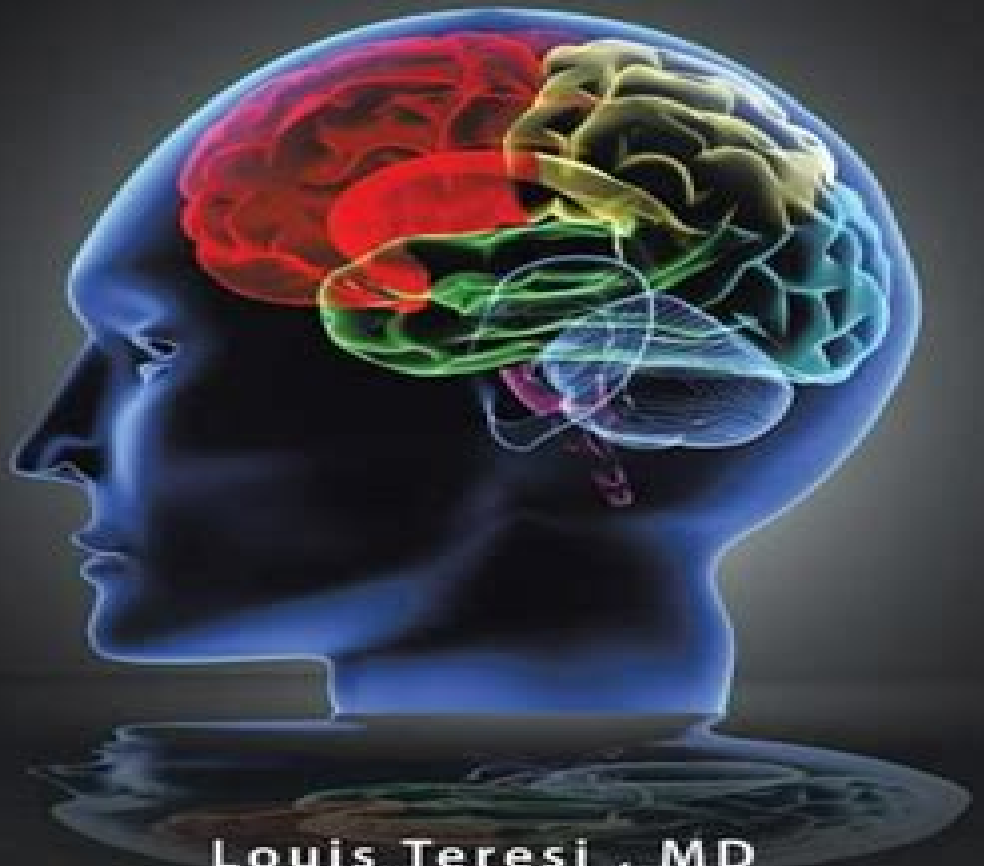
HIJACKING THE BRAIN

How Drug and Alcohol Addiction Hijacks Our Brains
The Science Behind Twelve-Step Recovery



Louis Teresi , MD

in collaboration with

Harry Haroutunian, MD

Hijacking The Brain How Drug And Alcohol Addiction Hijacks Our Brains The Science Behind Twelve Step Recovery

Marc Lewis

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Hijacking the Brain Louis Teresi MD,2011-10 Hijacking the Brain provides the first ever scientific explanation for the success of Twelve Step programs Hijacking the Brain examines data provided by recent rapid growth in the fields of neuroscience neuroimaging psychology sociobiology and interpersonal neurobiology that have given us new dramatic insights into the neural and hormonal correlates of stress and addiction cognitive decline with addiction as well as for the relative success of Twelve Step Programs of recovery Addiction is recognized by experts as an organic brain disease and most experts promote Twelve Step programs AA NA CA etc which invoke a spiritual solution for recovery To date no one has described why these programs work Hijack tells us why In Hijack the role of working The Steps for reducing stress and becoming emotionally centered is discussed in depth A full chapter is devoted to the rewarding and comforting physiology of meditation and the spiritual experience The author uses examples from animal sociobiology as well as sophisticated human brain imaging studies to demonstrate that empathic socialization and altruism are instinctive and naturally rewarding and along with Step Work act as a substitute for the synthetic rewards of drugs of abuse Hijack does not challenge the Steps or the Traditions of Twelve Step programs The sole intention of Hijacking the Brain is to connect the dots between an organic brain disease and a spiritual solution with sound physical scientific evidence Avoiding strict scientific language as much as possible Hijack is written for the layperson and abundantly illustrated **Hijacking the Brain** Louis Teresi, MD,2011-10 Hijacking the Brain provides the first ever scientific explanation for the success of Twelve Step programs Hijacking the Brain examines data provided by recent rapid growth in the fields of neuroscience neuroimaging psychology sociobiology and interpersonal neurobiology that have given us new dramatic insights into the neural and hormonal correlates of stress and addiction cognitive decline with addiction as well as for the relative success of Twelve Step Programs of recovery Addiction is recognized by experts as an organic brain disease and most experts promote Twelve Step programs AA NA CA etc which invoke a spiritual solution for recovery To date no one has described why these programs work Hijack tells us why In Hijack the role of working The Steps for reducing stress and becoming emotionally centered is discussed in depth A full chapter is devoted to the rewarding and comforting physiology of meditation and the spiritual experience The author uses examples from animal sociobiology as well as sophisticated human brain imaging studies to demonstrate that empathic socialization and altruism are instinctive and naturally rewarding and along with Step Work act as a substitute for the synthetic rewards of drugs of abuse Hijack does not challenge the Steps or the Traditions of Twelve Step programs The sole intention of Hijacking the Brain is to connect the dots between an organic brain disease and a spiritual solution with sound physical scientific evidence Avoiding strict scientific language as much as possible Hijack is written for the layperson and abundantly illustrated Evaluating the Brain Disease Model of Addiction Nick Heather,Matt Field,Antony Moss,Sally Satel,2022-03-07

This ground breaking book advances the fundamental debate about the nature of addiction As well as presenting the case for seeing addiction as a brain disease it brings together all the most cogent and penetrating critiques of the brain disease model of addiction BDMA and the main grounds for being skeptical of BDMA claims The idea that addiction is a brain disease dominates thinking and practice worldwide However the editors of this book argue that our understanding of addiction is undergoing a revolutionary change from being considered a brain disease to a disorder of voluntary behavior The resolution of this controversy will determine the future of scientific progress in understanding addiction together with necessary advances in treatment prevention and societal responses to addictive disorders This volume brings together the various strands of the contemporary debate about whether or not addiction is best regarded as a brain disease Contributors offer arguments for and against and reasons for uncertainty they also propose novel alternatives to both brain disease and moral models of addiction In addition to reprints of classic articles from the addiction research literature each section contains original chapters written by authorities on their chosen topic The editors have assembled a stellar cast of chapter authors from a wide range of disciplines neuroscience philosophy psychiatry psychology cognitive science sociology and law including some of the most brilliant and influential voices in the field of addiction studies today The result is a landmark volume in the study of addiction which will be essential reading for advanced students and researchers in addiction as well as professionals such as medical practitioners psychiatrists psychologists of all varieties and social workers **Dispersing the Clouds of Temptation** Brian Lightbody,2015-04-21 In Romans 7 14 25 Paul declares For I do not do the good I want but the evil I do not want is what I do KJV St Paul s statement is a universal truth for all human beings humans whether Christians Jews Muslims Buddhists Hindus or atheists are prone to committing free actions that are not good Furthermore and irrespective of how we might construe the notion of good whether as acting in accordance with some religious or spiritual precept or simply doing what is in one s best interest we often knowingly and freely choose actions that may or in fact do harm us There is a name given to such actions We call them weak willed Weakness of will or akrasia has perplexed philosophers theologians and laypersons alike for centuries This book reveals why the idea has caused so much bafflement and consternation for so many The main thrust of the work however is to illuminate and inspire Lightbody seeks to demonstrate concretely how and why we are weak willed By extracting an alchemical touchstone from Plato s middle period philosophy Lightbody in addition reveals how we may transmute harmful appetites into life edifying passions The 5 Choices Kory Kogon,Adam Merrill,Leena Rinne,2014-12-30 Time management for the 21st century Jacket Hijacked Brains Henrietta Robin Barnes, MD,2015-01-06 This book written from the perspective of a practicing primary care physician interweaves patients stories with fascinating new brain research to show how addictive drugs overtake basic brain functions and transform them to create a chronic illness that is very difficult to treat The idea that drug and alcohol addiction are chronic illnesses and not character flaws is not news this notion has been around for many years What Hijacked Brains offers

is context and personal stories that demonstrate this point in a very accessible package Dr Barnes explores how the healthy brain works how addictive drugs flood basic reward pathways and what it feels like to grapple with addiction She discusses how for individuals the combination of genetic and environmental factors determines both vulnerability for addiction and the resilience necessary for recovery Finally she shows how American culture with its emphasis on freewill and individualism tends to blame the addict for bad choices and personal weakness thereby impeding political and or health related efforts to get the addict what she needs to recover Molecular Neurobiology of Addiction Recovery Kenneth Blum,John Femino,Scott Teitelbaum,John Giordano,Marlene Oscar-Berman,Mark Gold,2013-05-27 Humans are biologically programmed to seek out pleasurable experiences These experiences are processed in the mesolimbic system also referred to as the reward center of the brain where a number of chemical messengers work in concert to provide a net release of dopamine in the Nucleus Accumbens In some genetically predisposed individuals addiction occurs when the mechanisms of the mesolimbic system are disrupted by the use of various drugs of abuse Since Alcoholics Anonymous was founded in 1935 it s 12 step program of spiritual and character development has helped countless alcoholics and drug addicts curb their self destructive behaviors However the program was developed at a time when comparatively little was known about the function of the brain and it has never been studied scientifically This is the first book to take a systematic look at the molecular neurobiology associated with each of the 12 steps and to review the significant body of addiction research literature that is pertinent to the program

Hijacked Brains Henrietta Robin Barnes, MD,2015-01-06 This book written from the perspective of a practicing primary care physician interweaves patients stories with fascinating new brain research to show how addictive drugs overtake basic brain functions and transform them to create a chronic illness that is very difficult to treat The idea that drug and alcohol addiction are chronic illnesses and not character flaws is not news this notion has been around for many years What Hijacked Brains offers is context and personal stories that demonstrate this point in a very accessible package Dr Barnes explores how the healthy brain works how addictive drugs flood basic reward pathways and what it feels like to grapple with addiction She discusses how for individuals the combination of genetic and environmental factors determines both vulnerability for addiction and the resilience necessary for recovery Finally she shows how American culture with its emphasis on freewill and individualism tends to blame the addict for bad choices and personal weakness thereby impeding political and or health related efforts to get the addict what she needs to recover **If You Work It, It Works!** Joseph Nowinski,2015-01-07 Gain a clear understanding of the science and latest research behind the success of the Twelve Steps a critical program used by millions of people around the world to stay sober and one of the greatest social movements of our time Since the publication of Alcoholics Anonymous in 1939 the Twelve Steps have been central to staying sober for millions of people around the world Countless recovery and treatment organizations have adopted the Steps as their program for abstaining from addictive behaviors But recently a growing chorus of critics has questioned the science behind this model In this book Nowinski calls

upon the latest research as well as his own seminal Project MATCH study to show why systematically working a Twelve Step program yields predictable and successful outcomes Whether you re thinking of joining a Twelve Step group or simply want to understand the science fueling one of the greatest social movements of our time this book is for you As any AA member will tell you It works if you work it Recovery Now Anonymous,2013-11-19 An accessible basic text written in today s language for anyone guided by the Twelve Steps in their recovery from addiction to alcohol and other drugs For decades people from all over the world have found freedom from addiction be it to alcohol other drugs gambling or overeating using the Twelve Step recovery program first set forth in the seminal book Alcoholics Anonymous Although the core principles and practices of this invaluable guide hold strong today addiction science and societal norms have changed dramatically since it was first published in 1939 Recovery Now combines the most current research with the timeless wisdom of Alcoholics Anonymous Narcotics Anonymous and other established Twelve Step program guides to offer an accessible basic text written in today s language for anyone recovering from addiction to alcohol and other drugs Marvin D Seppala M D offers a doctor s opinion in the foreword to Recovery Now outlining the medical advances in addiction treatment and updating the Big Book s concept of addiction as an allergy to reveal how it is actually a brain disease Regardless of gender sexual orientation culture age or religious beliefs this book can serve either as your guide for recovery or as a companion and portal to the textbook of your chosen Twelve Step Program The Alcoholic / Addict Within: Our Brain, Genetics, Psychology and the Twelve Steps as Psychotherapy Andrew P,2017-08-19 A doctor in recovery provides a guided tour through the brain changes genetics and psychology that cause addiction and how to use this information to beat addiction The Alcoholic Addict Within is a book that empowers alcoholics and addicts and those who wish to understand them with an understanding of the science behind why we become addicted why we do the things we do and why it is so difficult to stop The science is presented in everyday language and with a sense of humor that makes it a fun read The information enables a deeper understanding of ourselves and our addiction It allows those who love us to get a look inside us and for once find an understanding of our disease Anyone who reads this will never again ask us why don t you just stop They will see first hand that alcoholism addiction is a disorder of biology and not a failing of morality They will learn how they can best help us The 12 Steps are used as a framework for applying the science to recovery The 12 Step program was chosen because it is remarkably consistent with all aspects of the science of addictions For those working the 12 Steps or sponsoring others the information will enrich the experience by matching the science to the program For those who are not involved in that program the information is equally applicable to their own recovery The science is used to explain the basis of some effects widely experienced by people in recovery the insanity of alcoholism addiction the pink cloud effect relapse dreams hostage taking wet brain co dependency relationships and obsession Also addressed are important recovery issues such as self esteem coming to terms with past traumas dealing with anger finding peace of mind self forgiveness and putting a stop to cravings The question do I have an

alcoholism addiction gene and will I pass it on to my children is answered Also explored are the intimate ties between alcoholism addiction and mental illness They are so alike we can barely tell them apart and so woven together that one can kindle the fire of the other In fact it can be very difficult sometimes impossible to figure out which came first and brought the other on Or even to tell them apart We get to the bottom of this compelling issue that affects well over half of addicts and alcoholics The book speaks to many audiences The main audience is alcoholics addicts and those who wish to help and understand them Loved ones teachers clergy medical professionals counsellors and therapists all will gain insight and understanding **The Selfish Brain** Robert Dupont,2000-03-16 In a thoughtful and well reasoned book Robert L DuPont examines the biological basis of drug seeking behaviour Why is it so easy for some people to become addicts And sadly why is it so hard for these people to shake their addictions Well reviewed in hardcover this title is written for professionals people in recovery and their families DuPont encourages addicts to address the many issues of denial that stand in the way of recovery

Halfway to Hell and Back Gary N. Laursen,2011-04-05 Have you ever known an alcoholic or a drug addicted person Have you ever been one Well I am here to tell you it is really no fun even though it seems to be at the time Life is awesome being sober Here is my story of going HALFWAY TO HELL AND BACK A story about gaining awareness and admitting there may be a problem in your life and how to get back to normal if you are ready This book is a kick start toward progression Inside Recovery Susan Banfield,1997-12-15 Describes the practices and principles of twelve step programs how they can be used in dealing with such problems as alcoholism and drug addiction and how to get involved in them **The Biology of Desire** Marc Lewis,2015-07-14 A renowned neuroscientist provides an unorthodox but enlightening Wall Street Journal narrative of how addiction happens in the brain and what we can do to overcome it Through the vivid true stories of five people who journeyed into and out of addiction a renowned neuroscientist and former addict himself explains why the disease model of addiction is wrong and how it obstructs the path to recovery Combining intimate human examples with clearly rendered scientific explanations The Biology of Desire is enlightening and optimistic reading for anyone who has wrestled with addiction either personally or professionally Healing the Addicted Brain Harold Urschel,2009-04-01 New York Times Bestseller New scientifically based approaches that recognize the biological basis of addiction have brought major advances in the treatment of addiction Dr Urschel is at the forefront of this treatment paradigm Dr Larry Hanselka Psychologist The Proven Scientific Approach to Conquering Addiction and Defeating the Disease Healing the Addicted Brain is a breakthrough work that focuses on treating drug and alcohol addiction as a biological disease based on the Recovery Science program that has helped thousands of patients defeat their addictions over the past 10 years It combines the best behavioral addiction treatments with the latest scientific research into brain functions providing tools and strategies designed to overcome the biological factors that cause addictive behavior along with proven treatments and medications Using this scientific approach you will learn to conquer the physical factors that keep people tied to drug and alcohol addiction The proven fact is addiction

is not a moral failing or an issue of not having enough willpower It is a disease of the brain that can and must be treated like other chronic medical illnesses such as diabetes hypertension or asthma in order to defeat the disease This revolutionary program can triple the success rate of patients from 20 30% to 90% There Is Hope By understanding addiction and using 21st century breakthroughs for the first time drug and alcohol addiction can be and will be defeated *Truth About Addiction and Recovery* Stanton Peele,2014-06-30 A radical new approach to recovery using methods proven more effective than medical treatment or twelve step programs Drawing on the latest research and detailed case studies the authors expose the best kept secrets in the recovery field Addictions whether to food cigarettes sex alcohol or drugs are not diseases and they re not necessarily lifelong problems Many more people give up addictions on their own than are helped by medical treatment or twelve step programs Developing values skills and life resources enables people to quit addictions and to shed the addict identity altogether In their revolutionary Life Process Program for overcoming all kinds of addictions the authors emphasize self help and treatment through coping with stress and achieving one s goals As helpful as it is controversial The Truth About Addiction and Recovery will forever change the way we view and treat addiction A classic John Norcross PhD ABPP Distinguished Professor of Psychology at the University of Scranton and author of Changing for Good *Healing the Addicted Brain* Harold Urschel M.D.,2009-04-01 The New York Times bestselling book offering a breakthrough scientific approach and treatment to conquering addiction and substance abuse Addiction is not a moral failing or a lack of willpower It is a disease of the brain that must be treated like any other chronic medical illness Healing the Addicted Brain by Dr Harold Urschel a board certified physician on addiction and founder of the Urschel Science Recovery Institute combines the best behavioral addiction treatments with the latest scientific research on brain function providing tools and strategies designed to overcome the biological factors that cause addictive behavior This proven approach triples the success rate of patients from 30% to 90% for those who seek help You will learn how to Combat triggers and cravings Deal with difficult emotions Handle dual diagnoses Communicate with family Achieve heath and nutrition in recovery Regain enjoyment and pleasure Maintain long term recovery Whether you or a family member or friend suffer from addiction Healing the Addicted Brain offers you a comprehensive look at the new understanding of addition and will arm you with the latest treatment information and ideas to beat this disease and achieve sobriety Scientifically based approaches that recognize the biological basis of addiction have brought major advances in the treatment of addiction Dr Urschel is at the forefront of this treatment paradigm Dr Larry Hanselka psychologist **Unbroken Brain** Maia Szalavitz,2016-04-05 A NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER More people than ever before see themselves as addicted to or recovering from addiction whether it be alcohol or drugs prescription meds sex gambling porn or the internet But despite the unprecedented attention our understanding of addiction is trapped in unfounded 20th century ideas addiction as a crime or as brain disease and in equally outdated treatment Challenging both the idea of the addict s broken brain and the notion of a simple addictive personality The New

York Times Bestseller Unbroken Brain offers a radical and groundbreaking new perspective arguing that addictions are learning disorders and shows how seeing the condition this way can untangle our current debates over treatment prevention and policy Like autistic traits addictive behaviors fall on a spectrum and they can be a normal response to an extreme situation By illustrating what addiction is and is not the book illustrates how timing history family peers culture and chemicals come together to create both illness and recovery and why there is no addictive personality or single treatment that works for all Combining Maia Szalavitz s personal story with a distillation of more than 25 years of science and research Unbroken Brain provides a paradigm shifting approach to thinking about addiction Her writings on radical addiction therapies have been featured in The Washington Post Vice Magazine The Wall Street Journal and The New York Times in addition to multiple other publications She has been interviewed about her book on many radio shows including Fresh Air with Terry Gross and The Brian Lehrer show **12 Steps Unlocked** Linda Miller Ba,Dell Miller Cadcii,2011-11 This book has been written to give a fundamental nuts and bolts understanding of how the Twelve Steps work for men and women in recovery The manuscript was written by both a man and woman in Twelve Step recovery offering a perspective for both genders There is clear presentation not only of addictions but how Twelve Step programs aid in restoring recovering addicts lives The book breaks out of the generalities about spirituality and gives specific and clear implementation of Twelve Step programs that anyone from the agnostic to the believer can follow It was written in part by a recovering alcoholic and addict who also has been a Clinician in the field of addictions over the past thirty years We will look at how addictions grow into taking control of our lives and a simple understanding of how denial works and how it replaces self awareness This book examines characteristics of addictions that seem to follow three distinctive patterns which will be reviewed in depth This is one of the first books to describe in detail characteristics of the binge alcoholic addict It gives clear insight into the two other patterns of addiction involving the victim and the offender We will show how addictions deteriorate the fabric of our relationships and ourselves We break down character defects into three specific categories We will give a clear understanding of the architecture of the Twelve Steps with insight into motive and purpose of how the Steps can be implemented The stories of those who have had the courage to make the program part of their lives are used for illustrating how the program works This book breaks down the Steps offering tools in building a higher awareness of our actions to improve the quality of our relationships with others Another precedent shows how the program aids in being in charge of our health and physical recovery You will see the program from the inside out and how the networking of the fellowship is an integral part of working the Steps We have also contributed to a website for downloading Step worksheets to aid the reader in their recovery at www 12StepsUnlocked com The book provides an in depth understanding of how the culture of recovery works outside of the Twelve Step meetings It offers an understanding of the resources which are a must know to experience what recovery sobriety can be The material is insightful and sometimes offers the true joy and humor that accompanies

recovery This book introduces a refreshing perspective which may offer answers to some of the hardest questions we approach in working our sobriety recovery in the Twelve Steps The simplicity of how the book is written gives the newcomer an easy understanding of how addictions progress and how the Steps aid in a concrete way to create a strong foundation for sobriety recovery This book would be an excellent resource for those having difficulty understanding the fundamentals of Twelve Step programs Those who have difficulty accepting the concept of a God of their understanding will be able to see how this approach can offer a tangible solution to their dilemma Regular members of Twelve Step programs who are continuing to grow in their recovery will be offered a deeper understanding of the depth of what the program offers Professionals can use this resource for educating their clients in several different ways through using this book One aspect is in defining the characteristics of addictions presented in this book Another is the simple and congruent theme of addictions and the application of the Twelve Steps which is outline in this book This literature gives a fresh breath with new insights into addictions and Twelve Step implementation

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