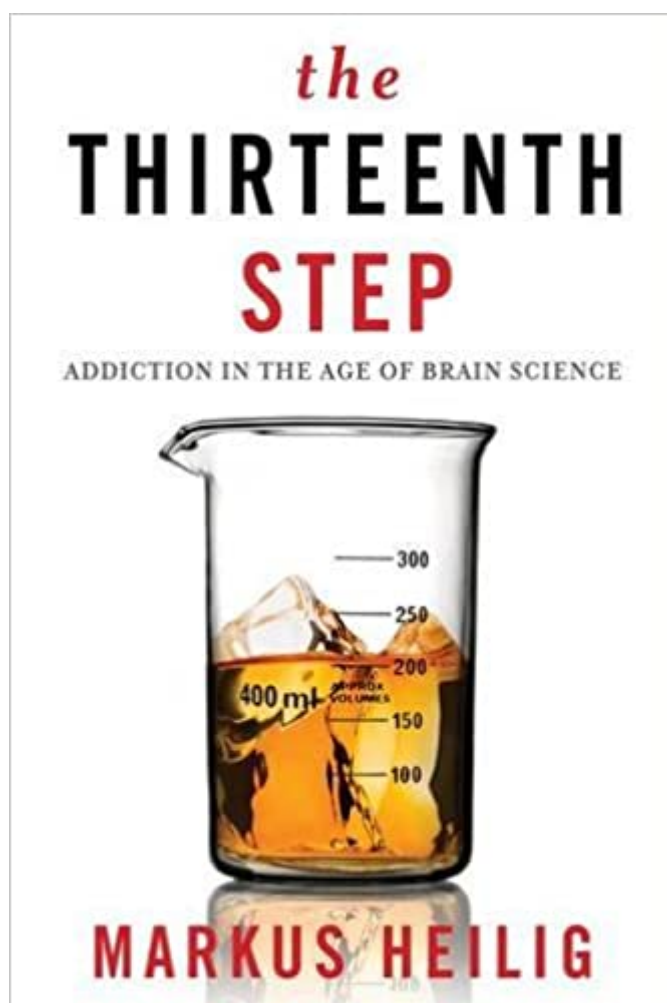


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# The Thirteenth Step: Addiction In The Age Of Brain Science



## Synopsis

The past thirty years have witnessed a revolution in the science of addiction, yet we still rely on outdated methods of treatment. Expensive new programs for managing addiction are also flourishing, but since they are not based in science, they offer little benefit to people who cannot afford to lose money or faith in their recovery. Clarifying the cutting-edge science of addiction for both practitioners and general readers, *The Thirteenth Step* pairs stories of real patients with explanations of key concepts relating to their illness. A police chief who disappears on the job illustrates the process through which a drug can trigger the brain circuits mediating relapse. One person's effort to find a burrito shack in a foreign city illuminates the reward prediction error signaled by the brain chemical dopamine. With these examples and more, this volume paints a vivid, readable portrait of drug seeking, escalation, and other aspects of addiction and suggests science-based treatments that promise to improve troubling relapse rates. Merging science and human experience, *The Thirteenth Step* offers compassionate, valuable answers to anyone who hopes for a better handle on a confounding disease.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Heilig makes the science of addiction accessible to both lay and professional audiences alike with an engaging conversational tone laced with humor and illustrative vignettes. He draws the reader in and effectively consolidates complex concepts. I applaud his efforts to bring the plight of the addicted to the attention of others and for his calling upon the field to do its very best to help.

(Valerie J. Slaymaker, Hazelden Graduate School of Addiction Studies)It was a great pleasure to read this book. Without being openly critical of the usual talk therapy, Heilig outlines the newest treatments that should be offered to every patient suffering from addiction. He shows that treatments today can be based on recent scientific knowledge about what is happening in the brains of alcoholics and describes new treatments based on current knowledge about the disease. Heilig, a world-class expert, has done a tremendous service for patients and their families by writing this book. (Charles P. O'Brien, Department of Psychiatry, University of Pennsylvania)Markus Heilig sums up what he has learned during his twenty years as a physician and researcher in the treatment of alcohol and other addictive disorders.... An informative and compassionate chronicle. (Kirkus Reviews)Poignantly written and personal, yet presents the current science of addiction in a clear and engaging way. Markus Heilig's exploration of addiction science is beautifully written and is a must-read for anyone who wants to understand why addictive behaviors and bad habits are difficult to give up, and how to do it. Heilig has masterfully laid out his own clinical experiences and concisely presented the science of addiction. His book brings to life the countless devastating effects of addiction that affect individuals across all strata of society while attacking the stigma of addiction and shows the importance of neuroscience in understanding and treating it. (Rajita Sinha, chief, psychology section, Yale Medical School)Heilig is one of the wisest, smartest, most insightful people I know. And what Heilig is, so is this book. A fantastic journey across one of the most complex and misunderstood problems of our time. (Pier Vincenzo Piazza, director, Neurocentre Magendie)Recommended for anyone who suffers from addiction or who knows someone who does; undergraduate and graduate students, scholars, and researchers studying medicine, particularly addiction and neurology, and psychology; and anyone who has an interest in learning more about the subject. (Library Journal)What makes this book especially compelling is the author's ability to smoothly transition between dealing with addictions at the human clinical level and at the more abstract level of scientific research. Heilig admirably tries to extract the most meaningful takeaway points from sometimes-dense scientific findings.... Highly recommended. (Choice)Markus Heilig has succeeded in making the airy dismissals of biological evidence-based approaches to addiction, such as those he heard in medical school, no longer tenable. (SÃfÂ©amus Sweeney Times Literary Supplement)[The Thirteenth Step] offers a brilliant and, perhaps more important, highly legible review of current addiction science.... Heilig's synthesis invites us all to critically consider the addiction concept along with its implications for people, policy, and the practice of medicine. (Kyle Bridge H-Sci-Med-Tech)

Clarifying the cutting-edge science of addiction for both practitioners and general readers, *The Thirteenth Step* pairs stories of real patients with explanations of key concepts relating to their illness. Heilig paints a vivid, readable portrait of drug seeking, escalation, and other aspects of addiction and suggests science-based treatments that promise to improve troubling relapse rates. *The Thirteenth Step* offers compassionate, valuable answers to anyone who hopes for a better handle on a confounding disease.

As a treatment professional, I found this book to be an excellent read about the science of addiction and evidenced-based treatments available. Heilig's chapters on molecular culprits and pills for addiction are superb. The entire book does an excellent job of reviewing the history of treatments for addiction, as well as the history of evidenced-based medical treatments for alcohol use disorders. He handles a discussion of AA with aplomb, and with the pragmatic view of a scientist. Overall, an excellent read for anyone interested in the science of addiction, the pharmaceutical treatments that are currently available, as well as a review of other treatment options from the perspective of a person of evidenced-based science.

This book deserves a serious review from scholar/practitioner in Addiction work. I am a social scientist doing research for family members. For my purpose, I could not ask for more from a resource. Well written, cogent and very useful for the casual reader trying to assist family members. Bravo.

Best book I've read on the subject. And that is saying something, because I have read several dozen since addiction visited the life of a close family member. If you want a good grounding in the research, the status of clinical help available, and the many factors that are associated with addiction, read this book. It's written at a relatively sophisticated level, but it is not dry or boring.

This is a balanced and informative account of a serious public health problem. The writer is experienced in both treatment and research.

This book is filled with scientific research and information that is helpful in understanding the true nature of addiction and the most helpful approaches to successful treatment. There are also many compelling stories included that make it a very interesting read.

This book is a must-read for anyone suffering from addiction, their families and anyone involved with the treatment of addiction.

I'm only through the second chapter, but so far this is a heart-warming approach to understanding addiction.

This is a very good book. It is written well, self-reflective and personable. It is historically informed and, most importantly, it is written by a clinician active in research in the field of addiction. It is scientifically informed and delivered in a very understandable form. It is easy to read and interesting; worthwhile. Jay Schulkin, Ph.D., Department of Neuroscience, Georgetown University

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