



# How to Save a Life

Eva Carter

**BOOK CLUB KIT**

# Letter from the Author

Dear Reader,

In the fall of 2013, my partner's heart stopped just after midnight and I had to do CPR. His chance of survival was under 10%, but he was one of the lucky ones.

He remembers nothing of that night, I remember everything. Together, we learned so much about joy, loss, strength, and vulnerability. And I knew I wanted to capture those extremes in a novel.

*How to Save a Life* is a love story that starts when a young athlete's heart stops, at midnight on January 1, 2000. Joel's heart is restarted after 18 minutes – but the aftershocks will reverberate for 18 years for Joel, for Tim, the would-be doctor who freezes in terror, and for Kerry, the geeky girl who gives Joel CPR.

The novel is a story of second chances—and my tribute to the heroic medics who perform miracles every day, often at huge emotional cost.

The essentials of CPR are woven into this story, so when you finish reading, you will also know the basics of *How to Save a Life*!

Warm wishes,

Eva Carter

Brighton, England



# Discussion Questions

1. In the opening chapters of the novel, we see Kerry and Tim work together to save Joel's life on New Year's Eve and their actions that night change the course of all three of their lives. Have you ever had a moment like that in your life? Were you aware of its significance at the time, or did you only become aware of it in hindsight?
2. Kerry chooses not to tell Joel that she was the one who primarily gave him CPR on New Year's Eve. Do you think it was fair of her to keep that from him and allow him to be mad at Tim instead? Why or why not?
3. What do you think of Joel's motivations for breaking up with Kerry? Is he being selfless or selfish—why?
4. Joel's outlook on life changes for the worse after he loses his place on the soccer team. Do you think this was an overreaction, or can you relate to this if you think about your own experiences as a young adult?
5. How do you feel about Tim's choice to continue with medical school, despite not really enjoying patient care? Have you ever continued on a certain path simply because you felt like you were expected to and had no other choice? Did you see it through, or did you change course at some point? Why or why not?
6. Throughout much of the novel, Kerry focuses on helping and supporting Tim or Joel instead of focusing on herself. Do you think she makes the right choice in doing so? Can you relate to that desire to help others before yourself?
7. At the end of the novel, Joel, Kerry, and Tim are leading very different lives to the ones they'd imagined at the beginning, and they all seem to be happier for it. What about you? Did your life turn out differently than you imagined when you were 18—and have your ideas about happiness and success changed too?
8. One of the book's themes is how emergency responders and medics are affected by dealing with extreme situations, even though the public often expect them to stay heroic and not show distress. Was that surprising to you? Have you had experiences that resonate?
9. Has the book inspired you to learn how to save a life or help in emergencies? (You can find more resources at [evacarter.net](http://evacarter.net).)

# Gin and Tonic



## INGREDIENTS

2 oz. gin  
4 oz. tonic water  
2 lime wheels

## DIRECTIONS

Fill a highball glass with ice, then add the gin.

Top with the tonic water and gently stir.

Garnish with lime wheels.

# Buffalo Chicken Celery Boats



## INGREDIENTS

1/3 cup Frank's hot sauce  
2 tbsp. mayonnaise  
Kosher salt  
Freshly ground black pepper  
2 cups shredded rotisserie chicken  
4 stalks celery, cut into 3" pieces  
1/3 cup crumbled blue cheese  
Ranch, for drizzling  
Chives, for garnish

## DIRECTIONS

In a medium bowl, whisk together hot sauce and mayo, and season with salt and pepper. Pour over shredded chicken and mix to combine.

Spoon chicken mixture into celery boats.

Top with blue cheese, drizzle with ranch, and garnish with chives.



# Lemonade Scones



## INGREDIENTS

4½ cups self-raising flour  
1¼ cups heavy whipping cream  
1½ cups Sprite/lemonade  
1 tbsp milk

## DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 400°F/200°C. Sift flour into a large bowl.

Add cream and lemonade.

With a knife, gently “mix” or “cut” the dough until it has been combined.

Generously flour a surface and, with floured hands, turn out the dough onto your floured surface.

Shape into a rectangle, about 4 cm/1.5” inches thick.

Dip a wine glass in flour.

Cut out rounds and place on a lined baking tray.

Reshape the extra dough, and keep cutting until the dough runs out.

Brush the tops of the scones with a little milk.

Place in oven for 25–35 minutes until golden brown on top. Serve with whipped cream and fresh raspberry jam.

# Puff Pastry Cheese Straws



## INGREDIENTS

14 oz. box puff pastry (thawed from frozen)  
1 large egg  
1 tbsp. water  
1 cup freshly grated gruyere cheese  
½ cup freshly grated parmesan cheese  
Cayenne pepper  
Paprika

## DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 375 °F. Line a sheet pan with parchment paper if desired (it's not necessary, there is enough fat to prevent sticking).

Roll out the puff pastry about ⅛-inch thick. Whisk the egg with the water and brush the puff pastry with the egg wash.

Sprinkle the entire surface with the cheeses, cayenne, and paprika. Press the cheese and spices into the puff pastry.

Cut the pastry into ¾-inch thick strips using a pizza cutter or knife. Twist each strip and lay it on the baking sheet.

Bake for 15–20 minutes until golden brown and puffy. Enjoy!



# Egg Salad Tea Sandwich



## INGREDIENTS

½ cup chopped red onion  
½ cup mayonnaise  
¼ cup sour cream  
2 tbsp. Dijon mustard  
½ tsp. pepper  
¼ tsp. salt  
8 hard-boiled large eggs, chopped  
1 large cucumber, sliced  
1 tbsp. dill weed  
12 slices sourdough bread, toasted

## DIRECTIONS

In a small bowl, combine the first six ingredients.

Add eggs; stir gently to combine.

In another bowl, toss cucumber and dill.

Spread egg salad over six slices of toast; top with cucumbers and remaining toast.



# Playlist

“How to Save a Life” by The Fray  
“1999” by Prince  
“Millennium” by Robbie Williams  
“Stayin’ Alive” by Bee Gees  
“Breathe (2 AM)” by Anna Nalick  
“(We Dance) So Close to the Fire” by Thomas Faragher  
“I’m Never Gonna Give You Up” by Frank Stallone, Cynthia Rhodes  
“Nellie the Elephant” by Mandy Miller  
“Life is Beautiful” by Vega4  
“Chasing Cars” by Snow Patrol  
“Someone Like You” by Adele  
“The Story Never Ends” by Lauv  
“Music of My Heart” by \*NSYNC, Gloria Estefan  
“Groovejet (If This Ain’t Love)” by Sophie Ellis-Bextor  
“Toxic” by Britney Spears  
“Mr. Brightside” by The Killers  
“Stronger (What Doesn’t Kill You)” by Kelly Clarkson  
“Fallin’” by Alicia Keys  
“Pure Shores” by All Saints  
“Breathe” by Blu Cantrell  
“Mad Love” by Sean Paul, David Guetta, Becky G

“Live While We’re Young” by One Direction  
“Happy” by Pharrell Williams  
“All of Me” by John Legend  
“Counting Stars” by OneRepublic  
“Bad Romance” by Lady Gaga  
“Break Your Heart” by Taio Cruz, Ludacris  
“Higher” by Taio Cruz  
“Better Now” by Post Malone  
“Ball for Me” by Post Malone, Nikki Minaj  
“Otherside” by Post Malone  
“Stay” by Post Malone



# How to save a life . . . the four simple steps that can make all the difference

The moment someone's heart stops, the clock starts ticking. Without help, fewer than one in ten people survive a cardiac arrest. But you could change that. The Chain of Survival is simple but life-saving: everyone should know the basics.

- 1: If you see someone unresponsive and not breathing properly, call 911. Every second counts. Ask someone else to make the call while you move onto step 2.
2. Begin CPR (chest compressions) as soon as possible and don't stop till medics arrive and can take over. Your hands are all you need to keep the blood circulating, reducing damage to the brain and body.
3. Get a defibrillator to the patient as soon as possible—whether that means operating one yourself, or the ambulance crew bringing theirs. An automated external defibrillator (AED) is like a reset button for the heart. AEDs are everywhere—schools, shops, even pubs. They calculate if a shock is needed—and tell you exactly what to do.
4. The emergency teams will take the patient to a hospital, where the cause can be investigated and treatment will begin. Your job as a first-aider is done—the paramedics or emergency doctors will transfer the patient to a specialist center to diagnose and treat whatever has gone wrong.

Pass it on! The more people who know the basics, the more lives can be saved.

**For more resources, including organizations offering first aid training, go to [evacarter.net](http://evacarter.net).**