



Saving Sammy: Curing the Boy Who Caught OCD

Beth Alison Maloney

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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. Racing against time as Sammy slipped further from reality, Beth's quest took her to the center of the medical community's raging debate about whether mental illness can be caused by infection. 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.

Driven by her desire to help others, Beth Maloney has infused every page of this triumphant journey with heart and passion. An important story, *Saving Sammy* is part manifesto, part medical mystery, but is at its heart the empowering and inspiring story of a mother's determination to save her son, take on the medical establishment—and win.

From the Hardcover edition.



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