



Stay Close: A Mother's Story of Her Son's Addiction

Libby Cataldi

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During his early teens, Jeff Bratton started using drugs. At first, alcohol and pot, but quickly he spiraled into using cocaine, ketamine, crystal meth and eventually heroin.

How could this wonderful son, loving brother, and star athlete lose himself to drugs? How could his parents be so clueless? How could his mother, the long-term head of a private school, be so blind?

"Stagli vicino", an Italian recovering addict told the author. "Stay close—never leave him, even when he is most unlovable." This is not a book about saving a child. It is a book about what it means to stay close to a loved one gripped by addiction. It is about one son who came home and one mother who never gave up hope.

Stay Close is one mother's tough, honest, and intimate tale that chronicles her son's severe drug addiction, as it corroded all relationships from the inside out. It is a story of deep trauma and deep despair, but also of deep hope—and healing.

Here is Libby Cataldi's story about dealing with addiction without withdrawing love, learning to trust again while remaining attuned to lies, and the cautious triumph of staying clean one day at a time.

He told her, "Mom, never quit believing." And she didn't.

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