

INTRODUCTION

This book, ***Born Addict***, is not just a title, it is my truth. Since birth, I was wired for addiction. The signs were there early: emotional sensitivity, difficulty regulating stress, and a deep, aching restlessness I could not name. Through childhood, adolescence, and into adulthood, I lived with a body and brain that felt out of sync with the world. My story is one of unraveling that lifelong mystery—of discovering that addiction was not a moral failing or a lack of willpower, but a complex interplay of genetics, biochemistry, trauma, and unmet needs. This journey, from birth to breakdown to breakthrough, is the heart of what you are about to read.

Something began long before I ever picked up a drink. Addiction was not a moment—it was a lifelong undercurrent. **And if you have ever felt like your story started long before your addiction, you may find yourself in these pages too.**

Have you ever felt like something is missing—even when you are doing all the “right” things?

You have been in and out of 12-step rooms. You have done treatment over and over—to no avail. You are committed. You have shown up. And yet... you are stuck in the chronic relapse cycle. Or you are sober, but still suffering—trapped in cycles of depression, anxiety, cravings, and insomnia.

You are not alone.

Even Bill Wilson, the co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous and architect of the 12-step program, stayed sober—but struggled deeply. He battled chronic debilitating depression for over 10 years.

“It should be noted that Bill W. continued to smoke throughout his recovery, even at 76 years of age, while dying from emphysema in the winter of 1971. From a neurological perspective, nicotine, coffee, and sugar activate and release dopamine in the reward system of the brain.”

— Kenneth Blum, PhD

Whether you have been through a 12-step program or not, Bill Wilson's journey is not just his story, it's yours too. Most people in recovery relate to Bill's early story

of surrender and spiritual awakening, but few know what came after—the part where he still fought to feel well.

In *Addiction: A Family Affair*, Dr. Scott Teitelbaum writes:

“An understanding of the neuro-molecular biological underpinnings of the 12 steps and the work of various groups... may indeed be new and important for continued progress to become and remain clean and sober.”

Put simply: understanding the brain and body is just as important as putting down the substance. Without this knowledge, even the most committed people can relapse—or live in emotional pain long after sobriety.

Bill Wilson was doing everything “right.” He had found a spiritual solution, dedicated himself to service, and transformed countless lives through the 12 steps. But even with all of that, his spiritual life alone was not enough to cure his debilitating depression of over 10 years. So why did he continue to suffer?

The answer may lie in his later work with Dr. Abram Hoffer, PhD. In the 1950s, Bill became interested in the use of niacin (vitamin B3) as a therapeutic intervention for depression and alcoholism. After taking high-dose niacin, Bill experienced a remarkable recovery from his chronic depression, so profound that he began privately distributing niacin tablets to fellow alcoholics after AA meetings. He believed this was the “missing link” in recovery—one that could support the body’s biochemical balance and help restore the mind.

Unfortunately, this discovery, never fully embraced by the medical or recovery communities of that time. Bill went on to write what became known as the Vitamin B Papers and was later honored in the Orthomolecular Medicine Hall of Fame for his pioneering research with Dr. Abram Hoffer and Dr. Andrew Saul, PhD. Despite the profound results and recognition, this groundbreaking work, never adopted into mainstream recovery or the 12-step program. This is where I come in—because of the impact this knowledge had on me and how it helped me recover fully, not just get sober. I knew I had to carry this message forward and integrate it into a model that could help others find the missing piece of their recovery journey. But today, thanks to advancements in molecular neurobiology and nutritional psychiatry, we now understand that **Bill was right**—he was ahead of his time.

His struggle was not unique. His solution was not anecdotal. It was biochemical.

“Even the addict with great resolve can still be swept away by obsession, unless the underlying cause is removed.” — Bill Wilson

Even though I dove headfirst into a spiritual life like Bill—and committed myself to a life of service to others—I was plagued by physical and mental unwellness, even after years of recovery, psychological counselling, and many other forms of therapies. I followed the path of recovery with all my heart, yet I continued to suffer in ways that could not be explained, by emotional trauma alone. I knew there had to be more.

This book is **beyond Bill**—a missing link supplemental guide to restore your brain chemistry. A starving, depleted brain cannot grasp the tools of recovery. It is not your fault, and there is a solution. That is what this book offers you: an end to anxiety, depression, sleeplessness, overwhelm, the roller-coaster of emotions—and the beginning of a calm, stable way of life so you can finally process past trauma.

Let us be clear: trauma is not the root cause of addiction, but it is often the catalyst. When we heal the brain first—the *root imbalance*—you are finally free to experience total recovery, not just sobriety.

This book picks up where Bill Wilson’s story leaves off—and where mine begins. While Bill opened the door to spiritual transformation and community healing, his later discoveries in nutritional therapy were ignored. My journey builds on his original vision. I have walked the long road through relapse, anxiety, depression, severe mental illness, chronic pain, and other health conditions—all while sober—and I discovered that lasting recovery demands more. This book is the continuation of that unfinished conversation. It picks up where the traditional recovery conversation ends. We will explore why so many of us still suffer after the substance is gone, and how modern science is finally catching up to what we’ve long suspected: addiction is a brain-based, biochemical disease. And there is a missing link that needs to be addressed if we want to heal *fully*.

We will dive into the real story behind chronic relapses, the biochemical drivers of addiction, and how unresolved imbalances—like blood sugar instability, reward deficiency, or emotional trauma—can keep you stuck even in sobriety. We will talk about genetic predisposition and the dopamine dilemma—how our brains, wired to seek out dopamine, can lead us into compulsive patterns. For those with reward system deficiencies, everyday pleasure feels muted, driving us to reach for substances or behaviors that offer temporary spikes of relief. Whether it is sugar, scrolling, or substances, we’re often chasing what the brain cannot maintain. This

ongoing depletion—combined with low dopamine receptor sensitivity—creates a storm of restlessness, impulsiveness, and emotional dysregulation. Left unaddressed, this imbalance can sabotage even the strongest recovery intentions. We will unpack how to naturally restore dopamine through nutrition, targeted supplementation, and lifestyle practices to finally stabilize your system and pyrrole disorder (also known as pyroluria), which we will explore in depth. These genetic conditions can significantly impact neurotransmitter function, stress resilience, and emotional regulation—making recovery far more difficult if left unaddressed.

This pattern is called **Reward Deficiency Syndrome**—a term coined by Dr. Kenneth Blum, whose groundbreaking research identified the genetic origins of this syndrome. Blum demonstrated that many individuals with addiction have inherited gene variants that reduce dopamine receptor sensitivity or production. This means their brains are wired from birth to struggle with experiencing pleasure, motivation, and focus—making them more susceptible to seeking out high-reward stimuli like drugs, alcohol, sugar, or risk-based behaviors just to feel normal. His research has become a cornerstone of understanding addiction as a biologically rooted, genetically influenced condition. As a result, we seek out stronger and more intense dopamine “hits” to feel normal. This is what I call “chasing normal.”

Addiction is like this: Imagine a gun. The genetic predisposition to addiction is the gun itself—always there, loaded, and ready. Trauma and environmental stressors? They are the trigger. Together, they fire the destructive patterns of addiction. But when we understand this model, we stop blaming ourselves. We start addressing the real causes—and begin to heal at the root.

This book will help you stop the chase and start the healing.

We will also gently explore the invisible burdens: stigma, shame, trauma, and all the quiet, heavy stories that keep us locked in self-doubt. Stigma kills. It isolates the addicted, delays treatment, and silences families who do not know where to turn. This book is here to crack that shame wide open. It will teach the truth behind the disease model, offering real education that replaces judgment with understanding—and blame with compassion. Imagine such an illness—so devastating and far-reaching—that it costs families everything: peace, trust, connection. It’s time to stop the suffering that comes from silence. This book is a movement to heal the stigma that has held too many hostage for too long.

Part of that stigma is the label itself. Being called an "addict" or "alcoholic"—repeatedly—can deepen our shame and keep us tethered to an identity we are trying to grow beyond. Yes, we are people who have experienced addiction—but we are not defined by it. We are human beings living with a brain-based illness that is treatable. And we do recover. We do not have to keep reinforcing that we are forever broken or stuck in the process. You are not just "in recovery"—you have the potential to be fully Recovered. This book exists to help make that truth real for you. For too long, addiction has been misunderstood—viewed not through a lens of compassion, but through one of blame and fear. This book offers a soft unraveling of those old, harsh narratives. By revealing the true biological nature of addiction, it opens a new path forward—one of understanding, grace, and healing. When we replace shame with knowledge and judgment with kindness, we begin to lift the weight off our hearts. And that's where healing begins. We will explore paradigm shifts, spiritual insights, and powerful re-frames that help you rewrite your identity—and your life. When your brain and body are biochemically restored, the spiritual solution can finally take root and flourish. You will be able to connect more deeply, feel more grounded, and live out the full expression of your recovery with clarity, purpose, and joy.

Finally, this book is your toolbox: packed with everything from family and community strategies to nutritional support, to genetic testing, emotional healing, and spiritual reconnection. Because recovery is not just about stopping.

It is about learning to thrive—not just survive. It is about quality of life in sobriety. Your Quality of Life in Recovery.

This is also a call to embrace a holistic lifestyle—one that nourishes the mind, body, and spirit with intention. Because true recovery does not come from abstinence alone; it flourishes when supported by balanced nutrition, emotional healing, spiritual connection, and sustainable daily practices.

This book is a teaching memoir—part science, part story. It bridges decades of personal experience with groundbreaking research to offer a new paradigm in the field of addiction recovery. It's time to turn a corner.

We must integrate current discoveries in neurobiology, nutrition, and genetics into more effective treatment models and family prevention strategies.

As Christina Veselek of The Academy for Addiction and Mental Health writes:

“Fortunately, 50 years of research supports an alternate approach to addressing the chemical imbalances underlying addictive behavior. By learning to feed their brains and bodies the simple nutrients required for optimal and balanced functioning, many recovering people are empowered to create a stable and enduring recovery and a vibrant life.

Imagine a three-legged stool: if this stool has only one functioning leg, it will fall over immediately; if it has two legs, the person attempting to sit on it may stay upright for a short while, but only by staying focused on maintaining strict balance. Once distracted, they fall right over. However, bringing in the third leg of the stool allows a person to easily find balance, and move on with life.

This book brings in that third leg—offering the biochemical support and brain-based healing that so many programs leave out.

This is Recovery Rewired. *Successful, relapse-free recovery must begin with biochemical repair.* The American Medical Association has long recognized addiction as a brain-driven, bio-psycho-social illness—a condition that demands a multi-dimensional approach to truly heal. When we treat only the behavior or only the spirit, we leave out the body—the biochemistry. And like Christina Veselak's three-legged stool, without all three legs—biological, psychological, and spiritual support—recovery is unsteady and unsustainable. This is not about abandoning what works, but about building on it—honoring our roots in 12-step recovery while bringing in the missing links that allow people to fully recover.

****Because recovery is not just about stopping—or living a half-fulfilled life in sobriety, always 'in recovery' and never Recovered. This book is about Thriving not just Surviving. You Can Recover.**

There is hope. And there is a way forward.

“Out of suffering have emerged the strongest souls; the most massive characters are seared with scars.” — Khalil Gibran

This is your invitation to total recovery—rooted in science, guided by spirit, and sustained through a holistic lifestyle that finally brings peace to your mind, body, and soul.

Lori Germain A trailblazer for Bill Wilson’s legacy, dedicated to transforming how we treat the disease of addiction for generations to come.
Certified Recovery Nutrition Coach

Spiritual Life Coach
Founder of **Missing Link Recovery Solutions™**
Balanced Brain. Balanced Life.™
"Where science meets recovery."