

BEATING  
MULTIPLE  
SCLEROSIS

**Empowering Stories of Self-Healing and Thriving**

AGOTA NAWROTH  
& PAIGE NEWSOME

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**To my loved ones,**

This book reveals the transformative path of my MS journey and daily dedication required for a healthy life. I'm taking care of myself, so you don't have to.

**To the multiple sclerosis community,**

May our stories empower and inspire, fostering understanding, compassion, and progress. Together, let's navigate the challenges of this journey, knowing that we are never alone.

With love and deepest admiration,  
Agota Nawroth

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to everyone who has contributed to the creation and completion of this book.

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I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all the remarkable individuals who graciously shared their heartbreaking stories for this book. Your bravery in opening up about your journeys will undoubtedly resonate with others who find solace and strength in knowing they are not alone. I am honored to have had the opportunity to give voice to your stories and express my deepest appreciation for your invaluable contribution.

Lastly, I extend my gratitude to my followers, readers, and supporters. Your enthusiasm, feedback, and reviews inspire me to continue sharing my story and the knowledge I've acquired along the way with the world, raising awareness about diseases that can be prevented.

To all those mentioned above and the countless others who have contributed in various ways, your presence in my life has made this book a reality. Thank you for being a part of this remarkable journey.

With heartfelt appreciation,  
Agota Nawroth

## AUTHOR'S NOTE

Many individuals are searching for a diagnosis while struggling with various symptoms. For those of us already diagnosed, having answers can be a relief but also adds a lifelong burden. At times, this weight can feel overwhelming. I wish a book like this had been available when I was first diagnosed four years ago. It would have made a world of difference. Back then, I wouldn't have felt so alone and lost. I wouldn't have had to search through numerous books to connect the dots. My goal with this book is to provide you answers and give you practical guidance to regain control and steer your life back on track.

The stories in this book showcase the remarkable potential within us as human beings. We can heal our minds and bodies, making full recoveries from autoimmune diseases when we cultivate the right mindset and well-being practices. I haven't encountered anyone who thrives with a pessimistic outlook. Our minds are incredibly powerful. It's crucial to remember that the path to healing often begins there. While change can be a challenge, it's a necessary step for those seeking a healthier life.

So, who is this book for? It's not exclusively for people with MS. This book is filled with ideas to improve the lives of anyone, diagnosed or not, who is facing symptoms. Each chapter is a glimpse into someone's life, flourishing despite the diagnosis. My hope is that you'll discover a story or two that resonate with you. Please share this book, help us spread the message, and raise awareness about this complex condition. It doesn't have to lead to life in a wheelchair.

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#### Final Note

“Wellness is the complete integration of body, mind, and spirit – the realization that everything we do, think, feel, and believe has an effect on our state of well-being.”

– *Greg Anderson*

## DISCLAIMER

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**Story by**

**ANDREA**

Diagnosed in 2000

Currently 62 years old

Lives in Los Angeles, United States

Instagram: @graygator1

Hello, my name is Andrea, and I was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS) in 2000 at the age of thirty-nine. Prior to my diagnosis, I lived a pretty simple life in the Santa Ynez Valley in California with my husband and three children. I had always been very healthy. The only big thing that seemed off prior to being diagnosed was an episode ten years earlier where I lost temperature sensation in my right leg. It did seem odd, so I asked my doctor at the time about it. He wasn't concerned, so I did not give it much thought, and it eventually resolved itself. I know it wasn't postpartum because I was way beyond that.

In the ten years that followed, I did have random things happen, like a strange tingling on the back of my neck that came and went, and an annoying itchy spot that moved from my wrist to my forearm. At the time, I did not think much of them, but once I was diagnosed, it occurred to me that those symptoms may have also been the beginnings of my MS.

Since my diagnosis, my life has changed in many ways. I can honestly say it has all been for the best, as the changes I made have led me to a healthier lifestyle. This is the story of my journey. It has been a long, winding mix of many different modalities, but none of the conventional types. In this story, I am only focusing on the different therapies, not the supplements I've taken—that could be a whole book on its own, as I have tried many different combinations.

It began with a case of optic neuritis completely out of the blue. I'd had a debilitating headache for about a week. As the week progressed, I started losing vision in my right eye. This was very scary for me, mostly because a friend of mine had just been diagnosed with a brain tumor, and her symptoms were identical to mine. Thankfully, her tumor was benign. Three trips to the emergency room, plus two different optometrists, and no one had any idea what was wrong with me. Desperate for answers, I made an appointment with an ophthalmologist. I told him what I had been experiencing, and he said without hesitation, "Oh, you have multiple sclerosis". Yep, it was a shock, but I was happy that someone finally had some idea of what might be wrong.

My general practitioner sent me to a neurologist who promptly scheduled me for magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). The MRI came back conclusive for MS. Based on the size, color, and location of lesions on the scan, he did not feel that any other testing was necessary. The first person I told was my husband at the time. My kids were eleven, thirteen, and fifteen. My immediate family was totally supportive of my decision to go at it alternatively and felt confident I was on the right path because they weren't comfortable with the pharmaceuticals either. But my mom was totally freaked out.

Still reeling from the news, I went home and immediately dove into researching what it all meant. I don't recall ever being scared about it. I think I was living in a bit of ignorant bliss, convincing myself that everything would be fine. I kept telling myself that people do not die from MS; they die from complications due to MS, and I was going to do my best to avoid the complications. At my follow-up appointment with the neurologist, he told me that he wanted me to begin treatment with Betaseron, which I believe was one of the newest drugs on the market for MS at the time. Again, I did my research. What I found was that this particular drug was a once a week injectable. I could expect to have two days of flu-like symptoms after the injection, and it would provide me with a 30% reduction in my symptoms. I did not feel that a 30% reduction in my symptoms was worth losing two days of every week for the rest of my life, plus I was not comfortable with using a drug that was

so new that no one knew what the long-term implications of it were. I had to find another way.

When I went back to the neurologist and told him my concerns, he scoffed at me, and said, “You are a very foolish girl. You obviously don’t understand the implications of this disease. I guarantee in six months you will be crawling back in here, begging for this drug!” Wow, I thought my diagnosis was a shock, but the arrogance of this man was astounding. Still, I was not deterred!

The next six months were full of stressors that could have kicked my MS up a notch. I turned forty, my dog died unexpectedly, and my grandmother passed away. I went back to the neurologist for my follow-up, but I was not crawling, nor was I begging him for the medication. I walked in, told him what had happened over the past six months, reminded him what he had said to me, and told him I still did not want the drugs. He actually apologized to me and said that based on the results, he did not think I should do anything different. He said that I should just keep doing the alternative things, like the supplements and dietary changes, I’d been doing since he saw me six months earlier because I didn’t crawl back in begging for the pharmaceutical drugs like he’d predicted I would. This, by the way, was the last time I ever saw a neurologist. I have chosen to judge how my disease is doing based on how I am feeling and functioning. Some might say this is irresponsible, but the mind is a powerful drug. I felt that having someone tell me I have new lesions could send me spiraling and ultimately be more destructive to my wellbeing. In fact, I tried to go to MS support meetings, but it was so much doom and gloom that I just couldn’t do it. That was so far from where I was at.

I was still unsure exactly how to proceed, so I returned to my general practitioner. He told me to give him a few days to do some research. What he proposed for me immediately was to begin a regimen of a therapeutic dose of both vitamin D3 (as cholecalciferol) and B12 (as methyl cobalamin), and to remove gluten and dairy from my diet, with the exception of butter and full-fat yogurt. I’ve taken 5,000IUs of vitamin D3 and vitamin B12 since the day I was diagnosed. I have my D3 levels checked every six months, and all the doctors I’ve seen like my number to be about seventy-nine.

Even though I said I wasn’t going to tell you about my supplements, I mention these two because I feel that they are fundamentally important to where I am today. Many of the things I have tried for my MS have

come and gone, but these two supplements have continued without fail to this day.

Resources for managing MS alternatively were few and far between in 2000, but one of the books I found helpful was Roy Swank's *The MS Diet Book*. This book was last updated in 1985, so it was severely outdated, but I read it and incorporated his diet suggestions into my daily routine. Today, the only thing I remember about it is that I removed red meat from my diet for one year. It took almost a year for my optic neuritis to heal, and my vision in my right eye returned to about 75% of what it originally was. A side note to my optic neuritis is that I walked away from that experience with a newfound appreciation for my vision... you don't know what you have until it's gone, right? The many months that I couldn't see out of my right eye impacted my life tremendously in ways I could not have imagined. Driving was next to impossible due to the loss of depth perception, and many simple tasks had become difficult because I could not see things the same way I was accustomed to.

As my MS journey continued along the winding road of alternative therapies, one generally led me to the next. I wasn't always sure whether the alternative therapy of the day was what kept me walking on my own two feet. I felt pretty good with no new symptoms, but I still struggled with crushing fatigue. It often felt like my legs and eyeballs were stuck in concrete. I had some serious brain fog and occasional trouble with my right leg.

My general practitioner was continually researching alternative modalities for me, which I greatly appreciated. About a year into my diagnosis, he found a clinic about five hours north of me that offered a promising treatment. This clinic offered Live Blood Analysis, something I had not heard of but was excited to learn more about. Now is probably a great time to mention that many of the modalities I tried fall into the quackery category, according to conventional medicine. I don't feel that anything I've done was quackery, but if you run it by a conventional doctor, or google it, they will tell you it is; I guess it all depends on who you ask. I always evaluated whatever modality I considered trying before jumping into it. Not everything worked, and maybe some were quackery, but who knows, maybe it did help because here I sit almost twenty-three years later with nary a symptom. Now, back to Live Blood Analysis. When I was a child, I remember going to the doctor. Every time, the doctor would take a drop of blood and look at it under a microscope before he would make any recommendations about treatments. I hadn't thought about this until I went in for my first Live Blood Analysis, so having this done regarding my MS made perfect sense to me.

Live Blood Analysis looks at a blood sample, magnified thousands of times, under a dark field microscope, looking for irregularities in the blood. Through this process, it was determined that I had something known as mycoplasmas in my blood, which are believed to be responsible for fatigue-producing diseases. The treatment recommended for this was an olive leaf supplement called d-Lenolate. If you google it, one supplement will come up. This is the one I took, as well as many of the MS patients they treated. I took one capsule every two hours for about one year and let me tell you—life goes by fast when you’re taking a pill every two hours! But it was worth it, as it made a significant improvement in my fatigue. Not only did I feel the improvement, but I also saw it in my blood analysis as the mycoplasma diminished. The clinic is no longer open; both doctors that ran it have retired. There may be other places that do it, but I can’t speak to the legitimacy of them.

A few years later, I was introduced to another interesting modality called Bee Venom Therapy (BVT). Sounds horrible, doesn’t it? I read about it in an article my doctor gave me from a publication called *Self-Healing*, and it suggested calling the American Apitherapy Society for more information. From there, I did a bunch of research and interviews until I found a doctor that I was comfortable working with. I was hoping to reverse my optic neuritis and remain healthy and as free from MS symptoms as possible. It was an interesting process. First, I had to get an EpiPen (that I never had to use, thankfully). He was adamant about that for good reason. There was a manual with everything I needed to know before beginning BVT: how to hold the bee to only get stung where it was intended, where to administer the stings, how often, and how long to leave the stingers in. I was armed with information, so I needed to get my bees! I was surprised when they arrived in a little wooden box about the size of an index card via the postal service. I placed the box outside and opened it up. I had a mini hive of bees. Obviously not a real hive, so I had to feed them honey every day.

The therapy consisted of intentionally stinging myself six-to-eight times, several times a week, in a specific location. There was a routine to follow, and the locations were specifically chosen for their benefits—no two the same. My husband did the dirty work of grabbing the bee by its wings and carefully placing it on me, enticing it to sting me in the appropriate location. It wasn’t bad the first few times, but I noticed as time went on, I wasn’t feeling better anymore. In fact, I often felt worse. It almost felt like I had the flu after I did a session of stings. I reached out to the doctor about this, and he suspended the therapy. He felt that my body was not able to metabolize the venom, causing it to linger in my body, making me feel sick. He was worried about a potentially dangerous

allergic reaction. I don't regret trying this therapy because I did see significant improvements in the lingering effects of my optic neuritis, but I was not sad when it was over! I don't remember exactly how long I did this therapy for because it was twenty-two years ago. All I remember is I did about fifty stings.

The next few years were a rollercoaster ride, feeling great some days and feeling like I was going to die from fatigue other days. When I started eating gluten and dairy-free, my body had some detoxing to do, so I didn't feel the results right away. It was hard to do because I still had so much to learn about eating gluten-free. It wasn't mainstream then, and finding alternatives was a challenge.

I had a laundry list of aches and tingles that came and went around different parts of my body; nothing that impacted my daily living, just annoyances that never seemed to go away. So clearly, I needed to dig deeper. I cannot remember where, but I learned about mercury fillings, and how detrimental they can be to our health. I don't know for a fact if the mercury fillings contributed to my MS, but my general practitioner, who helped me years later, agreed it was probably a trigger. I also learned that you cannot just have them removed. There is a very specific method that needs to be followed so as not to make problems worse. It took me a while, but I finally found a dentist about 120 miles from me, who was familiar with the process. I had six mercury fillings that needed to be replaced. He advised me that they should not all be done at the same time. First, he removed three fillings on one side of my mouth, waited three days, then removed the remaining three on the other side. I followed this with a series of supplements that the dentist recommended to assist in removing any remaining mercury.

Within a week of removal, I noticed that I was losing less hair in the shower, and my eyelashes were much fuller. I cannot say scientifically whether the fillings were responsible for my hair loss and thin eyelashes, but I was happy to see both improving!

As luck would have it, my general practitioner met a doctor who specializes in endocrinology and practiced medicine in a way he thought I'd appreciate. This was before functional medicine doctors had become mainstream. She did not officially identify that way, but her approach to health and wellbeing was exactly that—and I loved her!

She did a series of hormone testing through blood work, testing things I did not even realize were hormones. My results came back, and everything was out of whack. Next began the daunting task of trial and

error to find the right doses and combinations that would balance things out. We started with the thyroid. She preferred using desiccated pig thyroid, also known as bioidentical. It's a prescription. I have used two different brands: Armor, and the one I currently use, ERFA. I started on one half grain and worked my way up, then back down to find the optimal dose, and settled in at two-and-a-half grains—which is where I remain today. I did try some of the synthetic versions of thyroid medications over the years, but they never balanced things out as well as the desiccated thyroid. Nowadays, I check my thyroid level every six months.

I also learned from her that estrogen is essential for the re-myelination of the myelin sheath that covers a nerve, so balancing my estrogen and progesterone was next on the list. This was another arduous process. It took a lot of patience—as it took several years and some trial and error to arrive at the right type and dosage. I varied the dosage over the course of the month to mimic my natural cycle until I went through menopause. Now, I do static dosing all month. Originally, I tried the bioidentical type of hormones, but ultimately had better results with Prometrium and the Vivelle Dot (hormone medications), both of which I still use today.

The next few years passed uneventfully. I remained gluten and dairy-free. I felt pretty good most of the time, but there were still days where the fatigue was oppressive, memory fog and cognitive function waxed and waned, and I still had a lot of random tingling in my hands and leg that would come and go. By now, I had put together a network of other like-minded people. One friend had heard about something called chronic inflammatory response syndrome (CIRS), and a doctor who had come up with a protocol for mitigating it. His name is Dr. Richie Shoemaker. Dr. Shoemaker, a leader in patient care, research, and education, pioneered the field of biotoxin-related illness. Biotoxin-related illness occurs in certain susceptible people who are exposed to mold or have a tick-borne illness, including Lyme disease; are exposed to Dnoflagellates, like Pfiesteria; or come in contact with blue green algae, like *Cylindrospermopsis*, *Microcystis*, or *Ciguatera*. The people he found to be susceptible are individuals who have a specific HLA haplotype, inherited from both parents. He estimates that 24% of the population has this specific HLA haplotype. Genetically susceptible people have a problem with the production of protective antibodies that typically remove these biotoxins and mycotoxins, causing CIRS. I am not a doctor or a scientist, so this is as far as my understanding of the genetic process goes.

Knowing that inflammation is a key component in MS flares, I was very interested in this protocol. In 2016, I set out to find a doctor who practiced the Shoemaker protocol and found a woman in Montana who I was very comfortable with. The first thing she had me do was test my home for the presence of mold, using an ERMI test. Fortunately, my current home did not test positive for mold anywhere. Next, I did genetic testing for the presence of this HLA haplotype, and it came back that I do carry this genetic defect. Armed with this information, I began my treatment.

The symptoms of CIRS are as varied as MS symptoms, many of them being the same. Dr. Shoemaker found that most people with CIRS have at least six to eight of them at a time. Personally, I had at least half of them, rotating around my body all the time: fatigue, weakness, aches, headache, light sensitivity, decreased assimilation of new knowledge, memory impairment, decreased word finding, difficulty concentrating, joint pain, A.M. stiffness, cramps, unusual skin sensitivity, tingling, shortness of breath, sinus congestion, cough, excessive thirst, confusion, appetite swings, difficulty regulating body temperature, increased urinary frequency, red eyes, blurred vision, night sweats, mood swings, ice pick pain, abdominal pain, diarrhea, numbness, tearing of eyes, disorientation, metallic taste, static shocks, and vertigo.

The treatment plan is a twelve-step process that is very detailed. Moving from one step to the next is dependent on completion of the previous step. It was daunting, and I sometimes felt like I was never going to get to the next step. But I would remind myself of why I was doing it in the first place and refocus on the task at hand. There were medications I had to take, and I did Visual Contrast Screening (VCS) regularly. This is a test that measures your ability to see details at low contrast levels. It is considered a valuable diagnostic tool to measure the impact of neurotoxins on brain function. It was very interesting to see how my vision changed, often improving, from test to test along the way. It took about a year to make it to the final step in the protocol. The final step was a nasal spray called vasoactive intestinal polypeptide (VIP), a neuro-immune modulator that restores immune regulation. While using this spray, I was required to take my blood pressure and heart rate twice a day at the same time of day. This final step took me about two months to complete. It felt like I was never going to get through the process, but I did. Over that year and a half, I watched all the lingering, annoying symptoms either resolve all together or diminish to a place where they were no longer an annoyance. My brain fog greatly improved. I could not have imagined feeling so good when I started the process. I almost felt like my pre-MS self, and I was thrilled! As I look back, I think this



process was probably the most transformative step in my health journey. You can find more information about the Shoemaker Protocol at [https://www.survivingmold.com/docs/12\\_STEP\\_SHOEMAKER\\_PROTOCOL\\_FOR\\_CIRS.PDF](https://www.survivingmold.com/docs/12_STEP_SHOEMAKER_PROTOCOL_FOR_CIRS.PDF)

The next turn on my alternative therapy journey came the day my facial lady told me her story about a car accident she was in a few years earlier. She struggled with a lot of pain as a result but found great relief with something called cryotherapy. Cryotherapy is where the body is exposed to freezing temperatures between -120° and -180°F for about three minutes. Extreme cold exposure reduces inflammation, aids in muscle recovery, and reduces pain. I had to try it!

I started using cryotherapy about three years ago and felt a tremendous reduction in the arthritis pain in my lower back. I was hooked! Besides the improvement in my arthritis pain, I noticed an increase in my energy level, which was very exciting. I would leave my cryotherapy sessions feeling exhilarated with a spring in my step. I still do cryotherapy one-to-two times a week, as my schedule allows. I have recently added the infra-red sauna to my routine before cryotherapy. Saunas support detoxification and can be helpful in healing when used together with cryotherapy. I have only been doing the sauna for a couple of weeks now, so I cannot say definitively whether I notice any improvement from this combination. But thirty minutes in the sauna definitely contributes to my sense of relaxation, which is never a bad thing!

Exercise has always played an important role in my healing journey. We all know that staying active is important, but for those of us with MS, it is critical! I have always belonged to a gym and done heavy weight training and Body Pump for many years. During the COVID lockdown, I continued my workouts at home, and added walking three miles a day to my routine. When things opened back up, I did not feel like returning to my old gym. I felt like it was time to try something new. That something new was Reformer Pilates. Pilates seemed like the perfect option at this stage of my life because it is a mix of strength training, balance, and stretching—all very necessary not only as I age, but as I age with MS. I have been doing Pilates four times a week for over a year now, and I know it was the right decision. When I was younger, I was very flexible, but I did not realize until I started Pilates how much of that flexibility I had lost, whether it be to age or MS. Over the past year, I have seen my flexibility improve, and most exciting of all, my balance has improved overall—but markedly on my right side, the side affected by MS. Pilates has also been a good addition because it is a very calming form of exercise; it is a great way to reset in the middle of the craziness of life!

The most recent step in my journey was to do a DNA test through the DNA Company ([www.thednacompany.com](http://www.thednacompany.com)). This is not a DNA test like Ancestry or 23 and Me—this test is all about my genes and how they affect my physical health, mental health, sleep, and many other areas, and how to optimize all of that through supplements, food, and the lifestyle choices that I make. It was interesting to see that many of the traits that make me who I am are actually a result of my DNA. It also confirmed that my MS is real and not just another illness that presents as MS, which in a weird way felt good to know, as it confirmed that I had not been chasing the wrong diagnosis for over twenty-two years. Based on the recommendations of the report, I have updated my supplements and included the recommended foods as often as possible. Saunas and cold therapy were two recommendations that I was already doing, but now I know that there are some genetically beneficial reasons for it. It is something I will continue to incorporate as often as possible.

My diet has been pretty consistent since I started gluten and dairy-free. I was religious about not cheating for the first ten years and rarely ate out because it was so difficult. Like I said earlier, it wasn't mainstream, and a lot of people didn't understand when I told them I was gluten-free. Now, I occasionally have a treat, like a good slice of sourdough bread or a sweet treat like a donut (my weakness). I do eat out, but I try to remain mindful of my choices. I mostly eat organic, whole foods. If I eat meat at home, I choose grass-fed. Dairy is challenging because I love it, but I rarely cheat because it gives me a cough and horrible congestion. I found out from my DNA test that I am lactose intolerant, so dairy hits me hard.

I recently had my six-month checkup with my doctor, and she talked to me about some other modalities that I may want to try down the road, depending on what is happening with my MS in the future. This reminded me that the story that you just read is where I am at today, but I'm not done. This journey is lifelong. My health is a work-in-progress, and I will never stop researching and trying new things to stay ahead of the curve with regards to my MS.

I want to thank Agota for writing this book. Not only for the benefits it will provide others, but also because it gave me an opportunity to walk back through my journey. I had forgotten how difficult it was in the beginning, but I always knew that there was a way through. Almost twenty-three years later, I am so glad I made the choice to do it without the pharmaceuticals. I feel amazing today, almost forgetting that MS is part of my life. But I cannot get complacent. If I get lazy and do not take my supplements or eat whatever comes my way, I feel the little signs that remind me MS is a disease that does not go away. An amazing woman I

met through the internet, when I was first on my journey to manage my MS alternatively, named Betty Iams, used to say, “I have MS, it does not have me.” That is an adage that has stuck with me! I believe that I am in control, based on the choices I make. Anyone newly diagnosed, don’t panic, don’t let yourself be pressured into doing something you aren’t comfortable with, do your own research, and don’t make decisions out of fear—and most importantly, trust your gut! If you would like to reach out to me, you can find me on Instagram @graygator1. I would love to hear from you!

## FINAL NOTE

***"Before you heal someone, ask him if he is willing to give up the things that made him sick." -Hippocrates***

As we reach the end of this book, I hope these stories have not only inspired you but also encouraged you to take a moment to reflect on your own life. The purpose of this book has been to shine a light on aspects that deserve recognition and change. It's not just about MS or autoimmune diseases; it's a call to awareness, an invitation to slow down and reevaluate our lives.

Our ancestors had wisdom we can learn from, and with today's technology and knowledge, we can create a healthier, more harmonious world, instead of heading down a destructive path. It's as simple as pausing to take a deep breath, enjoying the smell of flowers, and appreciating the beauty that surrounds us.

We hope you've found this book to be a valuable guide. In closing, remember that while healing isn't guaranteed, it's always within reach. The life you choose to lead is firmly in your hands. Join us on **[www.BeatingMultipleSclerosis.com](http://www.BeatingMultipleSclerosis.com)** to explore all the limitless possibilities together.