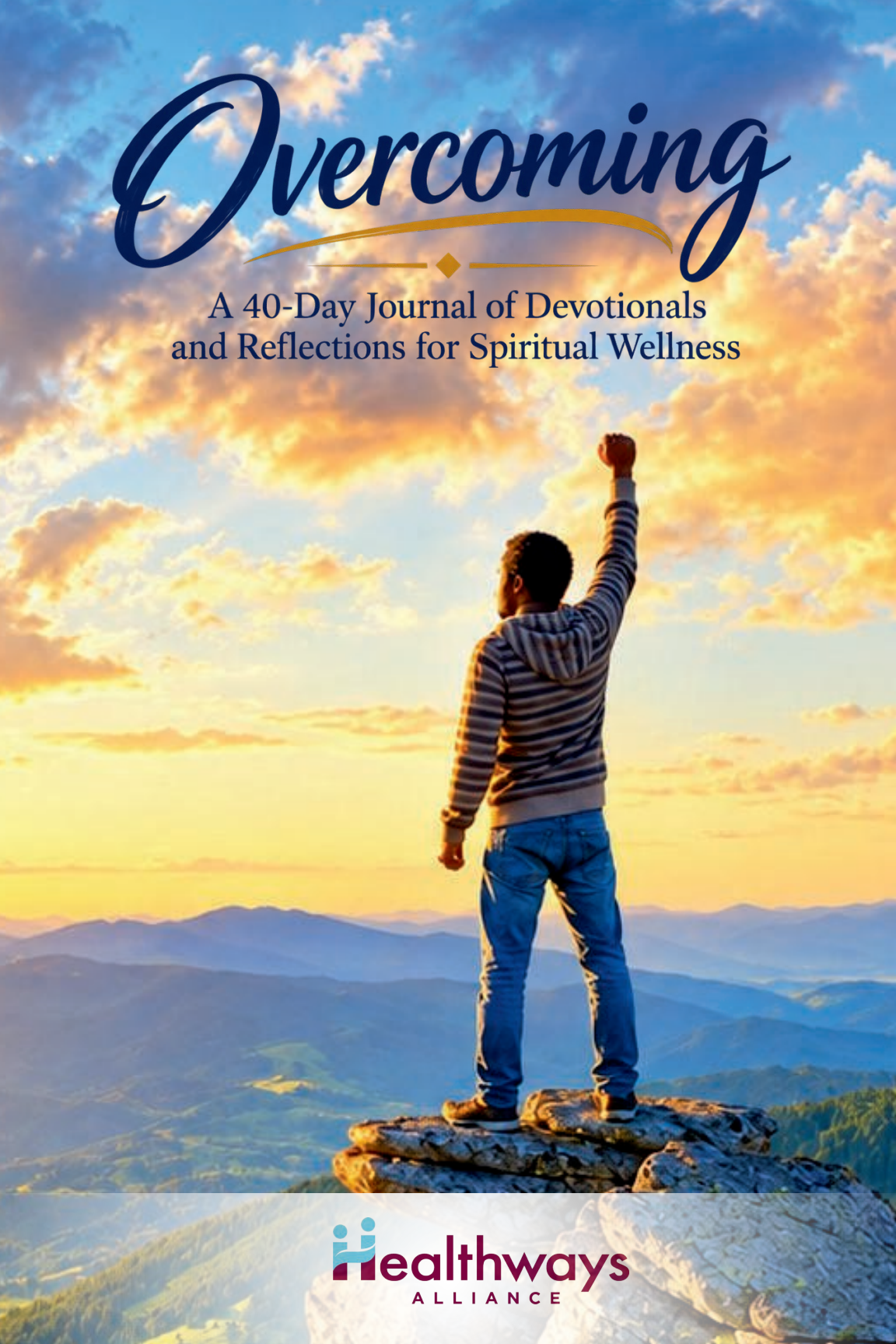
Overcoming

A 40-Day Journal of Devotionals and Reflections for Spiritual Wellness



Healthways ALLIANCE

OVERCOMING

A 40-Day Journal of Devotionals
and Reflections for Spiritual Wellness



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Introduction

Life challenges are inevitable. At some point, we will face a scary diagnosis from a doctor, the loss of someone we loved, a job change, or a mistake we'll regret the rest of our lives. There may be an addiction to overcome, a divorce to work through, a dying loved one to care for, a business to sustain. None of it is easy. Yet, we can be assured that God, our Creator, is also our Helper and Comforter, even on days when it feels like we're all alone.

Experts have long affirmed that spirituality correlates with improvements in physical and mental health. In other words, people who believe in something or Someone greater than themselves can be more grounded mentally, shedding stress. They are more resilient from life's hardships. Indeed, unexplained miracles have occurred, healing people in ways that can only be explained as the work of God.

Healthways Alliance is a faith-based nonprofit organization. Our programs, however, are available to anyone, regardless of faith. Still, we have found in our 28 years of community work that program participants who release their disappointments and burdens to a trustworthy God often experience peace that allows them to persevere. The same is true of our team.

We invited the Healthways team, supporters, and friends to submit stories of how God has worked in their lives to overcome various obstacles. The devotionals that follow are heartfelt and represent common trials of our day: divorce, addiction, diabetes, caregiving for loved ones, mourning death, tough career decisions, abortion. You will find several stories about cancer, now among the leading causes of death in our nation. Although we sometimes feel alone when we face these trials, we are not. Someone else is experiencing the same thing. As King Solomon said, "there is nothing new under the sun." Sharing our stories and methods of overcoming is our way of encouraging those who read this book. All proceeds benefit Healthways Alliance programs in Allen County and Lake County, Indiana. Our services empower and support underserved individuals to live healthier lives.

DAY 1

From Ashes to Beauty

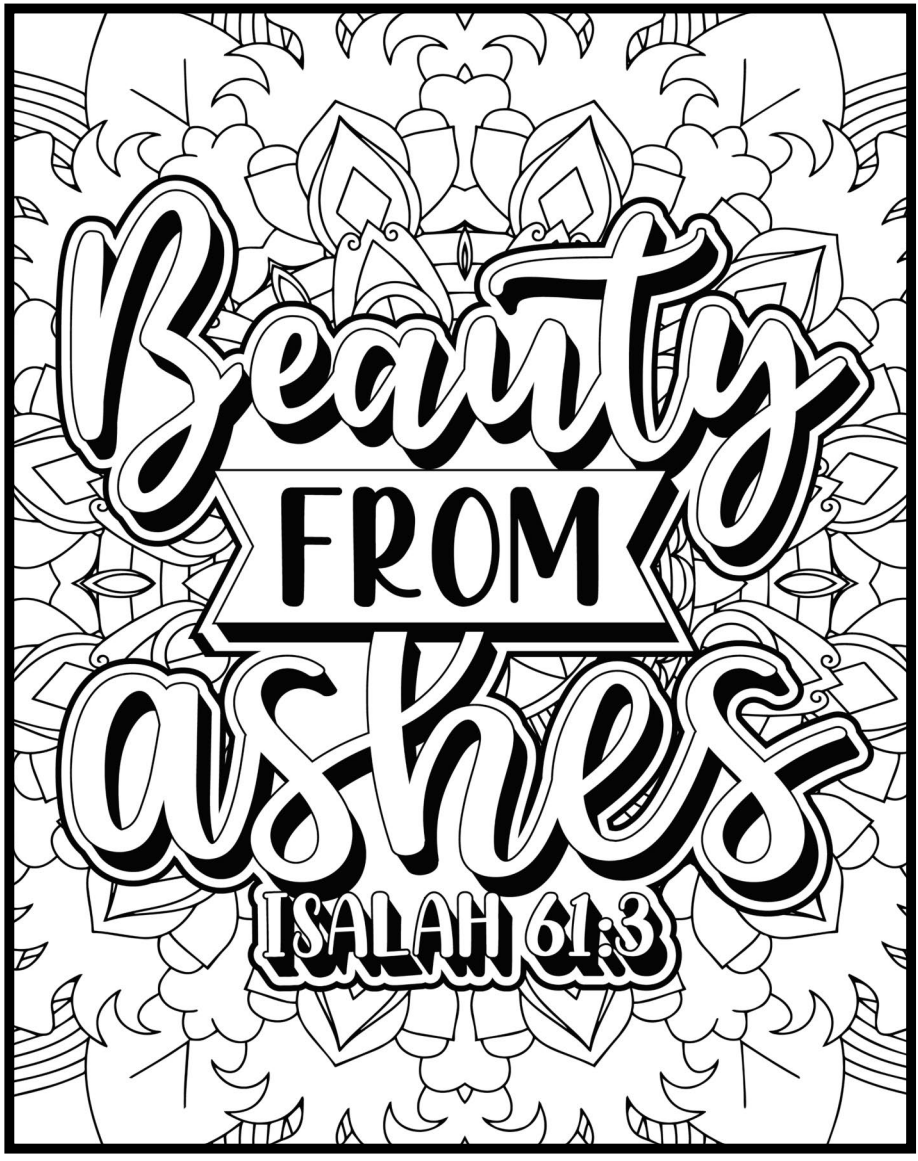
Dominique Petrovic-Melendez

My life is proof that God restores what seems impossible. I spent nearly thirty years homeless, trapped in addiction, gangs, trafficking, and cycles of physical, mental, sexual, and domestic violence. I carried unbearable pain and hopelessness. I attempted suicide seventeen times, lived with constant suicidal thoughts, trauma, and was clinically dead twice. Yet, God spared my life. Even when I wanted to give up, He kept calling me back and turned my pain into purpose. He created beauty from the ashes of my burned-out life.

Turning my life around was not instant. It required surrender, healing, accountability, and faith. Step by step, God rebuilt what was broken. He taught me how to live again, how to love myself, and how to believe that my story still mattered. What once defined me no longer holds me captive.

Today, I am a transformed person. I am a Certified Peer Recovery Coach, Certified Peer Recovery Specialist, Certified Peer Crisis Specialist, and Certified Community Health Worker. I am also a community activist, serving in the very streets and neighborhoods where I once caused destruction. Now I return with compassion, resources, my story, and hope, helping others get back on their feet and reminding them they are not alone.

I am an overcomer because of Jesus. My scars are testimonies, my pain has become purpose, and my survival has become service. If it happened for me, it can happen for you. No matter how dark your past is there is hope, healing, and a future waiting for you. Your life is worth fighting for. Stand up today and choose freedom, courage, healing, and purpose.


Beauty
FROM
ashes
ISAIAH 61:3

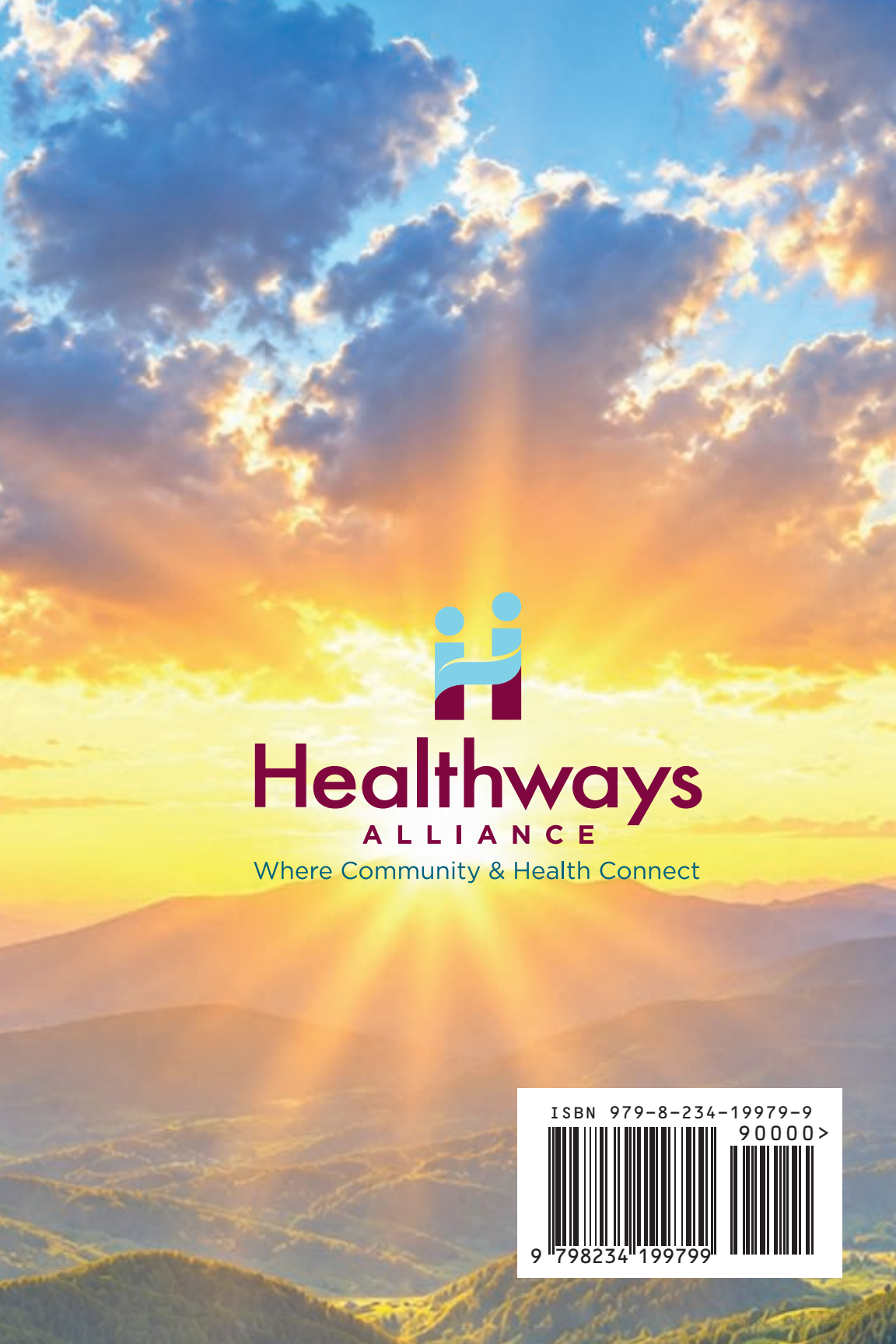
DAY 6

Joy as Medicine

"A joyful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones."
-Proverbs 17:22 (ESV)

Prayer
Father, help me to have a cheerful spirit in you, even when my physical health seems to fade. Many experts have affirmed Your Word, saying that joy releases tension and brings refreshment. Fill my life with laughter, joy, and gratitude for how you created me and the strength that you give during trying times. During those inevitable times when I feel weary or afraid, remind me that You are near. Give me grace for today and hope for tomorrow.

Reflection



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