



Saving Sammy: A Mother's Fight to Cure Her Son's OCD

By Beth Alison Maloney

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Saving Sammy: A Mother's Fight to Cure Her Son's OCD By Beth Alison Maloney

The story of one mother's fight against the medical establishment to prove the link between infection-triggered PANDAS and her son's sudden-onset OCD and Tourette syndrome.

The summer before entering sixth grade, Sammy, a bright and charming boy who lived on the coast of Maine, suddenly began to exhibit disturbing behavior. He walked and ate with his eyes shut, refused to bathe, burst into fits of rage, slithered against walls, and used his limbs instead of his hands to touch light switches, doorknobs, and faucets.

Sammy's mother, Beth, already coping with the overwhelming responsibility of raising three sons alone, watched helplessly as her middle child descended into madness. Sammy was soon diagnosed with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and later with Tourette syndrome. Unwilling to accept the doctors' prognoses for lifelong mental illness and repeated hospitalizations, Beth fought to uncover what was causing this decline. Beth's quest took her to the center of the medical community's raging debate about whether OCD and Tourette syndrome can be caused by PANDAS (Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorders Associated with Streptococcal Infections). With the battle lines firmly drawn, Beth searched until she found two cutting-edge doctors who answered that question with a definitive yes. Together, they cured Sammy. Five years later, he remains symptom free.

From the Trade Paperback edition.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. Maloney's debut chronicles her son, Sammy, and the illness that, almost overnight, transformed him from a sunny, bright boy (described by one teacher as "the purest math mind the school had ever seen") into an antisocial stranger "so dominated by obsessions, compulsions, and rules that daily life becomes impossible." Sammy's descent into mental illness was diagnosed as severe Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, Tourette's and a number of other ailments, all promising a lifetime of disability; it wasn't until a family acquaintance, whose son exhibited the same symptoms for 10 years, urged Maloney to have Sammy tested for Strep that they learned his condition was treatable. Describing herself as "part courtroom lawyer and part detective," attorney Maloney perseveres with ferocity and sharp storytelling instincts, making this medical mystery-meant to inform families dealing with mental illness-a tear-wrenching crowd-pleaser.

Review

From *Publishers Weekly* (Starred)

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From *Booklist*

At 12, Maloney's son Sammy won math awards but exhibited bizarre symptoms. The newly divorced mother's concerns grew as Sammy started hopping and spinning instead of walking and repeatedly resorted to uncontrollable headbanging. His disintegration, diagnosed without any thought about causation as sudden onset obsessive-compulsive disorder, included verbal tics, hours-long crying jags, and sporadic refusals to eat. Linking infection to "mental" illness, as strep antibodies are linked to the neurological Tourette's syndrome, has been rejected by many doctors since the rise of psychoanalysis, but Maloney insisted Sammy be tested for strep titers when he became unable to attend school and to walk. He was diagnosed with pediatric neuropsychiatric disorders associated with streptococcal infections, caused by strep antibodies attacking the basal ganglia controlling behavior. Antibiotics ended two torturous years...

About the Author

BETH ALISON MALONEY is a successful Maine attorney and guardian *ad litem*. Before moving to Maine, she was an executive and attorney in the motion picture and television business in Los Angeles. *Saving Sammy* is her first book.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Roderick Donnell:

In this 21st century, people become competitive in most way. By being competitive today, people have do something to make them survives, being in the middle of typically the crowded place and notice by simply surrounding. One thing that sometimes many people have underestimated this for a while is reading. That's why, by reading a publication your ability to survive raise then having chance to endure than other is high. For you who want to start reading a new book, we give you this Saving Sammy: A Mother's Fight to Cure Her Son's OCD book as basic and daily reading book. Why, because this book is greater than just a book.

Clarence Ross:

People live in this new morning of lifestyle always make an effort to and must have the time or they will get large amount of stress from both daily life and work. So , if we ask do people have free time, we will say absolutely without a doubt. People is human not really a huge robot. Then we question again, what kind of activity are you experiencing when the spare time coming to you actually of course your answer may unlimited right. Then ever try this one, reading ebooks. It can be your alternative in spending your spare time, the actual book you have read is usually Saving Sammy: A Mother's Fight to Cure Her Son's OCD.

Kathe Waller:

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