



Growing Pains Actor and Former Wish Kid Share How One Wish Changed Their Lives Forever

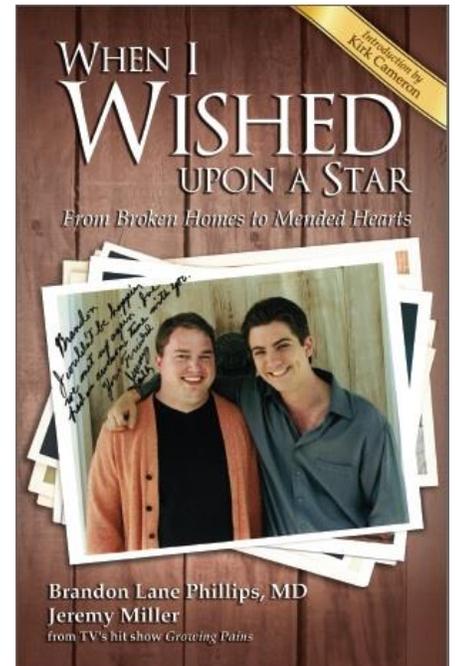
DALLAS – In their new book [“When I Wished Upon A Star,”](#) Brandon Lane Phillips and “Growing Pains” star Jeremy Miller share how Phillips’ wish to meet the child actor would change their lives forever. Phillips longed for the seemingly idyllic life Miller’s character enjoyed. But as he would later learn, things are seldom as they appear. Each chapter of this book, which includes an introduction from Kirk Cameron, reveals the real-life story of two complicated lives. The book releases from Thomas Nelson (ISBN 9781595558411) on May 21, 2019.

“Throughout my childhood, I spent time in and out of the hospital, visiting with my doctors and having multiple procedures and surgeries. I had my first open-heart surgery just after my second birthday,” Phillips, who has Tetralogy of Fallot, a combination of four heart defects, said. “By the time I was 11-years-old, my world seemed to be upside down. My parents had divorced, and I was struggling with what it meant to have a chronic illness. I was losing faith and kept asking God to show me that He loved me.”

A wish granted by [Starlight Children’s Foundation](#) helped provide the reassurance Phillips needed. As an avid fan of “Growing Pains,” Phillips wanted to spend the day with his favorite Seaver, portrayed by Miller. For Phillips, it was a chance to experience and see the perfect TV family up close. The experience and conversations he had that day provided the encouragement needed to lead Phillips to relentlessly pursue his childhood dream of becoming a pediatric cardiologist. Leaving the set that evening, Phillips knew that God had heard his cry. What Brandon did not know that day visiting the set was that Jeremy also longed for a real-life version of his TV family.

“As the oldest child of a single mother, I felt a lot of responsibility to be the man of the house and take care of my family,” Miller said. “Over the years, as the family dysfunction worsened, I turned to alcohol at a very young age, and it led me down a dangerous path that nearly cost me everything.”

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As Phillips faced obstacles throughout his life, events would unfold in a seemingly perfect way to remind Phillips of his wish and how God had answered his childhood prayer. More than a decade after his wish, just as Phillips was on the verge of seeing his dream come to fruition and Miller was nearing one of his lowest points, their paths in life would intersect again. This reunion would mark the beginning of a life-long friendship.

“Over time, I noticed Jeremy really struggling.” said Phillips. “It was my opportunity to be there for him as he had done for me back on that sound stage many years ago.”

“When I Wished Upon A Star,” shares the ups and downs both men faced and how God interwove their lives together when they needed friendship the most. It is an inspiring story of how life can come full circle and God can use one life to change another.

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When I Wished Upon A Star by Brandon Lane Phillips and Jeremy Miller

TITLE: "When I Wished Upon A Star: From Broken Homes to Mended Hearts"
AUTHORS: Brandon Lane Phillips and Jeremy Miller
PUBLISHER: Thomas Nelson
RELEASE DATE: May 21, 2019
PRINT ISBN: 9781595558411
MSRP: \$15.99
FORMAT: Paperback, 292 Pages
SIZE: 5.5 x 0.7 x 8.5 in

SYNOPSIS:

Having grown up in a broken home and with a congenital heart defect, Brandon Lane Phillips often questioned what God's plan for him was. Feeling alone and desperate for answers, Phillips prayed for God to show him a sign that He did indeed love him.

Soon after, Phillips got the opportunity of a lifetime; he was going to meet Jeremy Miller, an actor on his favorite TV Show, "Growing Pains." Phillips never missed an episode and longed for the life Miller's character, Ben Seaver, had. He didn't realize it at the time but he later recognized that the day on set with Jeremy and his co-star Kirk Cameron was an answer to his prayer.

Meeting Miller and his cast mates is just one of several God-ordained coincidences that Phillips shares in "When I Wished Upon A Star" that would shape and encourage Phillips through several obstacles he would face during his life.

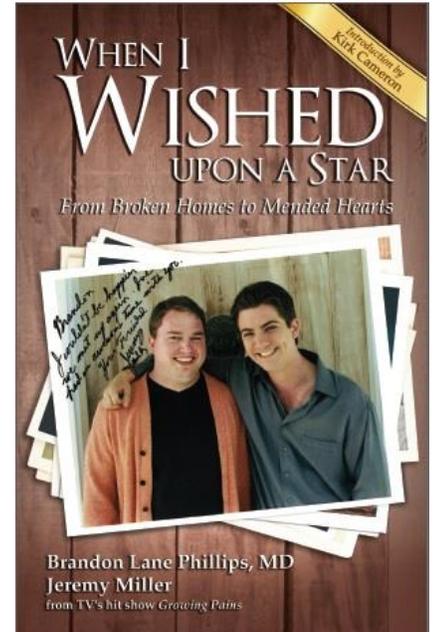
Though both Cameron and Miller played important roles in Phillips' life, Miller faced his own struggles as a child star growing up in a broken home. In the book, Miller opens up about growing up with a similar home life to Phillips and how the end of "Growing Pains" was almost the end of him. He shares about his battle with alcohol and how Phillips helped in overcoming the obstacles he faced.

"When I Wished Upon A Star" is the inspiring story of how God strategically placed two friends in each other's life at the moment they needed each other the most, finding their God-given purpose and empowering them to use their experiences to help others through their struggles.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS:

Brandon Lane Phillips is a pediatric cardiologist who was born with a congenital heart defect. He received portions of his medical training from the very physicians who treated him. He serves on the Board of Trustees for the Starlight Children's Foundation.

Jeremy Miller is an American actor and chef best known for his portrayal of Ben Seaver on the TV show *Growing Pains*. Jeremy struggled with alcoholism and was helped by the BioCorRx Recovery Program. Jeremy now mentors others in the program while continuing to pursue his passions for acting and cooking.

WEBSITE: wheniwisheduponastar.com

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Brandon Lane Phillips, M.D.

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Born and raised in rural Louisiana, Brandon Lane Phillips was diagnosed with a congenital heart defect shortly after his birth. His condition, Tetralogy of Fallot, meant he would undergo several procedures throughout his childhood to monitor and repair his heart. From an early age, he developed a desire to become a pediatric cardiologist just like his childhood doctor who he greatly admired. Many patients with congenital heart defects have learning disabilities, and even though Brandon struggled with a reading disability, he found ways to compensate once he set his focus on academia, graduating valedictorian of his high school class.



He went on to receive a Bachelor's degree in chemistry from Louisiana Tech University in 2000 before pursuing his medical degree at Tulane Medical School.

He completed his residency in general pediatrics at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston and his fellowship in pediatric cardiology at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn. He then worked as a pediatric cardiologist for 6 years with two medical practices in south Texas before returning home to Louisiana and accepting a position with Ochsner Health System in West Monroe.

A highlight of Brandon's medical education was receiving instruction and training from Dr. Thomas Vargo, the same cardiologist who had treated him as a child and supported Brandon's dream to become a pediatric cardiologist himself one day.

Among many of Brandon's awards and accomplishments, he is most proud of his Young Alumnus of the Year award from Louisiana Tech University in 2006 and the Robert C. Baird Award from Tulane University School of Medicine in 2004, which recognizes a senior medical student each year who embodies Dr. Baird's ability to overcome hardship and exemplify excellence and achievement.

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As a second-year medical student, Brandon had an essay about his chronic illness and the experience of having open-heart surgery between his first and second year of medical school published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*. Brandon considers it a great honor to have been invited back to Tulane Medical School several times to lecture to the second-year medical students about pediatric cardiology and share his journey from patient to physician with them.

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In addition to his position on the Board of Trustees for Starlight Children's Foundation, Brandon has served on the Board of the Make-A-Wish Foundation, Louisiana Chapter. He is a member of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Cardiology, and American Mensa, among several other professional memberships and societies. He has served many summers as a camp counselor at special camps for children with heart defects or other conditions, and also worked with Samaritan's Purse on the Children's Heart Project and even traveled to Mongolia in 2009 to help support the organization's mission.

Brandon has authored several medical papers and contributed to the book *Common Cardiac Issues in Pediatrics*, before writing *When I Wished Upon a Star* with Jeremy Miller. He currently resides in West Monroe, Louisiana, where he attends Jackson Street Church of Christ.

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Jeremy Miller

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As a child actor born and raised in southern California, Jeremy Miller was most widely known for portraying Ben Seaver on the popular 80s sitcom “Growing Pains.” His was a happy childhood, even though his parents divorced when he was young, but as a teen, not long after his mother’s remarriage, Jeremy began experimenting with alcohol in response to growing tensions at home. Jeremy graduated from Campbell Hall High School in North Hollywood in 1994.

Jeremy attended USC School of Drama for a year before he found a second calling in the world of food. He enrolled in Le Cordon Bleu in Pasadena and soon after began working as a chef and caterer while still pursuing the occasional acting job.

It was during the filming of the reunion film, “Growing Pains: Return of the Seavers” that Jeremy met Joanie, his fiancée. They have been together 15 years, during which time Joanie played a key role in helping Jeremy get sober, which he has been now for six years. They have three adult sons and live in southern California.

Jeremy has a long history of volunteerism, having advocated during his childhood acting years for the homeless and for children's rights across the world. In 1990 he was part of a coalition that championed a Declaration of Children’s Protection and Rights across the world. He addressed 81 heads of state at the United Nations about the importance of basic medical care, nutrition, and trafficking protection. All but two countries in attendance ratified the mandate. He also served as an ambassador for First Lady Barbara Bush's Education First program. He has volunteered at multiple homeless shelters including the St. Jordan Mission, Bridge to Home, Hope of the Valley, and many others, and also donates his time to cook for charity events for a local non-profit called Single Mothers Outreach.

Following his own struggles with alcoholism, Jeremy worked as a patient advocate at the former Start Fresh Recovery Clinic for three years, and wrote an article on alcoholism for *In Recovery Magazine*.

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Jeremy is an avid reader, a terrible golfer, a tennis player, and Crossfit enthusiast. His deepest joy comes from working with others in recovery and spending time with his family and friends – usually cooking for them.

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Suggested Interview Questions

1. How did you get the opportunity to visit the “Growing Pains” set?
2. Brandon, why did you want to meet Jeremy?
3. How did that meeting impact your life?
4. What is it like growing up a child actor and trying to provide for your family?
5. How did your friendship help you through times when you struggled?
6. What do you want to say to people who may be battling addiction or struggling with something in their life?
7. You both desired to have a family like the Seavers, would you say you have created that kind of family through your friendship not just with each other but other friends and supporters in your life?
8. With social media, many people put up these fronts that make people seem like they have it all – kind of like you idolizing the Seaver family. From your own personal experience what are the dangers of wanting what people portray?

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