A paved path winds through a forest of tall, slender trees. The ground is covered in a thick layer of fallen autumn leaves in shades of orange and yellow. The trees have vibrant green and yellow foliage, suggesting a late summer or early autumn setting. The path leads into the distance, curving slightly to the right.

**FREEDOM
FROM
DIABETES**

Dr. Matthew Hertert

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The Diagnosis

Then suddenly one day it happened. A doctor was droning on about the condition, the horrible side effects, the drugs, the changes you'd need to make, how different your life would be from now on... meanwhile you sat there, maybe numb, trying to process the fact that everything in your life just changed. Or at least eating, a major daily pleasure we all participate in, just totally changed.

What does this mean? What's going to happen? How am I supposed to do this? You sat there, probably in shock, trying to imagine what life will be like, while an insensitive doctor was blabbing at you, trying to answer that question for you. Maybe, like my family, you wanted to scream at them to shut up so you could try to grasp what just happened...

Sound familiar?

Maybe you were one of the lucky ones who took this news gracefully, or had a fantastic doctor, or you knew something about diabetes from friends or family members. Even for most of us who had some understanding about diabetes there was still that cold chill that crept down our spine.

I don't want this. I don't know how to do this. I don't want to change. I don't want to die.

The diagnosis is overwhelming. Some of us recover more quickly than others.

The Struggle

Once calm returns and we've started learning the basics of diet and exercise, we run into the problem of stamina, of sticking with it, of "compliance." We do great for a few weeks, a few months, usually motivated by fear, testing blood sugar four or five times a day, exercising a few times a week, sticking to a "healthy" diet that tastes like cardboard...

Then we start to return to our old habits. Then the suffering starts.

We move into frustration, beating ourselves up, blaming others, blaming the diabetes, or worst of all full-fledged denial. We eat too much, and the wrong kinds of too much, so we're tired all the time and depressed and the cycle worsens. We eat ourselves to an earlier and uglier death one innocent meal at a time.

We are afraid of dying from diabetes, but we're also afraid of following the new rules, of never enjoying life again. The solution to one of these fears involves major effort to change, and the other simply requires denial. Which solution is easier?

Well the answer is in the diagnosis. For many of us the denial lifestyle made us diabetic in the first place, so we're already comfortable with that "solution"...

So the battle is lost. And so is the war.

The Issue

It doesn't need to be - and *shouldn't* be - a war.

One of the most powerful realizations you can ever have is that diabetes does not kill people. Diabetes does not cause blindness, diabetes does not cause kidney failure, diabetes does not cause numb hands and feet or result in amputation. Diabetes does not cause any of these problems.

Our inability to manage our diabetes is what kills us. Plain and simple.

You can read as many books as you want on diabetes, how it happens, how to avoid it, how insulin resistance works, genetic factors, the glycemic index, carbohydrate management, the best kinds of exercise, the best times to exercise, how to protect your feet while you're exercising, and on and on. All of this information is valuable, but for most of us it amounts to a bunch of blah blah.

I say "blah blah" because what we need far more than *just* information is help changing the behaviors that got us in trouble in the first place. You need help learning how to work with yourself to successfully change your behaviors, and therefore your life, and therefore your lifespan.

You need help learning how to *successfully use* the information so you have *quality* of life.

With the Internet, information is cheap and easy. Anyone can read how to do CPR in twenty seconds. It's worthless if you can't *perform* it when the time comes.

The other most powerful realization you can have is that diabetes is not something to conquer or fight. There is no war unless you think there's a war.

The way to win, to not just *survive* with diabetes but to *thrive* with it, is to *surrender* to it.

My Story

That probably sounds crazy. After all, we're taught never to surrender. So let me explain with a story.

When I was four, my parents returned from a trip to Europe, and after not having seen me for a week they were suddenly able to recognize something was wrong with me. I was skin and bones, I had dark circles under my eyes, and I smelled funny. Something was wrong, *really* wrong.

We ended up at the Joslin Center in Boston, not far from where we lived. There my parents were given the diagnosis - or maybe I should say the death sentence. "Your son has juvenile diabetes. He will be blind by 16, on dialysis by 18, he'll lose his hands and feet by 20 and be dead by 22." I know the doctors were trying to scare my parents into being responsible, and honestly back in 1974 when I was diagnosed those estimates might have been spot on.

But that's a hell of a thing to say to someone about her beautiful child.

My mother was so traumatized and overwhelmed that she ran away for a week, leaving my doubly traumatized father to manage the craziness on his own. In 1974 it wasn't even required that food have nutrition facts on the label. In my case, my parents

were the ones who suffered from the diagnosis; they suffered the numbness and shock.

Strangely, I've had diabetes longer than I've had memories. I never had to re-learn the way to eat like you probably have. I didn't have to feel that chill run down my spine.

Not that I haven't had my challenges. Much the opposite.

I sat in classes eating snacks while all the other 4th graders stared at me wondering why I got to eat when they didn't. I had to take syringes on field trips, and have girl's parents tell them not to date me because I was a time bomb. My first love's Grandmother said to her, "Get a new horse."

Basically, I grew up knowing - not thinking, *knowing* - that I was going to be dead by 22. So I lived accordingly.

College, touring the US with a band, drinking and smoking every night, never testing my blood sugar, taking stupid risks and making poor decisions. Partly because I was so unhealthy that my brain couldn't make good decisions, and partly because it didn't matter, right? *I'd be gone soon enough, I might as well enjoy myself while I was still here.*

Then it happened. I woke up one day, and I was 23.

Well, shit.

There had to have

been some part of me that knew I wouldn't turn into a pumpkin on the eve of my 23rd birthday, but that wasn't the game I'd been playing. I'd chosen the "the light that burns twice as bright burns half as long" game, mostly out of anger. I was angry at diabetes, I was angry at my body, I was angry at the hand I'd been dealt, and I was angry at God. I was angry at having been born and having to live this kind of a life. I was angry at the choices I'd made and couldn't take back.

I was angry with everyone and everything, and I'd be damned if I was going to let diabetes (or anyone pretending to care about me) tell me how to live the short life I had left.

And I lived and drank like I was angry. 23 was uglier than 22, by far.



But it was also the year I figured out how to overcome addiction. Surprisingly, it was also the way to overcome diabetes.

Eventually, while “supporting a friend in need,” I found myself attending 12-step meetings and soon realized I was laughing more, identifying more with people’s stories and experiences, and was more excited to go to meetings than this friend I thought I was “helping.” My denial started breaking down, my fear kicked in, and one night I headed off to a meeting convinced it was the last one I’d ever go to; I needed to rebuild my denial and talked myself into believing I wasn’t like “Them.” When I walked in I saw the first person I’d ever seen who I knew from *outside* the group. A guy who worked at the comic book store I went to in college. I’d get wasted and talk this poor guy’s ear off for hours at a stretch. He just listened patiently to me, probably recognizing himself in me.

My entire denial system came crashing down at that point. The ironic context in which I knew this guy was key for me. It wasn’t just some random guy I’d known, it was a guy I’d talked to for hours, but never talked to sober. I suddenly saw my life from a new altitude, and knew why I’d been enjoying the meetings so much. I suddenly saw that I had worked myself into a corner through fear, denial and anger.

I had a spiritual awakening.

I had an awakening, and through using the tools I was offered and the ones I sought out I came to understand that the way to win with addiction is to surrender to it. I surrendered to, and became victorious over, alcohol, smoking, coffee, relationships, sex, spending money, eating - and eventually over managing my diabetes. I surrendered to the reality of what I had to change to survive, and then what I had to change to thrive. Not just to stay alive but to enjoy *quality of life*.

There were other trials: being in and out of hospitals, getting dumped because of my illness, screaming at God (if there was one). There were also beautiful experiences, instances when I chose love and hope and to take care of myself.

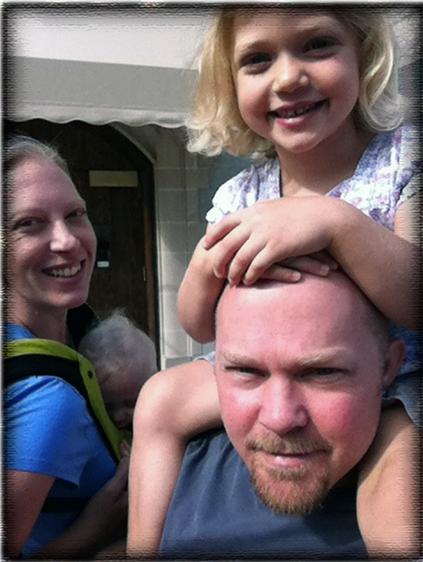
Experiences in which I came to understand that my partner didn't leave because she was afraid of diabetes, she was afraid of how much it would hurt if diabetes took me early and brutally. Experiences in which I learned to be in *acceptance* of the diabetes, in *cooperation* with what it required of me to stay alive and to live fully.

I made a lot of mistakes, dragged my feet when my ego was afraid of change, and hurt people and myself along the way. I also committed fully to change. I spent years in 12-step groups, studied

dozens of self-mastery and spiritual techniques, earned a degree in spiritual psychology, and became a doctor.

The reason I'm talking about the addiction experience is that over the years, counseling both addicts and diabetics, I came to see that *diabetes works the same way in consciousness that addiction does*. Through fear and denial we try to show the condition who's boss to maintain a sense of control and dominance over our life and fate - and in exchange kill ourselves slowly with food and resentment.

This is why I can offer you hope. I've been diabetic for 40 years, a coach for 20, and a doctor for 10. Far more importantly, I've been where you are. I've been in the darkness, I've been on the mountaintop at sunrise, and I've been just about everywhere in between.



I've got a message for you: you can do it. You can thrive, free from diabetes.

I got to practice surrender. *I got stronger and became more whole through choosing surrender.* I achieved victory over that awful prognosis by surrendering.

That's me: but we need time and space to talk about you and about the solution, the tools, the techniques, the resources, and about hope. I need to outline the plan. I've done a lot of work to become an expert in healing from diabetes, and if you want it, you can have it. Healing, and maybe even curing.

It's smarter (and less painful) to learn from others' mistakes than from making your own.

Learn from *my* mistakes. See, if I can do it, anyone can. *You* can. *We will*, together.

The Problem

Let's get down to business.

The problem for us is really a series of many smaller problems. This is a good thing because, as the old joke goes, you eat an elephant one bite at a time.

What we need to do is really simple - we need to learn to balance food, insulin and exercise. For adult onset diabetics, it's usually even simpler, reduced to balancing food and exercise. Again, the problem is we don't know how to change our lives, our emotions and our habits to do this.

Trying to balance these components gets complicated fast, and it gets complicated because we are complex beings with physical, mental and emotional challenges, all ruled over by a fearful ego. In fact, the ego is largely responsible for creating the challenges. It's the "master problem" for us. The ego is not just the personality, not just who we think we are, but more problematically it's a series of conditioned reactions and rules that we've learned from other people, schools, churches and the media.

The ego is the part of you that believes you're a better person if you make enough money. The ego is the part of you that thinks you'll be more lovable if you lose enough weight. The ego is the part of

you that fears being laughed at. The ego is the part of you that there's no hope with diabetes, so you might as well eat whatever you want.

The ego is fueled by *fear* and it *reacts*. It is not the part of you that you want making decisions.

Don't get me wrong; at a survival level the ego is your friend. The ego is trying to protect you - physically, mentally and emotionally. It wants you to stay alive, whole, safe, secure and in charge. It wants to keep you from getting hurt.

Physically, the ego likes to be **comfortable**. We like a full belly and sweet food and the sense of safety and abundance that food provides us. We like our couches and televisions and movies. We like our **habits**, even the ones that make us uncomfortable - even the ones we tell ourselves we should change. If a pattern didn't give us some payoff, we'd have stopped a long time ago. The ego gets **impatient** when we don't lose weight as fast as we hoped, or when we can't make a 4-minute mile after one week jogging, or when we can't balance our blood sugar easily after a month's practice. We get **frustrated** when things don't work well, especially when we're afraid our life hangs in the balance. These instincts and behaviors are deeply wired in the ego, having kept us alive as hunter-gatherers in circumstances where walking

ten miles a day looking for food didn't guarantee any.

Mentally, the ego defines us through roles in life - accountant, mother, Catholic, liberal - and we gain a sense of self and our place in the world through our **story**. When difficult situations arise that challenge our self-image, our story, we often retreat into **denial** or try to regain control through **obsessive** behavior. The ego **judges** other people and situations when our **expectations** are violated, to try and defend our story about how things *should* be or how people *should* act. These reactions help us navigate a complex and sometimes scary world by giving us a sense of control.

Emotionally, the ego doesn't like getting **hurt**, and once it happens it goes to great lengths to try to avoid getting hurt again. Usually these lengths are irrational and lead us to missing amazing relationships, opportunities and experiences - including healing! The first time we fail at something we get **disappointed** with ourselves, and we either **dwell** on it or, if it was too painful an experience, we **stuff** the feelings deep inside. The ego gets oversensitive and **defensive** when others try to support us, hearing it as criticism and blame. We find all sorts of ways to **resist** risk so that we don't set ourselves up for more upset, hurt or

disappointment, but in the process close ourselves off from life.

Look, the ego can be helpful on a survival level, but we're talking about quality of life, about *thriving*. When we let the ego "keep us safe" beyond reason, when we let it run the show and *react* without thought, fear wins and we lose. Most of us recoil at the idea of letting other people boss us around, but we do it every day. We do it by letting our ego react unconsciously to the world, which it does based on rules it's made up over years of being told what is right and wrong and trying not to get hurt.

This is how we miss life. As motivational speaker Lee Brown put it, "Many people die at 25 but don't get buried until they're 65."

Let's walk through the solution.

The Solution

There are effective solutions to each of the individual problems outlined above, solutions used successfully by thousands if not millions of people to overcome each of the challenges we just outlined - I've helped hundreds do it.

As for the "master problem," there's a very simple "master solution." Awareness.

You can't solve a problem you're unaware of. You can't even hope for or imagine a solution, let alone take action towards solving a problem if you're oblivious to it. You have to be attentive to yourself and willing to be honest about what you see. You have to choose to be awake.

You have to accept the way things are, admit your limitations, and surrender to reality. You have to move into cooperation with what needs to be done to thrive. Remember, *surrender is the path to victory*.

Developing your awareness leads to a higher state of mind, a "higher self." The higher self is the part of us that evaluates the situation and *thinks* before taking action, that *acts* instead of reacts.

When we choose awareness, we want to choose **balance** over comfort, we *want* to choose **goals** over comfort, and we develop a **devotion** to ourselves

and our health that overrides any impatience or frustration that comes up. We get **creative** about our resources and excited about the changes life is bringing.

When we choose to be awake and honest, we start feeling enough hope and **courage** to step free of denial. We experience **caring** instead of obsession, and trade judgment for **compassion** for ourselves and others, realizing that none of us are perfect and that mistakes are a part of learning. We start to **accept** our life and even ourselves as a “work in progress,” letting go of our expectations. As we slowly release the past and others’ limiting ideas about life, we can rewrite our story as one of hope, self-respect and **self-acknowledgment**.

When we choose to accept and cooperate with circumstances, the hurt and upset we’ve experienced no longer becomes fuel for fear and guardedness, but a source of strength and experience that helps us **love ourselves** and be of service to ourselves and others. Disappointment is replaced by **gratitude** for all the blessings we’ve experienced and our newly discovered sense of **connection**, safety and empowerment. We’re not interested in acting hurt, taking things personally, or dwelling on others’ actions as we **honestly** recognize situations for what they are. Resistance

disappears as we **surrender**, and life becomes a thousand times easier.

Not only do we give up the war, we realize there's no fight.

As we come awake in this way, we're able to recognize all the energy we've been wasting on fighting ourselves, diabetes, the world, our family and friends, and God. We're able to take responsibility for it. We're able to release it. We get *free*. We even forget how afraid we once were.

As we get free, we can consider what kind of life we want, what goals we want to pursue, how healthy we want to be without all that baggage clouding our vision. We can make decisions and plans from a place of hope and clarity.

We can set goals. And without all the limitations and patterns, we can achieve our goals and create a healthy, vibrant, thriving life based in healthy, supportive patterns.

If I could do it, so can you. I promise it. I guarantee it.

The Resources

Right about now I'm guessing you're feeling two things: excitement and fear.

Excitement at the possibilities. At the idea that you can change your patterns and overcome your resistance. That you can learn not only to manage your diabetes or cure it, but that you can live more freely and fully - that you can thrive. Your higher self is saying, "I want to be free! I want to feel great! I want energy and joy! I want to love what I eat and how I exercise! I want to have great sex! I want to be enthusiastic at work! I want to heal this diabetes and follow my dreams!"

Then there's that fear. Don't worry, your ego is just doing its job, trying to protect you from disappointment. It's saying, "Can I do this? What will I have to give up? How long will it take? Will I be able to stick with it until that time? What if I fail? I've always failed before... What if I disappoint my friends and family? Can I actually do this, *can I change?*"

The answer is yes, you can.

Did your ego hear me? The answer is
YES YOU CAN.

In the twenty years I've been counseling and coaching people and the ten years I've been a doctor, I've guided hundreds of people through major changes using the techniques I described above. In addition, I've designed dozens of specific resources for working through each of these major challenges.

The ever-increasing number of people being diagnosed with diabetes or as pre-diabetic has led me to develop a special program for us, *Freedom from Diabetes*. The truth is these tools would work for anyone with illness, and for any family member providing them support; but they are customized for us. The program is the only diabetic coaching program that is designed *for* diabetics *by* a diabetic doctor with years of experience in coaching, using tools I've used on myself - so I *know* they work.

The *Freedom from Diabetes* program is a unique program, one that treats the core problem for people like us: our lack of compliance with the simple requirements of diabetes. There are dozens of books about the physiology and biochemistry of diabetes that are as comprehensive as anything I could ever write. If that's what you're after, I'll happily direct you to those. But information is not your problem - a challenge with using your information is your problem.

Freedom from Diabetes addresses our major stumbling blocks on the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual levels using tools developed over almost two decades of working with clients on these issues. The program clearly describes the problems and the solutions to those problems and helps you design a simple, clear action plan based on your most heartfelt goals. It guides you through a gentle inventory to get clarity on your major resistance points and outlines a detailed series of action steps, behaviors and techniques to resolve them.

Freedom from Diabetes recognizes that people learn differently, need differing kinds of support, and have differing budgets. The program includes DVDs and online videos for visual learners, audio programs and teleseminars for auditory learners, and eBooks, books and workbooks for more tactile learners.

Most importantly, it provides you all the *support* you need to achieve your goals. Through individual coaching, structured group coaching sessions, live and virtual retreats, and a membership website, I give ongoing support to work through the specific hurdles that arise for you, customizing the process to your needs.

As the 12-step groups discovered eighty years ago, having a community of support - people who've had the same fears as you but now have the freedom you want - is an invaluable resource. In that spirit, *Freedom from Diabetes* hosts a thriving online community of diabetics going through the program to share support and insight and to answer your questions, a community I participate in daily.

Every part of this program comes with a no questions asked, full money-back guarantee. A few years ago, I started feeling an irresistible call to move forward with creating this program in service to the people I know best - diabetics. In reality my whole life has been bringing me to this, every experience synergizing to be able to help people like us. For me, this is about helping as many people as I can. It's about helping you.

I've been a diabetic for 40 years, and none of those horrible predictions have come to pass, despite years of stupid, fear-driven choices. That's because a dark time led me to surrendering to a new life, one of self-honesty, acceptance and cooperation. That choice gave me greater rewards than I ever could have imagined - especially given that I was simply trying to survive and escape the eye, kidney and extremity problems that had begun. The choice to surrender gave me purpose, it gave me a beautiful wife and amazing children

and friends, it gave me careers where I got to serve and make a difference, and it has given me freedom from diabetes.

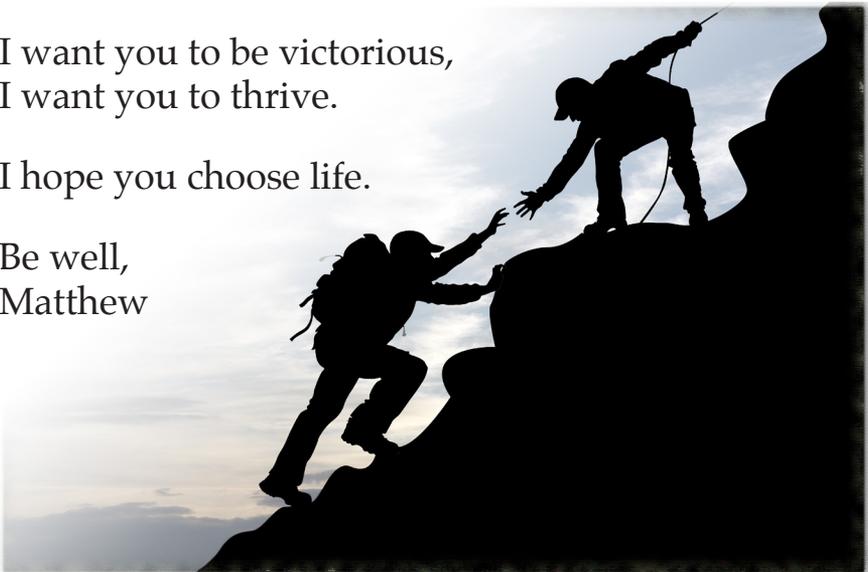
And I now offer it to you. There is no other resource on the market like this. This program is a labor of love, carefully crafted and generously priced to make it accessible to the greatest number of people possible. What you have to ask yourself is what the physical, mental and emotional cost will be if you *don't* try it.

Come join us at www.ThrivingDiabetics.com today and see what people are saying. See the products and programs, and I'll even extend a 20% discount on your first purchase (use the code *THRIVE20*). If you have questions, please feel free to email me at Matthew@ThrivingDiabetics.com.

I want you to be victorious,
I want you to thrive.

I hope you choose life.

Be well,
Matthew



My gratitude and special thanks to:
Greta and Jimmy for their love and service;
J-R, John, Ron and Mary for their example;
Susan and Carole for their faith;
and to my Lor for everything.

If you enjoyed this book or found the content helpful or
encouraging, please share it - others may need it...



For a free consultation or to share questions or
comments, please email Dr. Matthew at
Matthew@ThrivingDiabetics.com

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