping for some stratagems for living with Alzheimer's, which I do not have, but am mindful of preventing. I was a bit disappointed that the vast majority of it is the author's personal stories, which, though touching, don't provide much in the way of techniques to extrapolate. If anything, though, they do evoke compassion and a sense of what the author is feeling and going through. I, personally, found the book too religious for my tastes, but seeing that it is more of a memoir, and not preaching -at- the reader, I wasn't offended by it, and it was a decent read. I certainly can feel the author's plight for understanding and empathy, though I think it falls short of being a practical work. That said, you have to admire Greg for being determined and compassionate in the face of the disease, after already being diagnosed with cancer. Bottom line is, you don't read this book to gain strategies, or a comprehensive understanding of what to do when you or a loved one has Alzheimer's; you read this book to have a deeper sense of empathy and try to relate to someone with the disease. I would definitely recommend this book for some insight into needs and feelings of those with Alzheimer's. I also think that anyone who enjoys biographies might take a liking to Greg's story.

Greg O'Brien is a talented journalist who has written several books as well and hundreds of articles for newspapers and magazines over the last 40 years. But this is his best work. It chronicles his ten-year battle against Alzheimer's, a war he is still valiantly fighting for himself and for the whole baby boomer generation, many of whom may fall victim to this evil thief of the mind. "On Pluto" is an emotional and powerful account of the disease from a reporter embedded inside the mind of an Alzheimer's victim. I highly recommend it.

Ever wonder what you'd do if you started to notice the signs of Alzheimer's creeping into your head? Or if it was up to you to help a loved one travel down that dark path? This gripping, fun, heartbreaking and, ultimately, uplifting book puts you directly inside the interesting (and likeable)

mind of author Greg O'Brien as it comes to terms with an excruciating and never-ending battle. O'Brien holds nothing back -- not in his fight with Alzheimer's or his revealing candor about his very own fears, doubts, and, most important, strategies and methods to hold and win ground. Because he's basically a nosy reporter (and a very good one), O'Brien asks the questions we all want answers to -- and then turns his attention to the inner workings and thoughts of his own mind. He digs back into his family history and relationships to understand the roots and early signs of his Alzheimer's. Don't be put off by the tough subject, because this book has plenty of laughs and is a great read. O'Brien is a wonderful writer, and you will enjoy his stories and his family (because they, too, are a big part of dealing with this disease). I can't recommend this book more highly. When you finish reading 'On Pluto,' you will let out a deep breath, shake your head, and thank Greg O'Brien for an amazing gift.

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