

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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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.

CONTENTS

Disclaimer

1	Agota N. - Diagnosed in 2019	1
2	Paige N. - Diagnosed in 2019	28
3	Katy - Diagnosed in 2020	44
4	Angie G. - Diagnosed in 2004	56
5	Elisa F. - Diagnosed in 2011	65
6	Kelly G. - Diagnosed in 2015	81
7	Bob C. - Diagnosed in 1999	89
8	Nassira - Diagnosed in 2018	100
9	Biljana - Diagnosed in 2013	107
10	Mohammed - Diagnosed in 2018	112
11	Kathryn - Diagnosed in 2018	117
12	Claudie - Diagnosed in 1996	120
13	Laila - Diagnosed in 2010	129
14	Adria H. - Diagnosed in 2020	133
15	Mara R. - Diagnosed in 2004	159
16	Kelly K. - Diagnosed in 2015	164
17	Michelle - Diagnosed in 1996	182
18	Joanne M. - Diagnosed in 2009	190
19	Helena K. - Diagnosed in 2000	205
20	Sam P. - Diagnosed in 2015	212

21	Alicia - Diagnosed in 2018	230
22	Dawnmarie D. - Diagnosed in 2012	240
23	Clare M. - Diagnosed in 2019	243
24	Sofia C. - Diagnosed in 2013	250
25	Andrea - Diagnosed in 2000	257
26	Meryl H. - Diagnosed in 1999	268
27	Conor K. - Diagnosed in 2003	274
28	Parmjit K. - Diagnosed in 2008	286
29	Kadesha R. - Diagnosed in 2012	298
30	Melody W. - Diagnosed in 2013	306
31	Lieza - Diagnosed in 2016	312
32	Jasmin D. - Diagnosed in 2008	321
33	Megan L. - Diagnosed in 2007	325
34	Gabriel - Diagnosed in 2018	339
35	Talia - Diagnosed in 2016	348
36	Alice S. - Diagnosed in 2007	357
37	Maria I. - Diagnosed in 2012	373

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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34

Story by

GABRIEL

Diagnosed in 2018

Currently 33 years old

Lives in France

Spotify Podcast: Chronic Stories

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On June 18, 2018, I was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS). The diagnosis hit me like a punch by Mike Tyson in his prime—only I was blindfolded and never saw it coming. The notion was so surreal that it all sounded like a terrible nightmare you can't wake up from. Your mind immediately jumps to an analysis of all the potential implications, which, frankly speaking, you can barely comprehend, considering the emotional rush you go through simultaneously.

I'd been told repeatedly during the first few days that I was one of, if not, THE strongest person some people knew, which ordinarily comes as a great compliment. This time though, it made me feel so powerless. I would discreetly tear up when someone said it to me. At the same time, you know deep down that you must demonstrate strength and character to lift the hearts of your loved ones. I am not saying that you need to lie about how you feel. Keeping a positive mindset is ultimately what you'll

need to do if you want to tackle a disease that feeds off stress and sorrow. Aside from being deeply hurt psychologically, beyond your own self, you think of your loved ones and how this will impact them, too. The feelings you are forced to deal with are so powerful that it would take hours and countless characters for me to explain it all.

I've never cried so much in my life. I cried every single day for an entire week, hidden from view, most of the time alone in my room at my parents' house. "I never hurt a fly...I don't deserve this," I would tell myself.

When you realize that you're getting better at verbalizing it, you let your head fall within your hands and exclaim: "I cannot believe this is happening to me." The spiral of self-pity and despair can suck you in at the speed of light. I know it because I felt it nearby, but you must stay away from it.

That being said, the situation is inevitably sad and stressful. Finding the right balance of expressing your feelings, even alone in your room, while being optimistic is tough.

One of the hardest comments to hear at first is, "You know, people can live very well with it, nowadays!" To which you just want to answer, "How about we switch places, and you tell me how things are going five years from now? Nah!?" Knowing that we can have a normal life, contrary to what others may think, is not comforting at all. It didn't make me more willing to experience it whatsoever.

The lack of information at first is also something that is hard to deal with because you feel disoriented but don't know where to go from that point, what your journey will be made of, or if you have the necessary courage to succeed.

Handling the sadness of those who love you and understanding that you are not the only one affected is also important. Ignoring their pain is denying them the same right that you have to suffer. The news is so painful that you can easily become selfish, thinking this is only happening to you. But just as the death of someone affects an entire family, so does a bad diagnosis. Even though you must put yourself first, you somehow wish to watch over them, not worrying them more than needed.

They say, when it rains, it pours. This is exactly what happened to me. I lost my dad to cancer eight months following my diagnosis. Yeah...those

eight months were tough, man. I had been so intensely sad over my diagnosis that, although crushed by my dad's death, I did not show any emotion. I had no tears left in the tank. It was like my diagnosis had pumped them all out. The urgency I was in to find the key to my health overshadowed the imminent death of my father, too. We already knew by July 2018 (I was diagnosed in June) that the doctor had run out of solutions for my dad, so I had to manage my feelings over my own health, as well as my parents' emotions.

My dad knew that he'd be soon gone—which is hard enough to fathom by itself—but on top of it, he had to accept the idea of leaving both my mom and me to deal with my MS. This is probably what haunted him the most over his last six months. I had to show resilience not only for me, but for him, too. He took his last short but loud breath on the night of February 26, 2019, as I was holding his already cold hand. You see, the body is quite amazing. As all his organs were shutting down, his body redirected his blood towards the heart to help it until the very last moment. This is a known mechanism and the reason why his hands were cold. I forgot to mention that I received my diagnosis on the same day I buried my fourteen-year-old dog in my backyard after we had to put him down...what a great fucking day that was. When it rains, it truly pours.

“I will turn this thing around,” I told myself. I went from being devastated to being hopeful, taking matters into my own hands. I'd never researched as intensively and purposefully in my life more than when I was diagnosed. Neuroscience, microbiology, gastroenterology, micro-nutrition, epigenetics—you name it. I just couldn't get enough.

Considering the side effects of medications available to “MSers” and the corruption in the pharmaceutical industry that just wishes to bank on sick people (fifty thousand dollars a year, so two million dollars over forty years for people with MS), I understood that I was on my own. I rejected treatment, and I am happy I did. Although I do not take any medications, I would never point a finger at someone who does. We're in the same boat, after all.

I probably spent several hundreds of hours devouring books and various peer reviewed studies. The first book I read was *Overcoming Multiple Sclerosis* by George Jelinek. This book saved my life. Dr. Jelinek is an Australian emergency doctor (retired now, I believe) whose mom had multiple sclerosis and who was himself diagnosed later in his life. As a researcher, Dr. Jelinek also directed a medical publication, which allowed him to accelerate his research into ways for staying healthy with MS. Visit overcomingms.org for more information. His findings have helped

hundreds, if not thousands, of people by now. I was floored when reading about one lady who followed his program. Her name is Linda Bloom, an Australian woman who was diagnosed at age twenty-eight like me, and whose latest MRIs do not show any lesions in her brain or spine—as if she never had the disease. In other words, she healed her multiple sclerosis through diet and lifestyle, refusing treatment. When I read about her, I decided that I, too, could do it. Then, I found out about Kristen, who cured her MS without treatment, using a different technique but still revolving around lifestyle. You can read about her in an interview on *medium.com* from 2013. (<https://medium.com/cured-disease-naturally/the-woman-who-cured-multiple-sclerosis-11d2ebe47162>).

Later, I stumbled upon Mathew Embry, who was diagnosed at nineteen and also chose lifestyle over meds. He is now in his forties and runs like a madman every morning. Not only is he in top health, but he is also in far better shape than the average man—a true inspiration. Mat and his father, Dr. Ashton Embry (Ph.D.), have founded a movement called MS Hope that you can explore via their website called *mshope.com*. As a movie director, Mat also made *Living Proof*—a great documentary about multiple sclerosis that I urge you to watch if you have not yet. It's available on Amazon Prime. It shows well-functioning alternatives to treatment, going at length to demonstrate the cynicism and corruption that surrounds the pharmaceutical industry.

There is also Dr. Terry Wahls, who built on Ashton Embry's work and experimented on herself, creating the Wahls Protocol®. Terry had severe symptoms that made her bedridden. She recovered so well that she can now ride a bike. I do not remember if she takes treatment, but what I do know is that it is her lifestyle and what she puts in her mouth that helped her recover—not the medication. I follow a lot of principles that she applies to her daily life.

There is plenty of hope, as you can see and read in this book. Once I found out about all these people, I felt relieved. They do not follow the same methods to heal their MS, but what they do is obviously working. I kept telling myself, "If they can do it, so can I!"

There is obviously a way for me to be healthy and even heal myself. My diagnosis was a red flag from my body, notifying me that something was not working, and we needed a change of course. The body's first and constant purpose is to be healthy. It is my job to provide it with what is needed, so it can perform its job properly.

When I was diagnosed, I was the healthiest person anyone could think of. I worked out five times a week and ate my veggies and protein. I respected the eight hours of sleep rule. I did not smoke or drink. I would rarely enjoy a cheat meal. I checked every single box the general consensus has to define a healthy, fit individual.

As we know, multiple sclerosis is a chronic disease whose way of treatment resides in its nature: chronicity. You must eat, sleep, and exercise chronically well if you wish to get ahead of the game—and even heal. Let me share a few thoughts on what MS is in my eyes and the current status quo of medicine. First things first, let's tackle the way I see multiple sclerosis working. This is how I explain it every time to people.

Picture Clara going along on her bicycle. She loves it! Until suddenly, she falls. You see what happens and rush to help her back up, assessing if she's hurt. Turns out, she cut herself deep on the knee and does not seem able to get back on her bike. Her knee is sore and bleeding, so she will need a couple of stitches and some time to recover. The cut will leave a mean scar—that's for sure. There are two scenarios possible here to help Clara. One is short-lived, while the other is much more promising:

1. You can apply an antiseptic, stitch her up, and put on a bandage before letting her go.
2. Or you can do all the above, plus investigate why she fell off her bike.

If you only conduct the first part, Clara will eventually get back on her bike. Surely enough, she'll fall again. Every time she falls, she will be left with yet another scar, until her body cannot take it anymore. Eventually, she'll never be able to ride her bicycle again. Multiple sclerosis is no different. If we do not figure out what is causing the body to express itself in such a way, what they call Relapse-Remitting Multiple Sclerosis (RRMS) will perpetually repeat itself until the left overs (the scars) of each relapse (or fall) leave you with too much damage to your nervous system for the body to cope.

I am voluntarily making it sound simple, but I am under no illusion that it is. What I am saying is that we must investigate and experiment on ourselves to put an end to that mechanism, so we do not fall from our bicycles ever again. My message to you is simple: You are not condemned to go downhill as many doctors politely insinuate. You can actually turn this around. You got this! Own your MS narrative. Multiple sclerosis does not define you. It is merely a part of who you are.

I realize as I am writing this that I would have a difficult time saying this to someone in a wheelchair. The scene of Mathew Embry in *Living Proof*

where he goes to meet a fellow woman with MS who must use a walker, even after stem cell treatment, rushes to my mind. He manages to keep his emotions in as the interview proceeds but has to let go of them as soon as he leaves her home. That scene is powerful. Just a note here that Mathew recently shot *Living Proof 2*, which we hope will be available sometime in 2023. To you who have lost a lot of your independence and maybe most of your faith, whomever you might be, just know that I have deep love and empathy for you. I have those feelings because being in your position is my worst fear if I am being honest.

But even if I lose my battle because of X and Y, and indeed end up losing my autonomy, I must keep faith that what I practice daily can put anyone back on track. I must hold on to that thought, if only to keep sane. And because part of me strongly believes in it. Some fellow MSers have had incredible comebacks against all odds, like Terry Wahls, but she is not the only one. This book is proof. And as I often say, “If they’ve done it, there is absolutely no reason that you can’t!”

Multiple sclerosis can be a pivotal moment in your life to discover true health, which is not only summed up by diet and exercise. Diet, sleep, and exercise are of course paramount, but nailing all three while living in a toxic environment will not be enough. Make sure that those who surround you support you in every possible way, and make sure that no one in your intimate circle causes you stress beyond reason.

When it comes to food, it might not always be so easy to eat out because you will not be able to have the same food as others—but that’s fine! You know why? Because these foods and behaviors are probably what gave you MS in the first place and what powers the skyrocketing of all chronic illnesses in society. Do not let MS define who you are. You are not “that guy” or “that girl” with MS. No one is allowed to stick any label on you, period. You can be that incredible human being who is kicking ass at life—a leading example of resilience for your friends and family, who are in awe of all that you achieve and who almost forget that you have MS.

People would never guess I have multiple sclerosis. My relatives actually forget sometimes because I have not changed one bit. I even have to explain to people who don’t know about the disease that it can be serious because, as they see me, they think it’s a walk in the park—haha! I should probably clarify that this is not medical advice, and you should consult with your physician. But this isn’t going to be a place for me to lie, so I’ll be as nuanced about it as I most honestly can. It is my opinion that your health is your responsibility and yours only. Any doctor is an advisor, not a decision-maker. You make the decision for what treatment

you take or do not take. No one should ever force you to do anything—treatment, MRIs, whatever. I do not receive any treatment, and honestly, never would for many reasons.

I believe that the probability for doctors to be wrong in their approach is as high as their certainty that going without treatment is bad for people with multiple sclerosis. In more blunt terms, taking a medication without changing your lifestyle has a very high probability that you will relapse again, and your doctor will prescribe you more and more potent drugs, “until there’s nothing left on the shelf”—an expression from my dad who died from cancer.

Whether or not you decide to undergo treatment, changing your lifestyle represents the highest probability for you to stabilize and eventually heal. This is the part where I must tell the truth about what I think. I believe available treatments to date have a higher probability of endangering your health rather than helping it. I simply will not lie about it. There are many reasons why I think this. It intoxicates your body and worsens what we call the “toxic burden”. The toxic burden refers to the accumulation of harmful chemicals, pollutants, and toxins in the body over time. Treatments force your body to work harder to detoxify when its energy could be spent on healing. Although they refer to them as immunomodulators, they really knock your immune system out, which is unnatural. Imagine being semi-consciously in a state of drunkenness forever. That’s essentially how your immune system is probably feeling when undergoing treatment. Stopping treatment will put your health at risk because once you stop, your immune system will attempt to wake up by jump-starting itself. This will probably cause a massive inflammatory reaction. As we all know, inflammation equals a high likelihood of relapse. If by all accounts, doctors agree that MS is a snowflake disease, meaning that every case is different, then why standardize treatment as if we’re all the same? It makes no sense to me. Some of the side effects of these treatments are horrendous. I almost considered trying Lemtrada because it’s a once-in-a-lifetime treatment. But the main possible side effect is that you have a fifty-fifty chance of getting chronic thyroid disease. I mean, seriously. And guess what? I know two fantastic women who have taken it in the UK (where it is mostly used), and sure thing—one of them must take thyroid pills for the rest of her life. So, thank you, but no thank you.

With all that being said, I will repeat it again: I would never point a finger at anyone who takes medication. We are in the same boat. I wish to help, not to blame. I am just being my authentic self. The reason I am sharing my story in this book is to help as many people as possible, not

to criticize you for your choices. I am not a doctor or a researcher. The points I've just made are my opinion, based on my personal research, analysis, and understanding of what living with a chronic disease entails. The golden rule is that you decide for yourself. And just like the quote by Bruce Lee says, "Absorb what is useful, discard what is useless, and add what is specifically your own."

What I learned from reading about these various people mentioned before who were handling their multiple sclerosis successfully but with different methods is that there isn't a one-size-fits-all remedy. I have changed many things in my lifestyle and am doing very well. I train five times a week and am still very strong, if not stronger, than three years ago. You must create your own recipe for your personal, unique success story. But there are some key elements that we cannot ignore, such as the absolute necessity to cut all dairy because it not only activates the disease, but it also sustains its process. That being said, Kristen (who was mentioned before) consumes goat dairy from time to time. That is a risk I am not willing to take, but hey, it is working for her, and she is doing very well! Mathew Embry eats chicken, along with Terry Wahls, who also eats ghee and game meat. They also both advise against gluten. George Jelinek cuts out all meat but allows for fish, egg whites, and gluten. His program is the one I decided to follow the most from day one. I, however, do not consume eggs anymore. I usually say that I am pescavegan.

Here are the daily practices I've adopted to live my life to the fullest. These are based on my experience and what I've seen working for other MSers who are doing fantastic, as well. Let's start with what they agree upon and build our way from there. They all agree that dairy is poison for people with MS. That means no butter, milk, cheese, cream, and nothing containing them. Vitamin D3, B12, and Omega-3s are crucial, along with antioxidants. Loading your plate with plenty of vegetables and fruits, especially greens, is vital. Also, eating homemade, organic food as much as possible will benefit you immensely. They suggest exercising as often as possible. I exercise five times a week.

Now, let's build up from that list and add whatever I found to be useful, taken from various people working in health research. I also consume zero dairy. If I mistakenly ingest it, I either drink a draining smoothie to rid my system of it, or I make myself vomit, then drink the smoothie. Sounds radical? So does being in a wheelchair. Fasting is one of the most powerful tools in your arsenal. I would suggest looking at the work of Professor David Sinclair from Harvard University. He dedicated his career to researching longevity, and he wrote a book called Lifespan.

There is a great podcast of him and Shaun Parish on The Knowledge Project. He speaks at length about the positive impacts of fasting.

I also eat mainly homemade food, not the food-like substances that make up 95% of most supermarkets. Industrial food is garbage. If you consume it, make sure to eat very well afterwards to make up for it. I wouldn't make a habit of eating industrial, premade food. All good things in life take time. Shortcuts never do you any good. I also eat more than eight vegetables a day. I usually make a salad consisting of lettuce, cilantro, carrots, cucumbers, and endives. I eat lentil dahl almost every day with green lentils, beluga lentils, onions, garlic, and avocado. Dahl rice is a dish that can be made with any type of lentil. I usually eat dahl with potatoes (sweet or not). For your salad, you could also add purple cabbage, peppers, or beets. I often have a daily smoothie to sustain my training. It consists of banana, blueberries, peanut butter, and vegan chocolate protein. So, I total between fourteen to seventeen veggies on average—sometimes even more. I have found that eating fermented foods full of probiotics helps to populate the gut with healthy bacteria that help ease digestion. Lastly, I take a freezing cold-water shower for one-to-three minutes upon waking. This has a tremendously positive impact on your health. Andrew Huberman covers it in his podcast. Cold showers can be used for either physical or mental purposes. What you need to remember is that both play to each other's advantage. Improving your overall physical health will promote mental health, and vice versa.

Although I am doing very well today, I felt like shit when I was diagnosed—just like anyone else. I built myself into what I am today. It took true grit and was not always easy. From the moment the diagnosis was confirmed, everything I did after that became a first—first drive being sick, first training, first shower, first plane ride, first breakfast, lunch, dinner, and so on. I knew that my life would never be the same. There is a “before” and an “after”. I wouldn't go as far to say that it feels as if you suddenly acquired ten years' worth of wisdom, but you sure feel as if life, along with everything you enjoy in it, is far more precious than you ever could have realized before. The phone calls warning all of your family and close friends are awful because you have to experience the same feelings every single time, saying, “I'll be fine,” although you have no idea if that's true. Saying to yourself, “I am sick” is the strangest thing I've experienced so far in my life. I can now confidently say that no one understands this unless they have lived through it themselves. It was the first time that I experienced what “heartbroken” truly means, but I refused this new reality that was forced upon me. And it has helped me grow in ways I never expected. Being diagnosed with multiple sclerosis sucks but having it doesn't have to.

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.