



The Longest Goodbye news release

AMBASSADOR INTERNATIONAL
411 University Ridge Ste B14
Greenville, SC 29601
Ph. 864.751.4844
www.ambassador-international.com

MEDIA CONTACT: Susanna Maurer
media@emeraldhouse.com

NEW MEMOIR SHEDS LIGHT ON ALZHEIMER'S LONGEST GOODBYE



RELEASE DATE: November 15, 2022
TRADE Paperback
PAGES: 116
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ISBN: 9781620207550

For immediate release: Shelly Calcagno's longest goodbye began when her mother forgot the word for dandelions and referred to them as "yellow flowers" instead. That moment started a journey that Calcagno never wanted to be on and has not yet completed. In her memoir, *The Longest Goodbye: A Family's Hope-Filled Journey Through Alzheimer's* (Ambassador International, November 15, 2022, \$15.99), Calcagno shares her own personal journey with her mother in hopes of helping herself—and others like her—say the longest goodbye.

"I call it the longest goodbye—this losing of the one you love," writes Calcagno. "Piece by piece. Stage by stage. Hour by hour. So slow, yet so fast that it all doesn't seem possible when you look back and realize that it's been almost ten years."

Calcagno is open and raw as she shares each step of her journey so far—from her mother's forgetting "dandelions" to the day her mother could no longer recognize her. She even shares brief glimpses of what life has been like for her father, who was the main caregiver until the family made the difficult decision of putting her mother in an assisted living facility.

"There are many people walking that journey even beyond Alzheimer's, as sickness and disease ravage bodies and life fades away," writes Calcagno. "I've come to the conclusion that there is no scale to loss. Whether your loss is sudden or drawn out, pain is pain; and walking through grief is no simple feat, whether you are faced with it unexpectedly or it's a long-haul journey."

In writing about her own loss, Calcagno hopes to help herself heal and to walk with others who are starting their own longest goodbyes. With each chapter, Calcagno shares another step of her own heartache and reflects on ways that people and circumstances helped her along the way.

About the Author:

Shelly Calcagno studied English literature at Brock University and religious education at Master's College and Seminary. She followed that with 20 years of pastoral church ministry to children and families. Shelly loves to write, speak, and blog and has self-published a children's book, *Tini's Tangles*. In 2020, she started a pandemic-launched podcast called, *A Space for Grace*.

Shelly has written and produced several animated series for children, as well as family and children's curriculum. From 2013–2016, Shelly co-hosted 100 Huntley Street, Canada's longest-running daytime talk show, where she produced lifestyle and faith segments. She currently is the bureau chief for The News Forum, a national Canadian news channel.

Shelly loves being creative and taking on DIY projects, especially if they involve mason jars and chalkboard paint! She is passionate about legacy and bringing ideas to life. Shelly lives with her husband in her beloved country of Canada and has two young adult children.

To connect with the author or request a review copy of *The Longest Goodbye*, please contact publicity director Susanna Maurer at media@emeraldhouse.com.

ABOUT THE PUBLISHER: Ambassador International was founded in 1980 in Belfast, Northern Ireland and expanded to Greenville, South Carolina in 1995. Ambassador International's books and materials have been distributed in dozens of countries and are sold worldwide. For more information visit www.ambassador-international.com. You can also follow @AmbassadorIntl on Twitter or check out [Facebook.com/AmbassadorIntl](https://www.facebook.com/AmbassadorIntl).

Suggested Interview Questions for the Author:

1. How much of the population does Alzheimer's affect?
2. What surprised you about treatments for Alzheimer's?
3. How does caregiver fatigue play into the mental health of those who love someone with Alzheimer's?
4. What's been the most important help to you?
5. What Bible verse inspires you?
6. If you could go back in time, what would you tell the younger you to prepare you for life today?
7. What do you want the reader to take away from in reading *The Longest Goodbye*?
8. Where is your book available and are you available to speak?
9. Other than your book, *The Longest Goodbye*, what are other resources people should use?
10. What are your final remarks to those who are listening today?

Endorsements:

"Losing a parent is one of life's most difficult moments and, in some cases, a difficult season. Shelly's heartwarming, poignant, personal account of her decade-long journey of saying goodbye to her mom who suffered from memory loss will be a source of comfort and hope to anyone going through a similar experience."

CAREY NIEUWHOF

Bestselling Author, Speaker, and Host of the *Carey Nieuwhof Leadership* Podcast

"In *The Longest Goodbye*, Shelly gives us hope and help to navigate when a loved one faces memory loss. Shelly shares her decade-long journey watching her mother decline with Alzheimer's disease. Through heartfelt stories and reflections, she gives her readers a glimpse into the pain of seeing a loved one slowly fade away while at the same time looking for hope-filled moments along the way. Shelly expresses how joy and pain can co-exist and where to look when everything feels lost. And most of all, her experience shows how the bonds of family and unconditional love carried her through. This book isn't about the clinical part of the disease; it's about the heart and how to hold on through all the seasons of memory loss."

KEVIN SCOTT

Author, Leadership Expert, and Co-founder of ADDO

"It's much easier to write fiction than to share a hard, human story of love and loss for others to read. Shelly has brilliantly authored pages that share the hard and the good of loving someone fiercely, while losing them slowly to Alzheimer's. Shelly is both honest and honoring with her words as she draws the reader into the journey of the one thing she feared most—her mother's diagnosis and slow decline due to Alzheimer's. Shelly's words paint a stunning picture of a brave and tender response to human suffering. Be moved in the reading of this beautiful remembrance."

CATHIE OSTAPCHUK

Author, *Brave Women, Bold Moves*
Co-Founder & Lead Catalyst for Gather Women
Host of *The Strong Way* Podcast

"In *the Longest Goodbye*, Shelly invites her readers into the journey of her mother's battle with Alzheimer's disease. From the strong bonds of their special mother and daughter friendship to becoming a stranger to the mother who cannot remember, Shelly writes with the honesty and insight of a daughter processing the frozen grief of Alzheimer's and the long thawing of emotion, awaiting death's second chill. If you or someone you know is dealing with the pain of losing someone before they are gone, this book is a companion on your journey. Written as a friend who understands and with the wisdom of a faith holding on to hope, this book is for you."

MATT TAPLEY

Lead Pastor, Lakemount Worship Centre

"Shelly leads her readers through the stages of saying goodbye to someone who is still physically present as they live with dementia. Woven throughout the book are firsthand stories of how her family wrestled through the realization that life was going to look different and how God met them in the joy and in the pain. Shelly beautifully describes her deep assurance she is still known, seen, and loved by her mom. What a gift this journey will be to so many others as they navigate Alzheimer's disease with their loved ones. Shelly's words will be comforting, relatable, and hope-giving to others walking this same road."

MELISSA MCEACHERN

Chief Operating and Content Officer at Crossroads Christian Communications



author bio

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SHELLY CALCAGNO Author of "The Longest Goodbye"



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Connect with the Author

-  www.shellycalcagno.com
-  [@ShellyDCalcagno](https://twitter.com/ShellyDCalcagno)
-  www.facebook.com/TinisTangles
-  www.instagram.com/shellydcalcagno
-  shelly@shellycalcagno.com

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