

"No Storm Lasts Forever"

/ A father's journey by Dr. Terry A. Gordon /

>> "It is not often that something is placed before us that defines in crystal clear fashion, our purpose," says Terry Gordon, a retired cardiologist and author of the book, "No Storm Lasts Forever."

>> For Gordon, that moment came when a 15-year-old Brunswick High School football player died of sudden cardiac arrest, and the people who tried so desperately to revive him didn't have the means to do so. Gordon says if an automated external defibrillator, or AED, had been available that night, Josh Miller might still be alive today.

"At the time of Josh's death, I was the president of our local American Heart Association, and I vowed this would never happen again in our community," he says. "We ultimately raised the funds to place AEDs in all of our middle and high schools, becoming the first county of its size in the nation to do so."

For his efforts, Gordon was named the American Heart Association's National Physician of the Year in 2002. His initiatives convinced Ohio legislators to pass the State of Ohio School AED Initiative, a \$5 million grant that placed nearly 5,000 AEDs in schools throughout Ohio and trained five individuals in each school in CPR and the use of AEDs. To date, at least 15 lives have been saved as a result of his initiative, and a national bill to place AEDs in every school in our country is currently awaiting passage in the Senate.

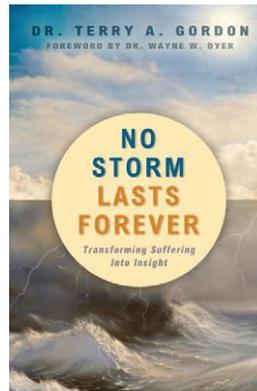
>> In June 2009, Gordon's own life was thrust into turmoil when his son Tyler was paralyzed in a near-fatal car accident. Though this tragedy weighed heavily on Gordon and the rest of his family, through months of reflection and healing, he ultimately came to a point of acceptance and even enlightenment.

In his book, "No Storm Lasts Forever," Gordon describes his family's struggle to piece their lives back together after the accident and the revelations he made along the way.

"Even in the midst of profound sadness, if you allow yourself to look around, you can focus on beauty that lies right before your eyes," he says. "It's there right alongside the suffering."

Part of Gordon's struggle throughout the book and in his personal life was answering key questions: Why do bad things happen to us? Why must we suffer? What purpose do these things serve?

"It would take quite some time for me to sift through the quagmire in



order to uncover them," he says. "I learned that all the pain and turmoil of this existence, those things that cause us to suffer, are beautifully balanced and coupled with those things that bring us pleasure."

Instead of seeking counseling after his son's accident, Gordon used writing as his own form of therapy. Putting his thoughts on paper drew out the pain he couldn't talk about in person and ultimately helped to relieve it.

"It provided me with incredible clarity in the midst of the chaos

I was experiencing," he says. "Over the course of the 2-1/2 years it took me to complete my manuscript, I found that the journal imparted to me an unencumbered view of the whole process, revealing the progress I had made along this, at times, dreadful path."

As a final reflection on his work, Gordon cites an ancient text of Judaism called the Kabbalah, which reads, "The falls of our life provide us with the energy to propel ourselves to a much higher level."

"It's the *falls* of our life, the difficulties we face that can be a source of strength that enable us to rise above adversity," he says. "I grew along the way — and for that, I am profoundly grateful."

/ *Writer Leighann McGivern is a senior at KSU working on her bachelor's in journalism.*

Comments?

E-mail them to managing editor Abby Cymerman at acymerman@bakermediagroup.com