

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

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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

ALICE SYDOW

Diagnosed in 2007

Currently 48 years old

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My journey with multiple sclerosis (MS) has been a lengthy one, navigating a course filled with medications resembling a passport's array of stamps. Instead of traveling to somewhere fabulous, I received a one-way ticket to Crazytown and Depressedville, with many stops at red lights on Anxiety Avenue. If you are reading this, perhaps you can relate. You see, I was never taught how to regulate or manage my emotions, and I was always a deeply sensitive girl. As I grew up, even during my grade school years, I found myself attuned to other people's emotions. I can recall being on the playground when bullies would tear down those who could not defend themselves. I would stick up for them and try to console the victims because I could feel what they were feeling. It hurts badly to feel others' emotions. When my own emotions became big, I didn't know how to regulate or process them. I would bury them inside my body. I never learned how to let them out, even though I wanted to SCREAM. Over time, those feelings and trapped emotions built up inside my body,

which is what I attribute to the dis-ease that unfolded in my life. Alongside this, I encountered other factors like mercury fillings (mercury poisoning), residing in a dorm room during college that had been closed-down due to asbestos, six months after I had moved out, that resulted in losing my sense of smell (fungicides/toxins/asbestos), and picking up parasites during a trip to Paris when I was twenty-two.

Adding to the burden of the viral load in my body, I endured both verbal and physical abuse as a small child, unable to defend myself. I never learned coping skills for handling the shame and sadness brought on by these experiences. Seeking validation, I resorted to love, alcohol, sex, shopping, and more addictions, unable to build a strong foundation. My saving grace came with the diagnosis because it forced me to heal unresolved trauma that I never even knew I had. It wasn't until I was diagnosed with MS, numb from the waist down, bedridden, handed a cane, bankrupt, and broken that I had the time to process and look deep within. I finally found the freedom I had been searching for my entire life. Now, as I put the cane in the closet and begin to walk freely, I bring more balance to my life. Gone are the days of people pleasing, playing the nice girl, the good girl, the victim, and the girl with the disability/cane. The old story was about me reaching for a cane, or anything outside of myself, to help me cope with the pain. NOW, I tell a NEW story: a story of resilience, a story of compassion, a story of grace, a story of accomplishment—a story of FREEDOM.

My intention in sharing my story is to shed light on the workings of big pharma and how I felt trapped within that system. I found a way to break free and learned that healing IS POSSIBLE. Instead of accepting the notion of “impossible” or “incurable”, words doctors often use which instill fear, I want to spread the message that healing is within reach. My aim is to inspire hope and show that there are alternative paths to wellness and empowerment. Audrey Hepburn once said, “The word itself spells ‘I’m POSSIBLE’.” In my discovery, words have power. When I began to look at the root cause of my health condition, I realized that it was my body out of alignment and flow that led to dis-ease. Suddenly, I found myself using a word I never thought would apply to me—disability. But then, I decided to take the “dis” out of the equation and get to the root of the problem. I discovered the ABILITY to find healing and balance.

It wasn't until I challenged and reversed all the programming I had been taught about the condition that I began to create a new story. I wanted to redefine not just the “dis-ease” portrayed by the western medical model as multiple sclerosis, but to tell a new story about my journey of healing.

Every day, I shift my mindset and am retraining my brain to live a life of freedom, ease, and grace.

However, before I share with you where I am now, I need to introduce you to a version of Alice who was diagnosed with a condition doctors call MS, and what I refer to as

“The body being out of flow and balance”. We’ll call her “Adderall Alice”.

Let’s begin, shall we?

We all know the story of Alice who goes down the rabbit hole. Like Alice, my own journey began as I traveled the world to far-flung destinations, having the time of my life as a Travel Director. I was constantly on the road with a travel company, working 320 days a year for five years, conducting corporate events and business meetings for Fortune 500 clients. At twenty-three, I was living the life at first class VIP events, such as the American Music Awards, the Super Bowl, the Kentucky Derby, the Indianapolis 500, and several other high-profile events. I was getting a taste of what life was like in the fast lane through VIP clubs, red carpets, and five-star resorts. I traveled to far destinations, such as South Africa, Buenos Aires, and the Greek Islands. It wasn’t until I became burnt out and tired of traveling that I began to look for another opportunity.

Unfortunately, at that time, the job market was challenging as September 11th had happened the prior Fall, and no one was hiring. I ended up finding a job that paid twice my salary as a Business Analyst, which relocated me from St. Louis to Minneapolis earlier that year. I had majored in marketing in college and always wanted to be in sales, so I thought that even though I disliked math, I could transition into sales once I got my foot in the door. I had a beautiful, large office; yet I felt like a caged bird, analyzing sales data. A dark contrast from lying on a yacht in the Mediterranean, being sprayed with a water bottle by a hot Danish man in full uniform.

Despite being far from following my passion, my goal was to adopt a mindset of “getting a few years of experience, then transition”. I disliked the job very much; however, the management and training were exceptional. I ended up excelling and received a promotion almost a year later to a Retail Sales Representative role. This time, I was wearing khaki pants while walking into accounts, like Walmart and PetSmart, selling pet food and schlepping fifty-pound bags of dog food as I stocked the shelves of major retailers. Again, I disliked the role, but I felt I needed

the experience. You might be wondering how different it was to go from traveling the world, staying in luxurious hotels, like the Ritz-Carlton and the Four Seasons, in the exciting travel industry, to working in the pet food industry. Let me tell you, it was a stark contrast, and this is where the dis-ease in my body began to take shape.

One day, I was in a Walmart, looking at a shelf stocked with cat food (snooze), reading the pricing labels. I saw one price tag above another. I didn't realize what was going on, so I sloughed it off as just being overly tired. The following day, I was on my way to the airport during the week off for the Thanksgiving holiday to work an event in Scottsdale for a golf program. As I walked to the gate to catch the plane, the double vision started to resurface. I called the Lead of the program, and he suggested I go to a LensCrafters (an eyewear retailer) before going to the work room at the hotel.

After arriving at the mall, I managed to see the ophthalmologist, and he examined my eyes. Concerned about what he saw, he recommended immediate magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). Despite it being Thanksgiving week, I got the scans done. When the radiologist approached me afterward, they informed me that the staff had left but felt compelled to tell me that I might have a brain tumor. In utter shock, I went back to my hotel. I spoke with the team, and they suggested I fly home immediately to be with my family. It was a celebratory holiday, and all my family could focus on was the thought that I had to undergo brain surgery. I was twenty-nine years old; it was a very scary time.

I had to wait almost a week to see a neurologist. She said that my scan indicated a possibility of MS, but she couldn't officially diagnose it as it wasn't within the guidelines of the MS rule book at that time. I had no idea what MS was. Back then (circa 2005), doctors did not give an official diagnosis until the patient experienced a second flare-up or occurrence. The neurologist recommended that I undergo an evoked potential test and a spinal tap, which involves inserting a needle into the spine. I agreed to the evoked potential test but decided against the spinal tap because of my severe fear of needles. Little did I know that within a few years, I would be giving myself a shot every day for the duration of SEVEN YEARS! The doctor told me to wait until I had another flare-up, then she could officially diagnose me and prescribe the necessary medication. I went home and lived my life, trying not to focus on the unknowns of my future. The rules around this are different now. They suggest medication immediately following diagnosis.

The second flare-up didn't occur until two years later, after I had transitioned from the pet food industry to managing events for a company run by one of the largest liquor companies in the world. My job entailed hiring youthful looking models to serve liquor in bars, restaurants, and events. After my success in implementing great processes and improvements in that role, I received a promotion and was managing all the restaurant sales for the entire state of Minnesota. I had achieved my goal of making six figures, but life had a different plan for me.

I was now thirty-one. One day while I was working out at the gym, I noticed tingling on the bottom of my feet. I initially thought it was my Diesel tennis shoes, as I had purchased them in Italy, but unfortunately, I was wrong. Over the course of a few days, the numbness and tingling traveled up to my waist. I called my neurologist and was finally diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. I was devastated and felt like my life had shattered, convinced I was going to end up in a wheelchair because that is what I was initially told.

During this time, there was so much activity taking place, which only added to my mind-body-spirit dysregulation. When I look back on how I was living when numbness overtook my body, it dawned on me that perhaps I became numb because I was numb to life! This made sense to me because I was not in alignment with my true self. I was working a job I didn't love, ignoring the signs, chasing the dollar, and attempting to numb the pain by not dealing with the root cause of why dis-ease manifested in my life. I knew something was wrong, and I was not caring for myself like I should. I was completely disconnected from my body and my life.

The day I was given the news, the neurologist prescribed a medication to help with the condition, which to my dismay, was a shot I had to give myself everyday (Copaxone), a stimulant for fatigue (Ritalin, then Adderall), antidepressants, anti-anxiety medication, and sleep medication (Ambien). There were never any suggestions on holistic or more natural approaches, like mindfulness, meditation, yoga, supplements, homeopathic remedies, etc. I hope that today, more neurologists are aware of these tools that are readily available to help manage symptoms, emotions, and stress. But sadly, I think as a patient, YOU are responsible for being your own advocate. This is why so much fear lives within the autoimmune world because doctors are still saying that the body attacks itself. I understand why they say this, as the myelin sheath gets diminished; however, that narrative needs to be reframed. As an abuse survivor (mental and physical), I've carried a lot of shame around my

body. So naturally, when the doctors told me it was my body's fault for attacking itself, it triggered self-hatred and anger because of the trauma I endured as a child.

Now, let's continue down the rabbit hole. Once I was diagnosed and in shock, I pretty much lived with the shame that there was something wrong with me and constantly put myself down in my head. I eventually (thank GOD) regained all feeling and function in my lower extremities after eight months of being bedridden. It is also important to note that at the time of the initial diagnosis, I was extremely depressed and shared with a not-so-close friend that my life would be better if I jumped off the balcony of my condo because I could not handle this diagnosis. She took me to outpatient therapy where I had to go daily for months. While I was there, they pumped me full of more drugs like Ambien and Zoloft, Abilify, etc. so I recall feeling strung out. I continued taking them, but in hindsight, I believe I was situationally depressed because of the multiple sclerosis diagnosis, and I might not have needed such heavy doses or combinations of medications. If more time was spent learning emotion regulation verses pumping my body with pharmaceuticals, I feel things would have been different.

As time passed, I started feeling better, and my friends invited me to go out and meet them. I remember choosing a beautiful dress in blue and green colors that brightened my skin tone. When I looked in the mirror, I thought to myself, "I look pretty; I don't look or feel sick." It amazed me how dressing up lifted my spirits after being bedridden. It made me realize that if I could feel this good by putting on a great outfit, I could potentially help others feel better, too.

Over the next week, I discovered the image consulting industry, and to my surprise, it turned out that being an image consultant was an actual career. Excited about this career, I immediately approached my mom and told her my plan to fly to NYC for certification in image line design and color. Off I went to pursue my newfound passion, and in doing so, I found my JOY. Corporate America was no longer my focus; instead, I was working for myself, doing what I loved. I was so excited to create a new life for myself that I did not put any focus or attention on my health condition. I did not speak about MS, and no one around me knew I had it. I hid behind the closed doors of shame, morning, and night, while administering my Copaxone shot, suffering silently on the inside. If that is not closeted shame, then I don't know what is, right, Brene Brown?

From my viewpoint, I acted like I did not have MS. I did not give it airtime in my mind. However, I was not working on the inner shame and

anger; I was just stuffing it down, which is how I was taught to deal with emotions. It's no wonder I like to use the acronym "MS" for "Must Scream", as I was never taught how to let my emotions out and that it was okay to do so. According to Louise Hay's book "You Can Heal Your Life", she states, "MS indicates mental hardness, hard-heartedness, iron-will, inflexibility, and fear. She suggests a new thought pattern, "By choosing loving, joyous thoughts, I create a joyous and loving world. I am safe and free." I wish I had known this then as I would have written this down on notecards and hung them on my mirror. Instead, I took my daily shot and focused on what brought me joy—helping others feel good and showing them their own inner beauty. I thought I was doing the work, but I was scapegoating and bypassing.

Although I was teaching others how to love themselves, I was not in alignment with my truth. Deep down, I had not done the inner work of truly loving myself, accepting the diagnosis, and understanding why the diagnosis had shown up in the first place. Six months after I flew back from NYC with my certification, my career took off. I started doing live TV shows, made appearances on Twin Cities Live, worked with radio stations, and styled photo shoots for newspapers and magazines. Additionally, I began consulting with clients, helping them with wardrobe and color choices. I even appeared on the hit reality show produced by Rachel Zoe called *Resale Royalty*, which is currently on Amazon Prime.

It was a successful seven-year fashionable run, until it wasn't!

During those years, I was on Copaxone until Tecfidera came out. My neurologist suggested I try it because it was the first oral drug to hit the market. I had been on Tecfidera for a short time, and when I was heading to a closet edit appointment with a client, my phone died. I knew the general vicinity of where she lived, as I had been there before but made a wrong turn off the highway. I found myself in an industrial area and pulled over to an auto body shop to ask for directions in a sea of office buildings. I walked into an all-male body shop, dressed to impress. They were perplexed by my random appearance in their garage. I asked for directions to the Eden Prairie mall in Minnesota. I knew how to get to my client's house from the mall, so this was my rationale. They wrote directions down on a small piece of paper, and I went on my way. I could not find the mall, so I went back the way I came. This time, I asked them for a phone charger. They agreed to find a charger and disappeared in the back of the building. At the time, I recall standing in their waiting room, feeling nervous because I could not call my client to share that I was going to be late for our session. I feel this must have triggered the mania

in my body, and it is likely they sensed something was off. When someone is manic, they may speak very fast and can exhibit illogical thinking. A few moments later, they returned, saying I had to come outside because they had called the police. The police officer put me in the back of a cop car as if I were a criminal. I asked them what was going on, but all they told me was that I had to stay in the back seat. Then, an ambulance arrived. They took me by my arms, put me on a gurney in the ambulance, and impounded my car. I had no choice, and none of my contacts were called. Throughout all of this, I was kept in the dark as to what was happening. Looking back, the least they could have done was allow me to call a friend and have them come pick me up, versus hauling me off to the hospital.

Once admitted, I recall being in a room with a man who proceeded to take my blood and check my vitals. Then, unexpectedly, two large men forced me into a wheelchair, pushing me down and restraining my arms. They didn't allow me to call anyone for help. I was a victim of the medical system in a cage of misfortune. I went from complete freedom at 9 am to feeling stuck in purgatory by 2 pm. Nobody was ever informed or notified about my situation.

Once I was forced and wheeled into the psyche ward, I was put on a forty-eight-hour hold. They would not let me take any of my Adderall, but they allowed all the other meds I was on. I pleaded with the male doctors that I needed to taper down off the Adderall, which, by then, I was on 60-70mg per day. I knew the side effects of going off Adderall cold turkey were intense and varied. I would need a small amount of it, or else my body would go into shock. Unfortunately, they didn't listen to me, my voice wasn't heard, and I was completely cut off from the meds. My body went into shock, as they cut me off the stimulant. I understand their reasoning, as they may have been considering a normal, able-bodied, healthy person, without a prior diagnosis of MS. However, I was not harming anyone, and they completely disregarded my diagnosis, my sensitive nervous system, and my pleas for them to taper me down from the medication, which is where the fault lies. Within forty-eight hours after the cutoff, my body began to break down, and I found myself grasping onto walls and losing my balance. In my opinion, being taken off the medication abruptly, and the stress of not being heard, threw my body out of balance, causing a flare-up. I went into the hospital fully mobile but came out needing a cane and handicapped.

My hope with this story is to shed light on the concerning treatment of patients in these hospitals. A protocol should have been in place for individuals with a history of being on antidepressants, having

autoimmune disorders, and/or sensitive nervous systems. It's crucial to address this concern and adopt a more sensitive approach to tapering off medications.

In addition, since being admitted, I continued to urge the staff to let me see a neurologist. I explained that I was a successful business owner and had been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, and my neurologist had prescribed the medication to help with fatigue. It took them a staggering NINE DAYS to finally allow a neurologist to come see me, but it was too late; the damage had already been done.

I strongly believe that if I had been able to call a friend or loved one, the unfolding events could have resulted in a completely different outcome. The way mental health is addressed in this country is completely broken and backwards. I hope my story sheds some light into the darkness of the entire mental health field. The crazy thing is that I wasn't even taking the Adderall for what it is prescribed for—I was taking it solely for energy to combat the fatigue due to a diagnosed medical condition. Stimulants are prescribed like candy to those suffering from fatigue in the autoimmune disease community. However, it only lasts for so long, then you need to bump up the dosage. For example, when I was first diagnosed, I was given 20mg. Over the course of seven years, my doctor had increased it to the point of 30mg two times per day, with a bump of 10mg in the afternoon when needed, and it fried my brain! Not to mention all the side effects from mixing this drug with antidepressants, Ambien, and a cocktail of other drugs I took solely due to the diagnosis. I tried to speak with a lawyer about medical malpractice/negligence, but I was suffering emotionally from such severe PTSD, depression, and shock, and I could barely walk. I recall the moment I had the strength to finally call an attorney, but I was advised against it. Hospitals have insurance, and the people admitted to psych wards are often in a distressed state, causing them to regularly lose their cases. I should have fought harder, but I was in shock, living alone in a city without family or support. By that time, I had lost my downtown high-rise condo, had to go on disability because I was unable to work, and found myself on welfare, living in government housing.

My life was spiraling, and I found myself going from Prada to PayLess.

Since I started using a cane while on Tecifdera, my neurologist suggested that I might be transitioning to Primary-Progressive MS (PPMS). They prescribed Tysabri, an infusion treatment. However, before starting it, I had to ensure I tested negative for the JC virus because, if positive, it could lead to progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy (PML). She

suggested that I go on the medication, even though my test returned back positive for the JC virus. I was in such a low place and disconnected from life and body, I followed her suggestions. After I started Tysabri, my gait became worse, and I would feel sick after each infusion. I repeatedly pleaded to discontinue the medication. It's important to emphasize that this was how my body reacted, and I understand that these medications can be helpful for others with the same condition. I'm just sharing my experience that they didn't work for me.

At that time, I sought second opinions on what my next move should be. I met with two different neurologists and asked if they would have taken me off Copaxone. Both of them pointed out that my MRI tests were stable, and they would have advised me to continue with that treatment. I was furious; this led me to question EVERYTHING! If I had tested positive for the JC virus, could I have other viruses in my system, like Epstein Barr? What if I had PML because it manifests as mental slowness, disorientation, and behavioral changes, which I experienced at the time of my MS diagnosis? What if MS could be caused by a virus? Maybe I had something other than MS? I was so confused! I went down the rabbit hole, as every good Alice does, and I began to uncover a lot of information. This all made sense when I read *The Medical Medium*. It explains how the root cause of MS is the Epstein Barr virus. More studies are coming out about Epstein Barr virus being the root of MS; however, my current neurologist says there are not enough studies to determine this.

About a year after I was released from the hospital, I was mailed the book *The Wahls Protocol* by Dr. Terry Wahls, and I saw how others were managing and thriving by changing their diet. Following her recommendation to visit a functional medicine doctor, my perspective started to shift around the diagnosis. So, thank you, Dr. Wahls, for the work you do. It gave me hope when I saw countless people's success stories about how they were changing their diet and coming off their medication. Also, her recommendation on removing heavy metals from your mouth made sense to me. I followed her protocol for three and a half years, and then plateaued. I had not yet delved into the trauma. Instead, I switched from the paleo diet bandwagon to the vegan bandwagon and decided to try following the Medical Medium. I stuck to this lifestyle for another three-and-a-half years, but unfortunately, I wasn't getting better with this approach either. Initially, it always started out great, but the positive results didn't last long. I felt good and would notice my body becoming more flexible, or I would have more energy here and there.

I then began to work with a specialist here in St. Louis and found results with his approach to prevention and healing. I conducted more tests, which found large amounts of mercury still in my body, so I did heavy metal chelations, along with many parasite cleanses. I have to say that western doctors, who are covered by health insurance, do not offer the same tests as functional medicine doctors. Reviewing the test results from the doctors who I have paid out-of-pocket to are remarkable. Learning about the amount of lead, arsenic, heavy metals, and toxins I had in my body, along with fungicides, pesticides, parasites, and bacteria, was helpful in connecting the dots and discovering what was causing the MS or dis-ease in my body. I feel when we detox and get the viral load down in our body, it helps the body to heal, repair, and renew. Taking action by doing things to support my body physically was very empowering, especially when I began to see a difference in my fatigue, brain fog, foot drop, hips, balance, bladder incontinence, focus, and overall flexibility.

At one of my vitamin C infusions, I was given *The LDN Book 3* from a nurse. I had not heard of this as an alternative to treating autoimmune conditions. The book shares how “low dose naltrexone (LDN) modifies the disease processes of MS at the cellular level, as well as decreases the symptoms. It can be used to improve sleep, balance hormones, improve the body’s ability to detoxify, help stabilize epigenetic changes, improve the health in the gut, and modulate the immune response, changing immune pathways to heal healthier ones.” Since I was learning about changing the mind at a cellular level through meditation, I wanted to explore this option. I asked my functional medicine doctor if he would write a prescription for me, and he agreed. I got it filled at a compound pharmacy, and from my research, the results looked to be successful. Unfortunately, my neurologist will not prescribe it because there is not substantial research. I share this for those who are curious about the book and if it resonates to find a doctor who will help you get on this alternative medication. I believe you can also get it online at a reasonable price.

It is important to note at the time of publication that I had been on LDN for only a few months. I am unsure how long I will be taking it. I have noticed that I am sleeping better. Because I have not taken prescribed medication for a long time, I will reevaluate how I feel after six months. As always, I let my body tell me what it needs, and it always leads me in the right direction. The way I do this is by sitting still, placing my hand on my heart, another on my gut, and talking to my body, asking what is best.

I was so focused on using food as medicine and detox protocols to solve my health problems that I just wasn't ready to do the trauma work. It was just too much, and I had to do things in stages. Once I had cleaned up my body, I began to work with a therapist and process everything that happened that dreadful day. I had to learn how to integrate and release the sadness and anger instead of running away from it. It was then that I realized how learning emotional regulation could have made things different. However, I also learned that this was the path I needed to walk, even if I was handicapped. Now, I can teach others through my story, as a survivor of addiction, verbal and physical abuse, and abandonment. I want them to know that trauma survivors can heal and reclaim their lives by learning to love themselves again. I did this by reclaiming my innate value, worth, and putting myself first by building good boundaries. To make this happen, I had to take an active role to not disassociate from the trauma but to be with it and resolve it, so it could be released from my body. I was extremely controlling and had to release that pattern, amongst many others. We are human and soak up patterns like a sponge. As I began to heal and balance my body, it started to regenerate and thrive. Allowing the energy to flow freely was crucial, as pent-up emotions had wreaked havoc on my systems for decades. When the energy is blocked, organs and systems can break down. By LEARNING HOW TO RELEASE and allow emotions to flow, my health improved significantly.

My FREEDOM came from telling a NEW STORY.

In my previous life, claiming the diagnosis of “MS”, I went on Copaxone, Tecfidera, Tysabri. It wasn't until I decided to take a stand against the abusive relationship I had with the pharmaceutical industry that I found freedom. I made the bold decision to discontinue the long list of medications I had been taking for almost a decade, and that's when I finally experienced a sense of liberation.

As I reflect on both diet lifestyles, I've come to realize that the true path to freedom was not through what I ate but working through and integrating healthy ways of being and learning to love myself from the inside out. Instead of constantly striving and putting energy into diets, I found that focusing on telling myself a new story that I CAN heal. My inner healing was the key to genuine transformation and self-acceptance. It was time for ALICE to change and TRANSFORM herself. There was no diet that was going to save me, no magic pill. I was going to have to go down the rabbit hole and make peace with it ALL and FORGIVE. I could not bypass this—I HAD TO WORK ON ME!

I now eat a balanced diet, VERY LOW SUGAR, and focus on healing my gut on the candida diet lifestyle to combat the yeast and bacteria which have not yet healed. I work with the meridians and energy centers (chakras) in the body, and I know when the energy is stuck, and I am not in flow. I have learned practices that I do on myself, such as Reiki, Donna Eden's energy routine, and several forms of meditation to clear energy from the body and organs.

All of the symptoms I once had are no longer part of my day-to-day experience. The only thing that reminds me I even have a health condition is the fact that I am not able to walk freely and balance for long distances, which is improving every day. I do a daily practice of crawling with knee pads to help with core strength, and I walk up and down steps every day. In addition to eating better, my big things I have liked doing and gotten positive results from were heavy metal chelation, vitamin C infusions, saunas, parasite cleanses, coffee enemas, colonics, castor oil packs, and many other things to detox toxins out of the body. As a result, I no longer feel severe brain fog, fatigue, and my mind is sharper. I go over all of these on my YouTube channel *Style Your Glow with Alice*. I understand it is expensive and some may not want to pay out-of-pocket. I did a GoFundMe to raise the funds to pay for these costs and found scholarships from the MS Society listed in resources below. By the grace of God, everything I have needed on my healing path was covered, from juicers, to a Vitamix, water filters, saunas, organic food expenses, etc. I receive my energy from food and supplements and have been free from the pharmaceuticals my neurologist prescribed for seven years. I now use plant tinctures and homeopathy to help balance my nervous system, such as ALA (support the brain barrier), vitamin D, B12 and B complex, liquid zinc, CoQ10, and others, which my doctor suggests for me according to my lab tests. I am hopeful to add in more sugar eventually and eat even more of a balanced diet, but for now, I'm focusing on my gut and intuition. Every morning, I dedicate time to connecting with my body and listening to its needs.

I have come to the conclusion that the root cause of my body's troubles was a cytokine storm, triggered by severe stress, which brought forth deeply held, unprocessed trauma. This stress, combined with the buildup of heavy metals from having mercury fillings taken out and put back in, exposure to toxins in a closed-down college dorm with asbestos, parasites from a near-death experience due to food poisoning in Paris, mold deep in my cells, along with fungicides, yeast, and bacteria running rampant in my body—all of it began to make sense.

I learned how to release the past and move through the trauma, forgiving myself along the way. Establishing a healthy relationship with my body and setting boundaries became part of my journey (though I'm still a work-in-progress). As I started to develop deep self-love and gratitude towards my body, my perspective on my illness began to shift.

I leaned into understanding how and why my life spun out of control. Instead of searching for external reasons, I began looking within myself for the answers.

I began to FORGIVE IT ALL!

I have been walking with a cane (or what I call the crutch) for nine years. I am trying my best to rehabilitate my body, walking freely without the crutch in my home. When I am out in public, I practice not using it to retrain my brain. I am not where I want to be yet; it takes time, and I'm hopeful.

If you are reading this and have received the devastating diagnosis of MS or know someone who has, I want to offer hope that healing and freedom are possible. It's essential to remember that everyone's journey is unique, and finding answers within yourself is crucial. I'm not suggesting that you have to go off your medication; that decision is yours to make. The most important thing is to believe in the possibility of healing and never lose hope.

In summary, my healing journey has taken me from Fear (False Evidence Appearing Real), to Flow, and finally, to FREEDOM! I switched the narrative I tell myself to "I AM" healing verses, staying in the mentality of "There is nothing to be done". I feel this experience unfolded to happen FOR me, not TO me. Now, I am healthier, truly in love with my body, and I've learned to embrace more patience, kindness, and compassion towards myself and others. Most importantly, I feel a deep connection to spirit and a newfound appreciation for the small things in life.

MS for me means "Mindset Shift", and I work daily on my mindset and hope to share how I do this with others on my social media.

This journey has transformed me in ways I could never have imagined. I am still not where I want to be after the tragic day in the hospital, and I still have forgiveness work to do. I walk with the cane when I need it. Each day, I practice "free walking", and I am more flexible now. I also work on my mood and my thoughts. I have come a long way in learning

how to reverse my victim mentality by speaking to myself differently. I no longer talk like I “have” MS; instead, I speak of it as a result of a manifestation of who I once was. I have compassion and love for the girl I was back when I received my diagnosis. Now, I have an entirely new outlook! I hope sharing my journey helps to inspire others to make small changes in their lives and proves that MS is possible to overcome. I now know and understand that my body has my back. I am no longer defined by this illness. It’s in my past, and I have stopped talking about it like I have something wrong with me.

At this point, I reflect on the past nine years of my healing journey. I’ve worked on detoxing drugs from my body, learned the power of healing herbs and foods, and prioritized putting myself first. I’ve let go of the bullshit, limiting beliefs, and outdated patterns I inherited from my parents—patterns that no longer serve me. Now, I am paving a new life, filled with balance, joy, fun, excitement, gratitude, and love. Being on the other side of it feels exhilarating, and I hold onto the hope of walking completely free someday. Taking one day at a time, I recognize my limits and put myself first above all else, setting solid boundaries.

Witnessing the regeneration in my own body every day on this journey to wellness is remarkable. It’s essential to remember how far I have come and that I am someone’s inspiration and goal. This keeps me motivated and driven to move forward. I want you to know that wherever you are on your own journey, there is always a light at the end of the tunnel. I’m here holding the torch of freedom for YOU! Remember, healing is possible, and there’s hope for a brighter and healthier future ahead.

The light in ME loves the light in YOU!
Xoxo, Alice

If you want to learn how I manage my health and wellness, you can follow me at www.styleyourglow.com and on social @styleyourglow369 on YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, Linked in, & Pinterest.

Check out your local food share resources in your city to help you with free, organic food. For example, I was a volunteer in St. Louis for the St. Louis Food Share Network, and in Minneapolis called Sisters Camelot, where I was able to get organic food for free to help me in my healing.

I have also benefited from grants from the following programs. Hopefully, they can help you, too:

MS Society 1-800-344-4867 (canes, equipment, help with mental health)
MS Association of America 1-800-532-7667 (equipment, MRI reimbursement)

MS Foundation also MS Focus 1-888-673-6287 (rent, utilities, eyeglasses, transportation, cooling program, etc.)

United Way 211

Modest Needs 1-844-667-3776

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** to explore all the limitless possibilities together.