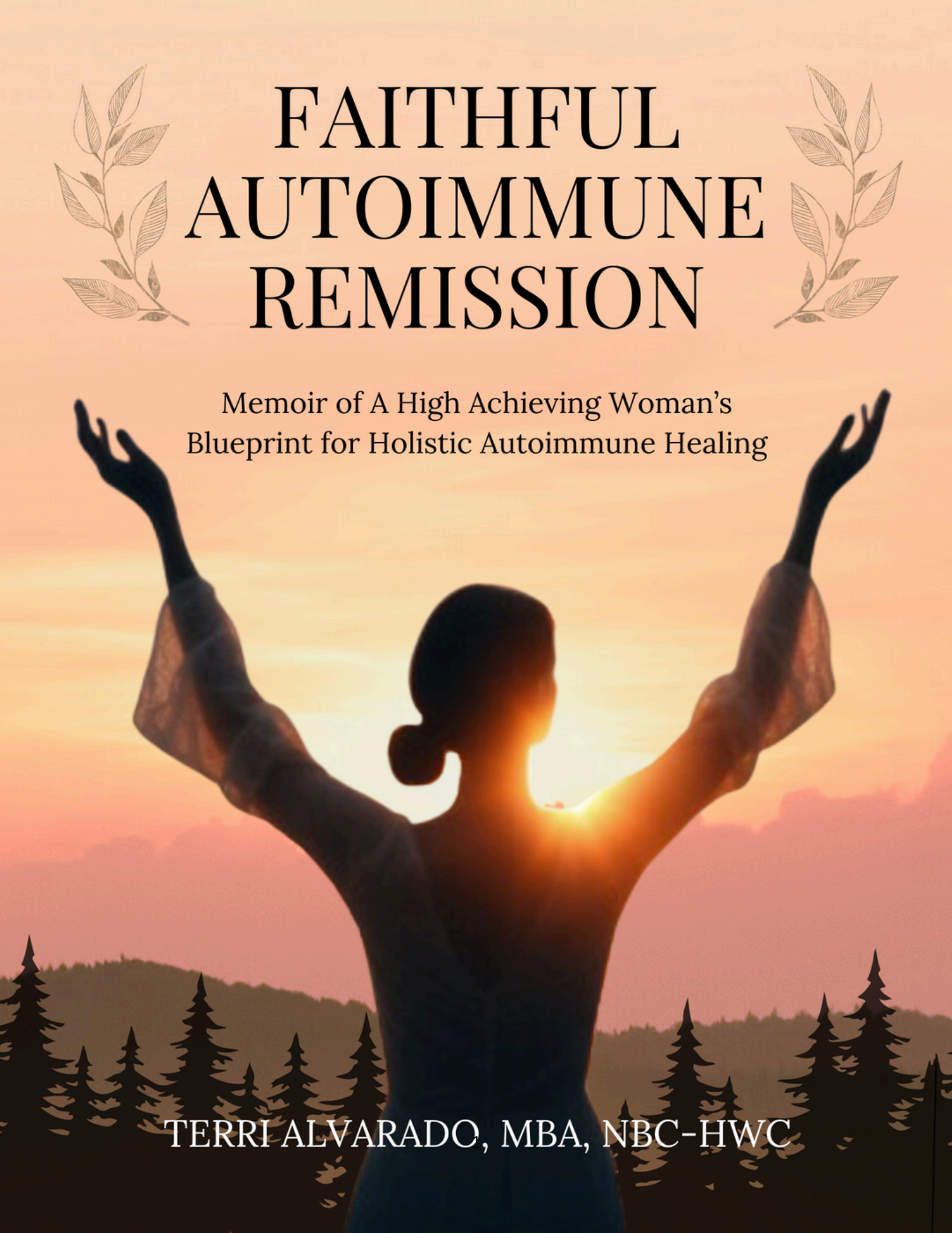




# FAITHFUL AUTOIMMUNE REMISSION

Memoir of A High Achieving Woman's  
Blueprint for Holistic Autoimmune Healing



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# Welcome!

I'm so glad you are interested in reading the first chapter of my book! It is a labor of love to write and put my story out into the world. I am transparent with my story because the purpose of my book is to share hope and healing with you! I know and understand the dark days. I also know I have great power in my mindset and choices to make a difference in my health. You do too!

My story and circumstances are personal to me. Undoubtedly, your story and circumstances will differ. However, the underlying root cause of all autoimmune diseases share many of the same issues.

I hope my story is helpful to you. My second book is already in my heart and in my head. It will be a workbook that dives deep into the Nine Pillars of Health that I discovered and implemented into my life which resulted in my disease remission. Glory to God! In addition, to sharing my personal story, I am called to share the holistic health practices with you!

As a result, in addition to my book and workbook, I am launching a group coaching program to teach the Nine Pillars of Health and explore each in more depth while creating community among participants sharing some of the same or similar struggles. It is not an easy or quick fix, but it is worth it! It is also more easily implemented with loving and patient support as well as community with others doing the same.

You can find current information on all Inspired Wellness services on my website. I also offer one-on-one for your extra, personalized support.

[Inspired Wellness Holistic Health Coaching – Faith-based wellness / life-coaching empowering women to take control of their autoimmune health and life! \(healthy-you.org\)](http://healthy-you.org)

## Chapter 1 – Weird Event

It was Tuesday morning, August 18, 2015, and I woke up to what I thought was going to be a normal workday.

As I got out of bed and stumbled downstairs to the coffee pot, I noticed the sunlight streaming in and what looked like the beginning of a glorious day. In that moment, I had no idea what was about to unfold and how it would affect the rest of my life.

With my delicious, hot coffee-filled mug in hand, I made my way back upstairs to my favorite chair and snuggled in to gaze out the sliding glass door at the sun and beautiful blue sky. This was my favorite way to begin the day. I grabbed my iPad from the table next to me and opened it for devotions with the Bible app. Beginning my day with coffee (now green tea) and devotions was, and still is, a non-negotiable part of my life. After a short time in God's Word, I dressed for the day and walked a few steps to my home office. I had recently been on a much-needed vacation, where I spent time relaxing from my current workload and relationship stress, so I was looking forward to easing my way back into my work routine.

I caught up on some emails, then joined a conference call with about a dozen people from several different departments. It was a collaborative call, and at one point, after sharing some information (which I honestly do not remember the topic), a colleague immediately and condescendingly contradicted me. This was not the first time I've had issues with this colleague – in fact, the tension between us had been escalating for months.

In frustration, I looked away from the screen and down at my iPad. When I looked at the document I was viewing, suddenly my vision was full of squiggly lines. *What the heck*, I thought as I blinked over and over and rubbed my eyes, but failing to make the squiggly lines go away. Soon the abnormal lines I was seeing were obstructing my vision and I could no longer read the document on my screen. I was a little concerned, but I decided to stay on the call and wait to see if the lines would go away. I muted my phone and was, of course, very distracted. Halfheartedly listening to the meeting, I decided to go downstairs and unlock the front door.

The thought crossed my mind that if I passed out, at least EMTs would be able to come in to help me.

I tried to get my focus back on the work call but kept quiet as a dozen other people were talking. I was perplexed about what was going on in my body. Without mentioning anything to my colleagues, I sat on the couch and waited for the squiggly lines to go away.

After several minutes, they did finally go away. I felt such relief and was able to continue participating in my meeting. After another half hour on the call, the meeting was finished and I finally had some time to think about what was going on. I began pondering what to do now. Was this potentially a serious health problem? Should I go to the doctor? I was not sure. I decided to call the nearby Urgent Care and explained what had happened.

The nurse I spoke with suggested I come in to get checked out. I wasn't excited about going in because I had a lot of work to do, as this was my first day back at work and I had a lot to catch up on after vacation.

My mind was churning and contemplating what might be happening. Since my vision seemed back to normal it didn't seem to be an emergency, so I took my time getting ready and didn't rush. I felt fine – maybe going to urgent care would just be a waste of time. I argued with myself but since I had already called, I decided I better follow through. That's me – I follow through.

I got in my truck and pulled out of my driveway to head to Urgent Care. I pulled up to the stop sign and noticed that a portion of my left hand suddenly felt very tingly. *What in the world is happening now*, I thought. I stayed parked for a few minutes trying to assess my hand. I could open and close it, but it felt very strange.

Alright, I decided, it was probably a very good idea to go get this checked out.

I arrived at Urgent Care a few minutes later, checked in and was immediately sent back to a private room. The doctor came in very quickly. The medical staff was not as laid back as I was about this whole thing. The doctor asked me questions and I repeated the story plus the new problem with my hand that began only a few minutes ago. He said he wanted an EKG. I agreed, so they laid me down and put the sticky pads on my chest to check my heart.

The EKG showed that my heart was normal, but the doctor said they were uncomfortable treating me further at Urgent Care. They added that I should not be driving, and they were going to call an ambulance to take me to the closest hospital.

*This is getting interesting*, I thought to myself, but I didn't feel frightened or ill. Instead, I was mostly concerned about the logistics of leaving my truck in their parking lot.

The Urgent Care staff assured me this would be figured out and it was important for me to get to the hospital right away.

The ambulance ride was uneventful.

I think I must have been a boring patient, totally lucid with no bleeding injuries or broken bones. At the hospital, I was quickly moved by stretcher from the ambulance to a private area in the emergency room.

A doctor came in and I once again told my story of the squiggly lines in my vision that only lasted 5-10 minutes and the later hand tingles that by now had also gone away.

The doctor ordered a CT scan and brain MRI and asked if I wanted to call anyone.

Call someone? "Not really," I said, "But should I?"

They highly encouraged me to contact someone, so I called my middle son Tyler who lived nearby.

I was grateful when he picked up, but I didn't know what to tell him except the same story I had been repeating, where I was and the tests about to take place. We chatted for a bit, and he asked me to call him when I knew more.

The hospital staff took me for testing right away but it took some time.

When they were finished and wheeled me back to my ER room, I was very surprised to see Tyler there.

He said he didn't want me to go through this alone, so he took the rest of the day off work to be with me.

This touched my heart, of course, but really, I still felt fine.

The doctor did not give me any results of the testing, but he did say I needed to see a neurologist as soon as possible. That was it. I was discharged with paperwork and a referral and was cleared to drive.

As Tyler drove me back to my truck, he told me he was concerned and didn't want me to be alone at home. He suggested, then later insisted, I come and stay with him and Ciera (my daughter-in-law) at their home for a couple days.

I wasn't sure what to think about that idea. I appreciated his love and care, but I also wanted to get back to my normal life.

But Tyler was insistent. He was not taking no for an answer.

I knew I could work remotely so I relented. We picked up my truck and went to my house, where I packed a bag of clothes, my laptop and work files, and jumped in Tyler's vehicle.

As we were leaving, I got a text message from my mother. She and Dad were nearby (they live 90 min away) and wanted to see me.

*What timing,* I thought.

I gave mom a brief update of what was going on and we met up with them at a McDonald's parking lot for a quick chat.

Everyone was very concerned about me – and I did appreciate that – but I also felt like what had happened really was not that big of a deal. I was feeling fine and there was still no news from the doctor. This was simply an odd blip in my life, and I would like to resume normalcy now.

Standing there in the parking lot, I did not know that this was the beginning of a complete life change.

Tyler insisted I get a blood pressure home kit and went to the store and got one for me. I camped out in a recliner with my laptop in their home and worked as best I could, giving priority to the most critical business and email needs.

Tyler also helped me with the “neurologist referral.”

We called around and quickly discovered that many of the local neurologists were not accepting new patients. Those that were, had an extended wait time. Finally, we made an appointment with the neurology department of the medical group my primary care doctor was part of, but the first available appointment was not until the week between Christmas and New Year's. This was August – so the appointment was over four months away – but I knew I would not be able to do



any better, so I booked it. The next couple days were spent resting and working at Tyler and Ciera's house. The upside to all that commotion was that I got to be with my wonderful, little one-year-old grandson, Kade.

I began referring to the squiggly lines as the "Weird Event." Prior to that morning, I had been thinking about selling my home and buying a nice RV to live in fulltime, spending winters in a warmer climate and returning home for our warmer weather.

I had gone so far as to have already met with a realtor to gather information on selling my house. I had traded my vehicle for a diesel pickup truck with sufficient towing power for an RV or a fifth wheel. I'd even looked at a few fifth wheels.

But I had been questioning whether this was a good idea. Did I really have the skills to tow a big rig (40 foot) and deal with setup, teardown and other mechanical issues that may arise? Any mechanical issues are most definitely out of my wheelhouse, but I wondered if I could do it using YouTube videos and sheer determination. I also had faith that whatever God leads me to, He will lead me through. I know this to be true in my life but I'm also a practical person. It's just me! My marriage ended about 10 years prior, and I had been dating but found it to be quite stressful.

At this point in my life I was content on my own. I had always been very independent and ambitious, and these traits served me well, but not so much within a relationship. Proverbs 4:23 was a favorite scripture during this time: "Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life." I also realized that becoming content with my life and my marital status was a gift from God. I knew I was on the right path, yet maybe not fully there yet because I had a burning desire to full-time RV. Selling my home would allow me to be debt-free immediately, which was very attractive to me. I worked as an independent business consultant and my largest client was a 3-month at a time contract. I was not feeling financially secure, which was very important to me, but I knew I shouldn't worry and needed to simply trust God. Is that easier said than done? Yes, of course it is. During my solo vacation, on my beautiful boat, in Beauty Bay on Lake Coeur d'Alene, just before the Weird Event, I did a lot of praying, journaling, and reflecting.

Two days before the Weird Event I wrote in my journal:

*"This is what I'm learning:*

- 1) *The last two years I've worked too hard and unbalanced according to demands from my major client.*
- 2) *This has caused me to become burned out and gain all my weight back and a new low of out-of-shape.*
- 3) *Despite the downside, I've been blessed to pay off a lot of debt.*
- 4) *God blessed me with a new (to me) boat that meets all the things I wanted in a new boat (upgrade from my cuddy cabin boat).*
- 5) *Recently God put a vision in my heart of full-time RV living.*
- 6) *God led me to buy a new truck June 4, 2015. I shopped online, knew what I wanted. The first one the salesperson showed me was the one.*
- 7) *I've been undecided about selling my home. I met with a realtor a week ago. The value is finally back up.*

*I fear that:*

- *I may regret selling my beautiful home and not be able to buy another one.*
- *Pulling a big fifth wheel may be too much for me to handle.*
- *The RV maintenance and repairs may be more than I can manage on my own.*

*I realize these decisions are reversible. I want to reduce stress in my life. I want to focus on a healthy lifestyle, eating clean and exercising more consistently. Lord, you know my heart and my desires and what is best for me. Most importantly, how you intend and desire to use me. I want to live in the center of your will. Not even slightly to the left or the right, but exactly where you want me. Help me to know without a doubt where that sweet spot is."*

I see now that my journal writings during this period are so spot on. I am not making this up, I'm writing verbatim what I handwrote in my journal. On August 22nd, 2015, I wrote from a Joyce Meyer devotion: "It seems that life always has its ways of bringing us to a place where we need to make a fresh start."



Then I quoted a passage in Genesis 13 where God said to Abram ‘Look as far as you can see in every direction – north and south, east and west.’ This is the story where Abram and his nephew, Lot, separated. Abram gave Lot first choice of the land, so Lot chose and left. God spoke those words to Abram after Lot had gone and went on to further tell Abram how blessed he would be with so many descendants.

I was also asking God what His message to me was in the Weird Event. I then wrote:

*“I believe it is to further my ministry. It is to work less and not be so concerned about money and debt. I need more balance. I need to take better care of my health. All this is creating my story for Diva Fit and will be used to help others.”*

Whoa! What I wrote on August 22, 2015, is truly God’s word to me today! Diva Fit (later renamed Inspired Wellness) was my personal training business which was suffering at the time because I did not have any time or energy to invest in. It never got off the ground and lost money.

#### *What I’ve Learned: Gratitude as Medicine – Cultivating Positivity for Autoimmune Healing*

Prior to the Weird Event, I had not had any health issues. In fact, I prided myself on my resilience and ability to work crazy hard and be successful at whatever I chose to take on. Now I faced a new challenge. I had not been listening to my body. There were signs that I was working too hard and living unbalanced. In fact, I journaled about it frequently. Since I was ignoring the signs and choosing to press on with forceful determination and an unwillingness to give up or give in, God used my health as a brick wall to stop me and get my attention.

I hit the wall with full force and bounced off wondering what had just happened. It was a mystery to me, but intuitively I already knew something major was happening, and over time I would come to accept it.

By God’s grace, I learned two things. First, I failed to enforce boundaries in my life. I allowed others to impose on my time, energy and ultimately, my health. I have learned to recognize, care for, and protect myself and my health with solid boundaries.

Secondly, the mind-body connection is real and it's powerful! I had not given this connection the respect it deserves. Our bodies hold a great deal of wisdom. My body has a lot to say, and it is very wise. I learned I need to listen.

Stress Reduction is one of the nine pillars of health in my Inspired Wellness Holistic Health Coaching protocol. Managing chronic stress is essential for maintaining overall health and well-being. Chronic stress can manifest in various symptoms including physical, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral issues. In my case, my chronic stress was related to high job demands, long hours, unreasonable deadlines, unresolved conflict with a colleague, and a lot of stress stemming from a personal relationship and internal conflict I was experiencing about the relationship.

At this time in my life, I had a personal motto that I previously used successfully but for some reason, I did not utilize at this time.

*I believe in taking responsibility for all aspects of my life. If there are things or circumstances I do not like, I have three choices. (1) Accept it; (2) Change it; or (3) Leave it.*

I wish I could go back and “leave it” before I hit the brick wall. However, God reassures me through Romans 8:28.

“And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.”

My story in this book is only beginning to unfold, however, my rare autoimmune disease, Susac's Syndrome came on during a slice of my life that God is using to become a theme of my life for helping others. It was a gift and an opportunity! I am honored you are here, reading my story. I am thankful for the brick wall that turned my life into a purposeful, meaningful, and fulfilling opportunity to better serve Him by serving you.