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Introduction

My equilibrium failed me. I sat in horror as the stable world I had always taken for granted deserted me, suddenly and without explanation.

Am I sick? Did I eat something bad? All I had eaten for hours was a bag of Chex Mix.

My mind reeled. Off in the distance, I heard my professor say, "Okay, now open your text book to page 151..." I had no idea what we were learning. It was something about manipulating a computer database. I couldn't bring her words into focus.

As the world began to spin around me, vision doubling, I thought, "How am I going to get home?" There was still 30 minutes left in the class.

I started sweating through my shirt. I had been getting dizzy for months with no rhyme or reason. Not like this though. Never like this.

I was in my senior year at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, Florida, as a business/IT major. I had everything going for me and my future looked bright, but now this.

"What's wrong with me?" The thought desperately echoed through my mind for the rest of the class. No answers came. The answers wouldn't come until much later.

After I got home, the ceiling finally stopped moving. I lay in bed as my mind drifted back to the ten-minute trip home I had taken hundreds of times before. I should never have driven home. Driving drunk would have been safer.

As the room settled back into the stable reality I knew and loved, my 24-year-old self shrugged the whole thing off. I was still invincible back then. I would have to suffer for a while before any answers would come. And a bit more after that, as well.

That was just the beginning. A terrifying start to what has now become a four-year journey. I didn't know it then, but I was suffering from Meniere's disease. A chronic condition of the inner ear that causes tinnitus (loud ringing), feelings of intense ear pressure, hearing loss, and "attacks" of violent vertigo. There are many theories, but modern medicine has yet to find a cause or discover a cure.

What started as an imposing life sentence has slowly evolved into a journey of self-discovery. In the months and years that followed, I took back my health piece by piece. Today I find myself healthier in mind, body, and spirit; healthier than I've been in a long time.

If you have just been diagnosed with Meniere's disease or are currently suffering, I want you to grasp one thing right now: there is so much hope. Meniere's disease will not define you. It cannot and will not ever be bigger than your dreams. I wish someone had told me this sooner. It may be hard to see it right

now, but you can regain much of what you have seemingly lost and have the opportunity build a life of purpose and meaning more substantial than you ever dreamed possible.

I will show you the way through the confusion you undoubtedly feel. You will be able to face your Meniere's disease without fear or hesitation. I will help teach you to take back control of your lifestyle and health with simple and effective techniques. With a little bit of effort, you will come out the other side stronger, happier, and more confident. You will thrive once again.

This book is divided into three sections. The first section will gently guide you to an understanding of Meniere's disease. Early on, I suffered needlessly. I will steer you through the chaos to avoid the crippling anxiety and depression that many Meniere's patients tragically face. Through the combination of knowledge, proper mindset, and finding the right doctor, you will replace your despair with a sense of confidence and hope. It will pave the road for acceptance, your first true step towards health.

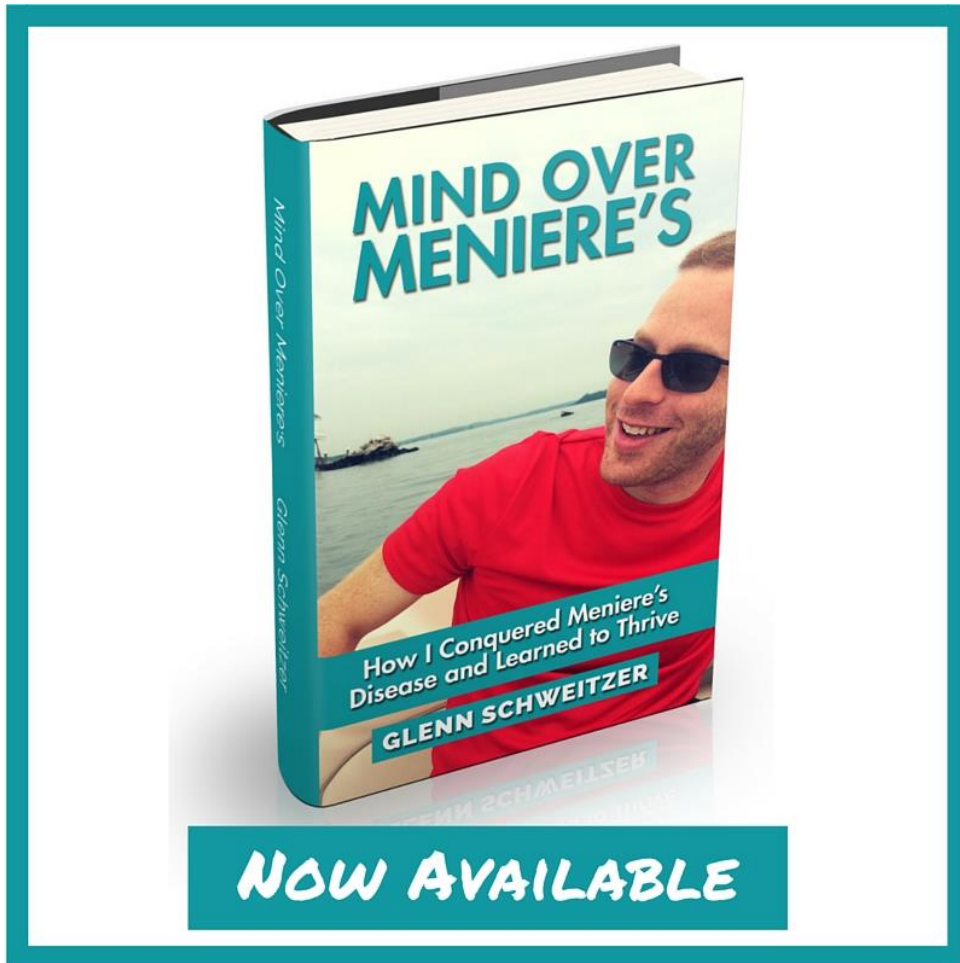
The second section offers a system of lifestyle management techniques that will bring you back toward a baseline level of health. Before you can thrive, you need to get your symptoms to a more manageable level. Facing a challenge like that alone can be a frustrating cycle of trial and error, but it doesn't have to be. It's also frightening to face the prospect of having to make massive changes to your lifestyle (giving up coffee was the hardest for me). The good news is that many of the lifestyle changes you face are only temporary, a necessary evil to allow yourself to accurately discover your body's new limitations. As you start to rediscover your health and begin to thrive, you will find that your limitations will constantly change and may decrease over time.

I will also teach you how to build routines that automate aspects of both your mental and physical health to allow you to easily transition into your temporary new lifestyle. Diet, exercise, sleep, and stress reduction all play an important role in treating Meniere's disease and will help manage your symptoms when approached the right way.

The final section will feature a roadmap for you to advance your health further and begin to thrive. You will carefully test what your body can and cannot handle by conducting what I call lifestyle reversal experiments. You will learn how to reach states of optimal experience and peak performance, called flow states, which will reveal potential that you never dreamed possible. I will cover cognitive boosting supplements, called Nootropics, as well as techniques that will help you cut through the brain fog and increase your memory and focus. You will also learn various strategies for personal growth and techniques for ongoing lifestyle management as they relate to Meniere's disease. And finally, I will show you how to find purpose, passion, and clarity in your life. It's not as difficult as you might think.

In fact, if you are anything like me, you may have overestimated the challenges in front of you. It will take hard work, discipline, and courage, of course. Yet far too often, we have a tendency to exaggerate the level of difficulty involved when facing large obstacles.

You are capable of incredible things; nothing is impossible. As you take your first steps, I want you to know you are not alone. There is so much hope. You will thrive again.



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