

Starting Your Caregiver Journal

Journaling is writing down your thoughts and feelings. As a caregiver or care partner to someone with kidney disease, you dedicate time to your loved one's health. Journaling offers you time to focus on your well-being. It lets you collect your thoughts in a unique way.

Write what you feel and do not worry about spelling. Write as much or as little as you want. Journaling can be three sentences, or three words. It is your choice. A journal is just for you.

All you need is the courage to begin.

When You Are Ready to Begin Journaling

- ✓ Download the pre-created journal template.
 - Print the template or download it on your device to journal electronically.

OR

- ✓ Start journaling with a notebook and create your own flow for journaling.
 - Use the prompts below to help get you started.
 - Record details such as time, location, who you were with, and what you were feeling. Journaling is like a record of your story. The details will help with the memories.

Encourage your loved one to try journaling, too. Patient templates are also available.



A Few Prompts to Help You Get Started

Right now, I feel or I want . . .	Today, I plan to . . .
If I could talk to others whose loved ones were just diagnosed with kidney disease, I would say . . .	As I think back on how I felt just before my loved one started dialysis, I remember feeling . . .
If I could go back and talk to myself when my loved one first started dialysis, I would say . . .	When I think back to when we made an important decision about treatment, I think we considered the most important thing was . . .
If my heart could talk, it would say . . .	Quality of life means this to me . . .
This gives me strength to keep going when things are tough . . .	Thinking back on the past five years, I think my life has been impacted by kidney disease by . . .
As I reflect on my journey as a care partner, I am most proud of . . .	The most important life lessons I have learned on my kidney caregiver journey are . . .
The one moment in my loved one's kidney treatment journey I will never forget is . . .	When it comes to kidney treatment for my loved one, I am most grateful for . . .
My life experiences have affected the way my loved one and I approach kidney treatments by . . .	If I were to describe what being a care partner feels like in two sentences, I would say . . .
As I think back on my journey as a care partner, I see that I focused mostly on . . .	Outside of my role as a care partner I am . . .
I am most proud of overcoming . . .	When I look in the mirror, I see . . .

For more information visit www.esrdncc.org/patients. Click on *Mental Health/Well-Being*.



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