



Getting a Winning Verdict in My Personal Life: A Trial Lawyer Finds His Soul (Hardcover)

by [J. Gary Gwilliam](#) (Author)

★★★★☆ (5 customer reviews)

Review

Getting a Winning Verdict In My Personal Life: a trial lawyer finds his soul begins with a heartrending jury trial loss in a high-stakes products case he had hoped would be his long awaited breakthrough. As he sits alone in his car, emptying a six-pack to fill the hollow in his heart, Gwilliam starts us on a retrospective journey of his life. It's quite a ride. Throughout it all, there is a sense of a complex being who has opened his soul for our inspection, consequences be damned. It's somewhat disturbing and not a little puzzling. It's also interesting.

Gwilliam isn't afraid to write about things of which he's not proud, and it's a long list. There are two failed marriages and numerous family tragedies. We witness his professional losses, both in the courtroom and at the firm. We experience the pain and personal anguish of a bright mind chained in a dark place. If this is the story of a soul, then we come to understand something about the damned.

Of course, damnation cries out for redemption and in this regard the author does not let us down. His own life healed, we see Gwilliam embarking on a life mission to minister to others suffering the pain of addiction. It's a moving turn of events. --Bill Daniels, *The Advocate Magazine*, September 2007

J. Gary Gwilliam's new book, *Getting A Winning Verdict In My Personal Life: A Trial Lawyer Finds His Soul*, is a riveting autobiography by a well-known, successful courtroom lawyer who talks openly about his losses, failed relationships, and his addiction to alcohol-- things lawyers never mention-- in a brutally honest way. Never has a well-known lawyer written a book that so openly bares his soul for the entire world to see.

Gary's life is one of extremes. He transforms himself from a gang member to prosecutor, morphs from a staunch conservative into a liberal Democrat, from alcoholic to being sober, from follower in his professional life to leader, and from wild party guy to devoted and loving husband. These are just a few of the personal transformations that are recorded by gifted storyteller Gary Gwilliam.

But *Winning Verdict* is more than just a sordid, legal tell-all book. Through the stories in his book, Gary tells us that where you start out in life is not necessarily where you will end up, a point clearly illustrated when Gary takes us on the spiritual journey he describes in his book. Lawyers, judges, and others connected to the legal profession who have read Gwilliam's book enthusiastically endorse it. Gary's story is a prime example of what can happen when people face the worst in themselves, and by doing that, learn how to bring forth the best. All of us need wisdom like that. --National Employment Law Association

Most great trial lawyers bare their clients' souls in their quest for Victory, but few bare their own in their personal struggle to be real.

Gary lays it all out in the dramatic story of his life - the good, the bad and the ugly. His pain throbs as he reaches the bottom, and his joy abounds as he learns to live with success and the love of his life. This journey, one that few of us have the courage to travel, much less admit, has made him a greater champion of the powerless and a better person. -- Morris Dees, nationally known trial attorney and founder of the Southern Poverty Law Center

Product Description

This Best Books finalist (USA Book News) is a true adventure of one lawyer's unflinching truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth about a journey from the bottom of alcoholic despair to sober, soulful leadership in his profession and personal life.

Like most lawyers, Gwilliam was trained to win, and he's always been an expert at getting winning legal verdicts. His biggest personal (and eventually legal) wins, however, came after facing the shame and pain of a crushing courtroom defeat. This set him on a spiritual and psychological journey that caused him to look anew at every aspect of his life, including his history as a high school gang member (he still bears the scar of a poorly removed tattoo), failed marriages, and lots of partying.

Lawyers are trained to wear a slick mask of impersonal confidence and never, ever let the other side see what might be perceived as a weakness. Gwilliam, however, has found that being authentic and practicing compassion creates a foundation for even better service to clients, as well as a more satisfying personal life.

Readers of *Getting a Winning Verdict In My Personal Life: a Trial Lawyer Finds His Soul* often comment that the book reads like a novel, yet its truth grips and inspires people of every profession.

California lawyers can receive a CLE credit in substance abuse for reading the book and passing a test on it. The test is available from Gwilliam's law firm, Gwilliam, Ivary, Chiosso, Cavalli and Brewer, in Oakland, CA.

About the Author

J. Gary Gwilliam has long been one of the nation's most successful and respected attorneys. For more than a dozen years, he has also been a powerful mentor for attorneys and others who deal with such challenges as alcoholism and overwork. In 2005 the ABA Journal featured him on its cover and in its story of how attorneys find that some of life's most important lessons come from defeat. As president of the California Trial Lawyers Association, he led the defeat of bogus tort reform propositions that would have severely limited consumer rights.

Gary vigorously advocates on behalf of employees and consumers who have been wronged by the actions of others. He also fully integrates his spiritual practices with his legal practice, so that trial preparation includes meditation as well as thorough legal strategizing. People who work with him enjoy a model of disciplined work balanced with compassion and a great sense of humor.

Gary's personal life centers on his soul mate, Lilly, their grandchildren, and a love of traveling. They have travelled the world together and live an active and full life.

Gary is a compelling speaker. He often speaks to people of all professions on topics including stress release, sobriety, spirituality, work-life balance and integrity at work.