



## Personal Life Changing Experience

In September of 2010, I received the most wonderful news I have ever received in my life – I was approved to be a kidney donor. Dave, the recipient became a client of mine in 1997 when he adopted an out-of-control puppy. Through the years, we became friends. He and his wife volunteered for us, helping with classes and appointments.

In June of 2009, he became gravely ill with polycystic kidney disease, went on dialysis three times a week, and was added to the transplant list. His sister was tested to see if she was a match. Though she was a match, her own health precluded her from being a donor.

I decided to inquire about what was involved in being tested. I found out it was about 30 hours of thorough medical testing! The donor has to be a blood donor match, have a compatible immune system, be an anatomical match (the kidney and all its attachments have to match perfectly in the recipient's body), and the donor has to be in excellent health. I decided to go through the testing and if I was a match, then I would figure out how to go about taking six weeks off from work to recover!

Of course, I was a match and the surgery was on September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2010. Everything went perfectly! With the support and help of family and friends, I was able to handle the recovery time from work. Dave is doing remarkably and is back to a normal life. The kidney was a perfect match for him and his body accepted it perfectly. This was the most life-changing experience I have ever had. It has caused me to change my focus on life and adjust my priorities. I now place a huge value on my health and well-being and value relationships with others in a way I never could before. I feel so incredibly honored to have been a part of this.

Thank you for reading my story and I hope it inspires you think about becoming a donor. You can be a living donor, like me, or make sure you indicate wishes to be a posthumous donor. Living donors can donate blood, a kidney, a lobe of their liver, pancreas, etc. For more information check out the following web site:

<http://www.transplantliving.org/livingdonation/questions.aspx>

Sam Kabbel