

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY BY
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BOOK PREVIEW

FROM HOPKINS TO HOMELESS: MY TRUE STORY OF PRESCRIPTION DRUG ADDICTION

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The following is a summary of my soon to be released real life autobiography.

After completing 4 years at the University of Northern Colorado for my Bachelor of Science, 1 year at Johns Hopkins University for my Masters in Health Science, and 2 ½ years into my Ph.D. in respiratory medicine at the Medical College of Virginia/Virginia Commonwealth University, I thought I had complete control of my life. Specifically my career in respiratory medicine. I had published my first paper in a respectable medical journal when I was 27. Several months after that, I presented the paper at a medical conference in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany. It was one of 9 trips I would take to Germany to consult with a medical company established in Starnberg, Germany.

By the time I was in my second year of my Ph.D. I had published/presented 54 medical papers, published 6 peer reviewed medical papers, was contributing author on one book, owned and operated my own consulting company in respiratory medicine, developed a patent for respiratory devices, and was progressing successfully in my Ph.D. I was 31 years old and I was proud of my accomplishments and my

continuing success in respiratory medicine. But, that was all about to change. Addiction would enter my life and take away from me my possessions, my profession, my loved ones, and my sanity.

My pathway to addiction started when I made an appointment to see Dr. Cary Suter, M.D. for migraine headaches. I put great trust in him due to the fact that he was the medical schools doctor and was responsible for taking care of the students enrolled in the medical school programs. In a timeframe of 7.9 months I was prescribed 6,647 controlled substance pills. I had pills to help me stay awake and study, pills for helping me sleep, pills for anxiety, and pills for pain. I knew about addiction but I thought I was too intelligent to become addicted. Anyway, these pills were provided to me by the schools doctor who said he had taken pills when he was in medical school to help him succeed. My ignorance would cause me to lose almost a decade of my life and would bring me close to death many times as a result of my severe drug addiction.

Although Dr. Suter lost his medical license for over prescribing controlled substances and not monitoring that prescribing, it was too late for me. I had to drop out of my Ph.D. program due to my addiction.

At this point in my life, I had to confront and accept some very disturbing facts: I no longer was pursuing the goal I had been following for the past 15 years, I was severely addicted to prescription drugs, the doctor who had been prescribing me the drugs had his medical license revoked, and the main focus of my life was to obtain drugs. I was, in essence, trapped in the severity of my addiction. For the first time I had lost control over my life.

My first of numerous addiction related detrimental events came when I was presenting a medical paper at a conference in Atlanta, Georgia. Before my lecture I forged a prescription on my computer and proceeded to the pharmacy to have it filled. Since the prescription was for Demerol, the pharmacy called the doctor and verified the prescription was forged. The police were waiting for me at the conference lecture hall to finish my lecture. When I did, they handcuffed and arrested me. I was taken out in front of all my colleagues and conference members and taken to jail. Needless to say I was immediately fired from my job as a senior aerosol scientist for a prominent German company established in the United States. For many years I was doctor shopping. I would acquire my drugs in many ways: the internet, hospital emergency rooms,

forged prescriptions, clinics, private doctors, and in other countries. I would stay employed by various companies because of my experience in respiratory medicine. But, I would ultimately get fired when my drug addiction interfered with the quality of my work. Eventually, word of my addiction became known to my colleagues and the respiratory medicine industry. From that point on, I was not called upon to lecture, to consult, or in any way work in the respiratory medicine industry. I was, for all intents and purposes, "blackballed" from my profession.

Shunned from my profession, disenchanting from my family and friends, and homeless, I fell into a deep depression. It was at this time that I wrote a suicide note and attempted to commit suicide. Over the next 9 years I would attempt suicide 1 more time, have 35 toxic overdoses, and 45 seizures. All of which brought me close to death each time.

During the decade of my addiction I would periodically give the rehabilitations a try. Nine times I made a serious effort to get sober. But, every time I would relapse within weeks



FROM HOPKINS TO HOMELESS (CONTINUED):

of being discharged. After a decade of being an addict, I completely surrendered to my disease and came to the understanding that my addiction was not going to be successfully addressed in weeks or even in a couple months of treatment. I realized that my recovery would require at least a year in a long term residential program where I could work on my addiction issues every day with no distractions. I found that in a year-long cognitive/behavioral rehabilitation program. This program not only worked on my addiction issues but also worked on my cognitive/behavioral issues that caused me to seek out the drugs.

Currently, my life is finally in a direction I can be proud of. I graduated from a year long in-patient residential cognitive/behavioral rehabilitation facility. My sobriety restored my clarity of thought and determination. Two attributes which are essential for completing this book. I believe I can inspire and educate others about addiction and recovery with the publication of this book. I have also been employed by the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless as a peer mentor. I now use my past experiences and education to assist others who are on their own journey from addiction to recovery.

My future is completely open with possibilities. I do know that I am very thrilled and inspired living life as a sober individual. And, for the first the first time in over 9 years I have a sense of self-confidence and respect for myself. This confidence reminds me that I can accomplish anything I put my mind to. For this reason I have enrolled and been accepted to complete my doctorate in public health.

It has been a long, arduous, and self-revealing journey through my 10 years of addiction to recovery. Unfortunately along the way I became deceitful, dishonest, unreliable, and untrustworthy. On the other hand I can proclaim that through my suffering and adversity came great prosperity. Today, I will continue to advocate for those affected by this disease of addiction. It is a passion and a pathway that I will pursue for the rest of my life.



Prescription addiction affects nearly 21 million people in the United States and is growing faster than heroin, cocaine, and amphetamine addiction combined. Additionally, one person dies every 19 minutes in the U.S. as a result of a prescription drug overdose.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

- (1) Prescription Addiction In Today's Society
- (2) Building A Future: A Promising Career In Respiratory Medicine
- (3) The Beginning: The Doctorate Program At The Medical College Of Virginia
- (4) Breaking The Hippocratic Oath: 7.9 Months Under The Care of Cary Suter, M.D.
- (5) No Escape: Trapped In The Severity Of My Addiction
- (6) Desperation: Obtaining Prescription Drugs On The Internet And In Other Countries
- (7) Doctor Shopping/Drug Diversion: Years Of Clinic, E.R., And Doctor Visits
- (8) Being Homeless: An Impoverished Existence
- (9) The Darkest Hours: Seizures, Suicide Attempts, And Overdoses
- (10) My Family's Perspective: This Cannot Be Our Son
- (11) Rehabilitation Programs: Attempting To Appease My Family And Alleviate My Guilt
- (12) How And Why I Quit: The Programs/Tools That Saved My Life
- (13) What Now? Life After Addiction

APPENDIX OUTLINE

- (A) Prescription History With Dr. Cary Suter
- (B) Dr. Cary Suter's Medical License Revoke By The Virginia Board Of Medicine
- (C) Criminal History After Becoming Addicted
- (D) Detrimental Consequences After Becoming Addicted
- (E) Suicide Letter
- (F) Famous/Celebrity Addicts
- (G) The Prescription Drug Monitoring Program [PDMP]
- (H) Referrals, References, And Programs For Those Affected By Addiction

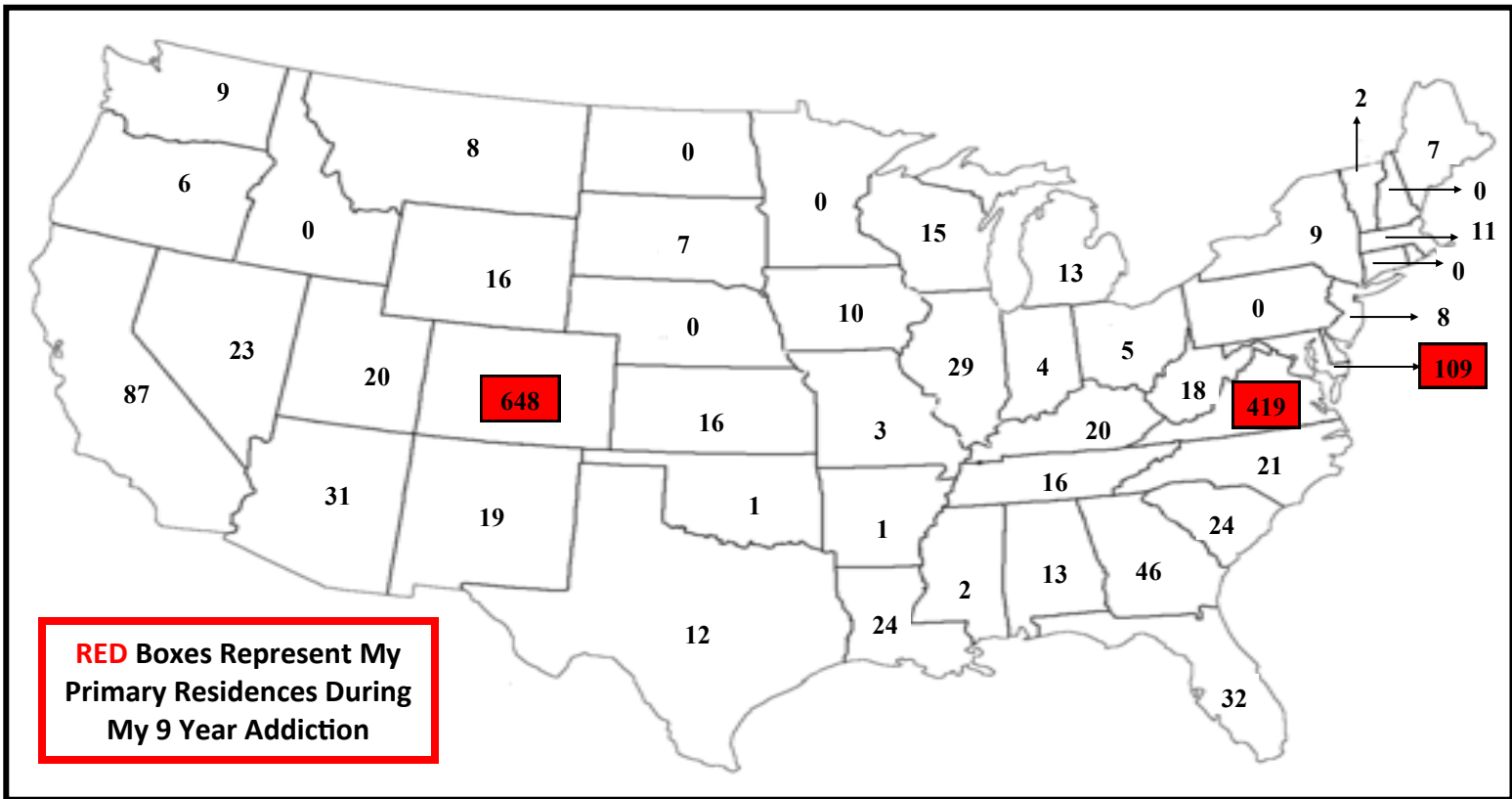
QUOTES:

- ◆ An incredible and unbelievable story of suffering, sacrifice, and redemption.
- ◆ “This cannot be my son”, Diane Loffert-Mother of the author.

THROUGHOUT MY 9 YEARS OF ADDICTION THE FOLLOWING EVENTS HAD A SIGNIFICANT DETRIMENTAL EFFECT IN MY LIFE

- ◆ 67,457 controlled substance pills ingested
- ◆ 45 seizures
- ◆ 323 narcotic related hospital visits
- ◆ 9 in-patient rehabilitation programs
- ◆ Periodically homeless
- ◆ 35 hospitalizations from drug overdoses
- ◆ Total medical debt for 9 years=\$310,650.00
- ◆ Fired from 5 different scientist positions
- ◆ 19 prescription related arrests
- ◆ 180 forged prescriptions
- ◆ 2 suicide attempts
- ◆ 167 bad checks written for prescriptions
- ◆ 1,434 medical visits to obtain narcotics
- ◆ Dropped out of my Ph.D. due to addiction

THIS MAP REPRESENTS THE NUMBER OF TIMES I OBTAINED PRESCRIPTIONS FROM EACH STATE DURING MY 9 YEARS OF ADDICTION



COUNTRIES IN WHICH I OBTAINED PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

- ◆ Germany [265]
- ◆ Austria [8]
- ◆ Holland [10]
- ◆ Pakistan [12]
- ◆ Canada [15]
- ◆ Bermuda [17]
- ◆ Caribbean [12]
- ◆ Mexico [110]
- ◆ Japan [4]
- ◆ Spain [5]
- ◆ Brazil [9]
- ◆ India [11]

“I will prescribe regimen for the good of my patients, according to my judgment and ability, and never do harm to anyone. To please no one will I prescribe a deadly drug, nor give advice which may cause his death”

[An Excerpt From The Hippocratic Oath]

PURPOSE

I have written this autobiography about my 9 year journey from addiction to recovery for several reasons:

- 1) To inspire, educate, and give insight about the disease of addiction and the process of recovery.
- 2) To show that no matter who you are or what you do everyone is susceptible to the disease of addiction.
- 3) To have some closure about my addiction while at the same time providing others the opportunity to learn from my mistakes.

Another main goal of this book was to focus on the way society/system deals with the dilemma of addiction/addicts. I felt a compelling urge to inform society about the daily struggles that addicts undertake. It is this daily struggle that calls for compassion, understanding and encouragement from society as these three attributes are vital for the recovering addict. By portraying a realistic insight into the devastation addiction causes in the everyday life of the addict, I intended to elicit an encouraging empathetic response from society that would be beneficial to the recovering addict.

My final goal for writing this memoir is the hope that in some way it will have a positive influence in the lives of those who are on their own journey from addiction to recovery. I only hope for the best in regard to those struggling with this disease. It is important to remember that addiction is a non-discriminant disease. Addicts range from successful professionals (doctors, lawyers, etc.) down to the homeless. But, you can overcome addiction and lead a very productive and satisfying life. You only have to ask yourself one question, "How bad do I want to change?"

PRéPARE = People Recovering from Prescription Addiction and Relapse

PRéPARE is a non-profit that I started to help others who are struggling with prescription drug addiction. It is currently in the start-up phase where I am looking for financial backing so that I can continue to operate the program. From my experience and education, I am completely confident that this will not only be a successful institution but also one that will help numerous individuals caught up in the addiction cycle. If you are interested in accompanying me on this venture and journey in regard to PRéPARE, feel free to contact me at the number and/or e-mail address below. Thank-you in advance for any support you may give.

PLEASE ADDRESS ANY QUESTIONS OR REQUESTS TO:

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