

# You Don't Have to ACT Strong, You Can BE Strong

Sept 3, 2014 | [Press Releases](#)

*Digging Deep is a remarkable resource for children and teens living with serious illness. The simple—yet powerful—words and the vibrant images gently guide them through their experiences. By ‘digging deep,’ these young people will, in fact, emerge into clarity and light.*

– Barbara Sourkes, Ph.D., Director Palliative Care, Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital Stanford, Professor of Pediatrics, Stanford University School of Medicine

**September 2014.** Serious childhood illnesses, disabilities, and long-term medical concerns are, sadly, still on the rise; the good news is that fewer and fewer children and teens are dying from diseases that once took their lives. These young people often face new challenges, both physical and emotional, because of their survivorship. What is often sorely missing in their care is ongoing emotional support to deal with the complexities of their situation. [Digging Deep: A Journal for Young People Facing Health](#) by coauthors Rose Offner, MFA, and Sheri Brisson, MA, provides an engaging, fun, and affordable resource to build a child’s emotional strength.

*“Understanding how one feels is the first step in being able to better communicate one’s needs, and have these needs met,”* says Brisson, a long-time brain tumor survivor, who also experienced many surgeries and hospitalizations as a child.

*“Emotional needs of sick kids often go unmet because kids themselves feel they need to ‘be brave’ and ‘act strong’ for themselves and their families,”* adds Brisson. *“Digging Deep teaches that ‘being strong’ is showing one’s vulnerability and true feelings. Digging Deep takes young people through a process of first identifying how they feel, and then helps them express their thoughts and feelings to their medical team, families, and everyone around them wanting to help.”*

Unlike any other book on the market, *Digging Deep* gives kids a way to recognize their strength within and build their emotional endurance in the face of illness.

*Digging Deep* is not a storybook about a character with an illness and it is not an activity or distraction book. It invites the reader to become an active participant in creating their own story from their experience—that's what makes it unique.

*Digging Deep* not only validates the young person's emotional journey, it builds resilience and the life-long skill of introspection.

Through creative, colorful artwork and thoughtful writing prompts, *Digging Deep* explores themes and ideas such as:

- **An Upside Down World** – addresses that feeling of being “lost in space,” when all we have known to be true or part of our identity, is turned “upside down”
- **My Boiling Point** – discusses how it is normal to feel frustrated or angry when you have health problems
- **Throwing Out the Trash** – teaches about letting go of negative thoughts and feelings, an action that helps us move on, by actually making a “garbage” pocket from a paper bag
- **Tricks Up My Sleeve** – is about evolution; to be far enough past an experience that we can share our wisdom and help someone else with a similar experience. “Finally something to heal my child's heart,” says one parent whose child has been using [Digging Deep](#).

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### About the Authors

[Rose Offner](#), MFA, is an accomplished author in the field of journal writing. Her work as a motivational speaker, writer, and visual artist has given her insight and understanding into the ways that imagination, voice, and soul can be captured and shared in stories. Offner has more than twenty years of experience leading and facilitating classes on the art of journaling with children, teens, adults, and professionals. She knows first-hand that journaling can transform lives.

Therapists, educators, and individuals across the country are using Rose's previous journal writing titles to guide inner transformation.

[Sheri Sobrato Brisson](#), MA is a brain tumor survivor who discovered the importance of self-reflection during her recovery. From her personal illness experience and a dozen years supporting families and children with serious

illness, her life's philanthropic mission is to empower families and children facing serious illness. She has started and facilitated support groups for children with illness and their families for over twenty years with organizations such as the American Cancer Society, National Brain Tumor Foundation, Ronald McDonald House, and Packard Children's Hospital. She has served as Board Member for many children's health nonprofit organizations including American Cancer Society San Jose, UCSF/Mt. Zion Auxiliary, Creighton Health Institute, Okizu Foundation, and Parents Helping Parents (PHP) and the founding board of Bravekids. Brisson received her master's degree in counseling from Santa Clara University and her undergraduate degree in human biology from Stanford University. She and her husband live in the San Francisco Bay Area with their two young children.

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*Digging Deep: A Journal for Young People Facing Health Challenges* was released in October 15, 2014. It is available through [ipgbook.com](http://ipgbook.com) and [amazon.com](http://amazon.com).

For bulk orders or books sponsored through donation, contact [info@diggingdeep.org](mailto:info@diggingdeep.org).