

WHEN ILLNESS CHANGES THE FUTURE

A faith-based guide for an
unexpected medical season

The life you planned may have
changed.

Your purpose is not over.

*"Fear thou not; for I am with thee; be not dismayed; for I am thy God:
I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee
with the right hand of my righteousness."*

ISAIAH 41:10 KJV

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Kingdom Growth



When One Appointment Changes Everything

An illness can divide life into before and after. A diagnosis, hospitalization, new limitation, uncertain test result, or disability can alter routines, relationships, work, finances, and plans all at once.

Our family knows how quickly a medical crisis can change what the future appears to hold. When Tim became critically ill, I learned that you can be praying with faith, listening to doctors, making decisions, and grieving the life you expected, all in the same day.

This guide is for the woman whose own health has changed and for the woman walking beside someone she loves. It is not a medical treatment plan. It is a place to slow down, name the impact, gather support, protect your capacity, and choose one faithful step.

You do not need to understand the entire medical story today. You need clear information, wise care, honest prayer, and enough grace for this day.

You are allowed to ask questions, request plain language, receive help, and take time to understand what comes next.

With faith,

Angela Conner Foland

Illness can change the plan without erasing your worth or purpose.

THIS GUIDE IS FOR YOU IF...

- your own diagnosis or symptoms changed daily life;
- someone you love entered a serious medical season;
- tests, treatment, recovery, or prognosis remain uncertain;
- work, family roles, finances, or future plans changed;
- fear makes it hard to focus on what is known today.

Begin With What Is Known Today

SEPARATE FACTS, QUESTIONS, AND FEARS

"What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee."

PSALM 56:3 KJV

Medical uncertainty can make the mind jump from one unanswered question to the worst possible outcome. Before trying to solve the future, organize what is true today and what still needs clarification.

1 RECEIVE THE FACTS

Write down the diagnosis or working diagnosis, confirmed findings, instructions, and who provided the information. Keep copies when available.

2 CAPTURE THE CONVERSATION

With permission, record or transcribe important conversations and request written instructions. Keep questions, summaries, and files together in one secure place.

3 NOTICE THE IMPACT

Name how this season affects sleep, energy, mobility, work, caregiving, finances, relationships, and the ability to plan.

4 ACT ON URGENT INSTRUCTIONS

Follow the care team's guidance about urgent symptoms, emergency care, medicines, restrictions, and scheduled follow-up.

PAUSE AND REFLECT

The fact I understand best is:

The question I most need answered is:

What I am afraid this may mean:

What is not known yet:

WHEN SYMPTOMS MAY BE URGENT

Follow the care team's instructions and seek prompt medical help for severe, new, rapidly worsening, or life-threatening symptoms. In the United States, call 911 for an emergency. Do not delay urgent care to complete this guide.

A TRUTH TO CARRY FORWARD

Uncertainty is not the same as certainty about the worst outcome. Return to what is known, what needs clarification, and what requires action today.



Name What Illness Changed

ACKNOWLEDGE THE VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE LOSSES

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."

1 PETER 5:7 KJV

Illness can affect far more than the body. Naming what changed does not mean you are giving up. It helps you recognize the real weight of this season and bring it honestly into God's presence.

HEALTH + BODY

- ☐ Symptoms, pain, energy, mobility, or sleep
- ☐ Tests, treatment, medicines, or recovery demands
- ☐ Independence, privacy, or ability to plan
- ☐ Confidence in what the body can do

DAILY LIFE

- ☐ Work, school, household, or transportation
- ☐ Parenting, caregiving, or family responsibilities
- ☐ Appointments, paperwork, and financial pressure
- ☐ Routines that once felt dependable

RELATIONSHIPS + IDENTITY

- ☐ Marriage, family, friendship, or social connection
- ☐ Roles that no longer fit in the same way
- ☐ Sense of usefulness, confidence, or belonging
- ☐ The future you expected to have

EMOTIONAL + SPIRITUAL

- ☐ Fear, anger, grief, numbness, or exhaustion
- ☐ Questions about God, prayer, or waiting
- ☐ Isolation or pressure to appear strong
- ☐ Hope and gratitude that coexist with grief

The change affecting me most is:

The loss I have been minimizing is:

The pressure I need to stop pretending I can manage alone:

What I need God to meet me in today:

A TRUTH TO CARRY FORWARD

Grief is not a lack of faith. It is a response to something that matters, and it can be carried honestly in God's presence.



Examine What Remains and What Needs Care

IDENTIFY STRENGTHS, SUPPORT, AND PRESENT CAPACITY

"My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever."

PSALM 73:26 KJV

This is not an exercise in forced positivity. It is an honest inventory of what remains steady, what requires attention, and what support may help you move through this season.

WHAT REMAINS

- ☐ God's presence and unchanging character
- ☐ Personal worth and identity beyond illness
- ☐ Experience, wisdom, values, and abilities
- ☐ Relationships, purpose, and meaningful choices

WHAT NEEDS CARE

- ☐ Physical symptoms, changes in behavior or awareness, safety, medicines, and follow-up
- ☐ Rest, nutrition, movement, and sleep as advised
- ☐ Emotional health and honest communication
- ☐ Work, benefits, finances, or household needs

SUPPORT AVAILABLE

- ☐ Doctors, nurses, pharmacists, or therapists
- ☐ Social workers, case managers, or patient advocates
- ☐ Family, friends, church, or support groups
- ☐ Counseling or other qualified guidance

CAPACITY + BOUNDARIES

- ☐ What I can reasonably do today
- ☐ What needs to be delegated, delayed, or declined
- ☐ How and when I will share medical updates
- ☐ Where I need privacy, rest, or more information

Three things that remain:

One need requiring care:

One person I can invite in:

One boundary that would protect capacity:

One truth about God I need to remember:

A TRUTH TO CARRY FORWARD

Your capacity may have changed. Your value has not. Needing care, support, or a different pace does not make you less faithful or less worthy.



eXplore Questions, Support, and Possibilities

GATHER INFORMATION WITHOUT DEMANDING A COMPLETE FUTURE

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."
JAMES 1:5 KJV

To eXplore is to learn what is known, what still needs answers, and what support may fit your circumstances. It does not require you to predict the outcome or make every future decision today.

1 CLARIFY THE MEDICAL PLAN

Ask what is confirmed, what is still uncertain, what comes next, what each option may involve, and which symptoms require prompt attention.

2 ORGANIZE THE CARE TEAM + RECORDS

Record names, roles, contact information, portal details, appointments, medicines, allergies, recordings, transcripts, and a time-stamped observation journal.

3 ACTIVATE PRACTICAL SUPPORT

Consider transportation, meals, childcare, household help, workplace accommodations, benefits, counseling, and a trusted person for appointments.

4 PROTECT HOPE AND CAPACITY

Use reliable information sources, limit fear-driven searching, schedule rest, choose who receives updates, and preserve small moments of meaning.

MEDICAL-SEASON LIFELINE: RECORD THE CONVERSATION

Do not rely on memory alone when you are under duress.

Before an appointment, bedside discussion, discharge conversation, or important medical call, I strongly recommend downloading and testing an AI recording and transcription app, such as **Otter**. I used Otter during Tim's medical crisis, and it became a lifeline. It gave me a written transcript and complete audio recording that I could revisit later. Under duress, you cannot be expected to remember every diagnosis, instruction, medicine change, and decision.

Record responsibly: Ask everyone present for clear permission before recording; follow the provider or facility's policy and applicable law; review the app's privacy and security settings; and store files securely. AI transcripts can contain errors, so verify medicine names, doses, dates, and care instructions against official records or directly with the care team. If recording is not allowed, bring a trusted note-taker and request written instructions or an after-visit summary. Otter is named from my personal experience; this is not a sponsored recommendation.

1. Download and test

2. Ask permission

3. Label and store securely

4. Verify critical details

QUESTIONS TO TAKE TO THE CARE TEAM

What is confirmed, and what is still being evaluated?

What should we do next, and when?

Which symptoms or changes from the usual baseline need a call, urgent care, or emergency help?

What benefits, risks, or alternatives should we understand?

Could a medicine, dose, timing, interaction, the illness itself, or another factor be contributing to this change?

May I record this conversation, and may we receive the plan in writing?

PROTECT THE MEDICAL PLAN

Do not start, stop, or change a medicine, treatment, restriction, or care plan because of this guide or information found online. Consult the appropriate licensed clinician.

A TRUTH TO CARRY FORWARD

Reliable information, clear questions, and appropriate support create room for wiser decisions without requiring certainty about the entire future.



Take One Faithful Step in This Medical Season

CHOOSE AN ACTION THAT SUPPORTS SAFETY, CLARITY, OR CARE

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

PSALM 119:105 KJV

Your faithful step may be following one instruction, asking one question, resting, requesting help, organizing information, or beginning a journal that preserves details the care team may need later. Choose an action that fits the needs and capacity of today.

TODAY

- ☐ Write down one medical question
- ☐ Record today's baseline and any new symptoms
- ☐ Update the medicine and allergy list
- ☐ Save care team and emergency numbers

WITHIN 48 HOURS

- ☐ Confirm an appointment, test, or follow-up
- ☐ Start a time-stamped symptom, behavior, and medication journal
- ☐ Download and test an AI recording/transcription app
- ☐ Request records or written instructions
- ☐ Clarify which symptoms or changes require action

THIS WEEK

- ☐ Create one medical information folder
- ☐ Review journal observations with the clinician
- ☐ Prepare for the next appointment
- ☐ Set one communication or rest boundary

NOT MINE TO SOLVE TODAY

- ☐ The entire prognosis or recovery timeline
- ☐ Every future medical or financial decision
- ☐ Other people's opinions or comparisons
- ☐ Every worst-case scenario my mind creates

A SIMPLE RECORDING AND OBSERVATION-JOURNAL SCRIPT

"Before we begin, may I record this conversation so I can review it later? I also kept a time-stamped journal of the changes I observed and what medicines or treatments were given beforehand. Could we review whether this pattern suggests something that should be evaluated? What is confirmed, what should we do next, and which symptoms require urgent care? May I have the instructions in writing?"

My one action within 24 hours is:

The person or office I will contact is:

The observation or pattern I will report is:

The support I will request is:

A TRUTH TO CARRY FORWARD

A faithful step can be a question, a boundary, a request for help, a period of rest, or obedience to one clear medical instruction.

My Medical-Season Observation Journal

TRACK PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS, BEHAVIOR, MEDICATION TIMING, AND CHANGES FROM BASELINE

A time-stamped journal can turn a frightening blur into specific observations the care team can evaluate. Use the Notes app on your phone, a paper notebook, or printed copies of this page - whichever method you can maintain consistently. Print or duplicate this page as often as needed.

MEDICAL-SEASON LIFELINE: DOCUMENT THE PATTERN

Write down what was usual, what changed, and what happened just before it.

During Tim's hospitalization, I used the Notes app on my iPhone to document when he appeared to be at his usual baseline and when he did not. I recorded physical symptoms and changes in behavior, thinking, and alertness - including hallucinations, combativeness, aggression, and confusion. Then I asked staff which medicines had just been administered and at what times. I presented the pattern to Tim's neurologist. My notes did not prove what caused the changes; they gave his medical team specific, time-stamped observations to evaluate.

WHAT TO RECORD EACH TIME

- ☐ Date, exact time, and location
- ☐ Physical symptoms or body changes
- ☐ Medicines or treatments given beforehand, with the time and dose if confirmed
- ☐ How long the change lasted and what happened next
- ☐ What the person's usual baseline looked like before the change
- ☐ Changes in thinking, awareness, speech, mood, personality, or behavior
- ☐ Other context: sleep, pain, fever, food, procedure, stimulation, or a stressful event
- ☐ Who was notified, the response, and follow-up questions

Date and exact time:

Location or care setting:

Before the change, the person's usual baseline looked like:

Physical symptoms or body changes I observed:

Changes in thinking, awareness, speech, mood, personality, or behavior I observed:

Medicines, treatments, tests, meals, sleep, pain, or other events before the change - include times and doses if known and confirmed:

How long it lasted, what happened next, and what seemed to help or worsen it:

Who I notified, what the care team said or did, and questions I still need answered:

A CLEAR WAY TO PRESENT THE OBSERVATION

"At _____, I observed _____. Before that, the person's usual baseline was _____. What medicines or treatments were given before this change, and at what times? Could the medicine, dose, timing, an interaction, the illness itself, or another cause be contributing? Please document the change and notify the appropriate clinician."

PROTECT THE MEDICAL PLAN

A journal records observations and possible patterns; it does not establish the cause. Report sudden, severe, rapidly worsening, or dangerous changes promptly, and never stop, skip, delay, or change a medicine without guidance from the appropriate licensed clinician.

My Medical-Season Support Plan

ORGANIZE THE PEOPLE, INFORMATION, AND RHYTHM THAT HELP ME FUNCTION

This plan is a practical snapshot, not a permanent prediction. Keep it where you and a trusted support person can find it, and update it when the medical plan changes.

1 MEDICAL INFORMATION

Diagnosis or primary concern:

Care team and contact:

Next appointment, test, or follow-up:

Medicines, allergies, or restrictions are stored:

Recordings, transcripts, and the observation journal are stored:

2 SAFETY + URGENT PLAN

Symptoms or changes in behavior, thinking, or awareness that the care team said to report:

Who to call during office hours:

After-hours or emergency plan:

Transportation or help I may need:

3 PRACTICAL SUPPORT

Primary support person:

Tasks someone else can handle:

Work, school, or family contact:

Benefit, resource, or support to research:

4 DAILY RHYTHM

Rest and recovery time:

Medicine or care routine as instructed:

Prayer or grounding practice:

A time when medical talk can pause:

MYTHREEACTIONS

TODAY

WITHIN 48 HOURS

WITHIN SEVEN DAYS

☐ My plan is stored where I and my support person can find it.

Date: _____

Follow the care team's instructions and update this plan whenever medicines, physical symptoms, changes in behavior, thinking, or awareness, restrictions, appointments, or emergency guidance change.

A Prayer for an Unexpected Medical Season

BRING GOD THE FEAR, FATIGUE, AND UNKNOWN

Father,

You see my body, the person I love, the appointments, tests, decisions, and questions. You know what changed and what I am afraid may change next.

Help me face what is true without allowing fear to take over every moment. Give wisdom to the medical professionals involved and clarity to us as we listen, ask questions, document what we observe, and make decisions.

Give me strength for today's responsibilities, courage to request plain language, humility to receive help, and peace when answers are delayed. Protect us from confusion, unsafe advice, and choices made only because we feel afraid or pressured.

Help me grieve what changed without believing that purpose is gone. Remind me that a diagnosis, limitation, or uncertain season does not define the whole person You created.

Show me the next faithful step. Teach me what requires action, what requires patience, and what I can place back into Your hands.

Be near in the waiting, present in the treatment, and faithful through every outcome I cannot yet see.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

MY HONEST PRAYER TO DAY

God, what I am most afraid of is:

What I am placing in Your hands is:

TRUTHS TO REMEMBER

- A diagnosis is part of a story, not the whole identity.
- I can document what I observe and ask the care team to evaluate it.
- Receiving help is not weakness.
- Rest can be responsible.
- Fear and faith can be present in the same day.
- I do not have to predict the entire future.
- God is present in uncertainty.
- My purpose is not over.

God is present before the answer, within the process, and beyond what I can see.

The Future May Be Different, but It Is Still Held

You can move through a medical season one faithful step at a time.

N

What did illness change?

E

What remains, and what needs care?

X

What questions, support, and possibilities can I eXplore?

T

What one faithful step will I take?

An unexpected medical season can change plans, routines, relationships, and capacity. You do not have to deny reality in order to hold hope. Gather reliable information, record important conversations and observations, follow professional guidance, receive appropriate support, and take the clearest step available today.

ONE FAITHFUL ACTION FOR TODAY

Today I will:

ABOUT KINGDOM GROWTH

Kingdom Growth exists to encourage and equip Christian women navigating caregiving, illness, job loss, financial uncertainty, identity disruption, and unexpected life transitions. Find more free resources, books, devotionals, and faith-based support at:

kingdomga.com

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