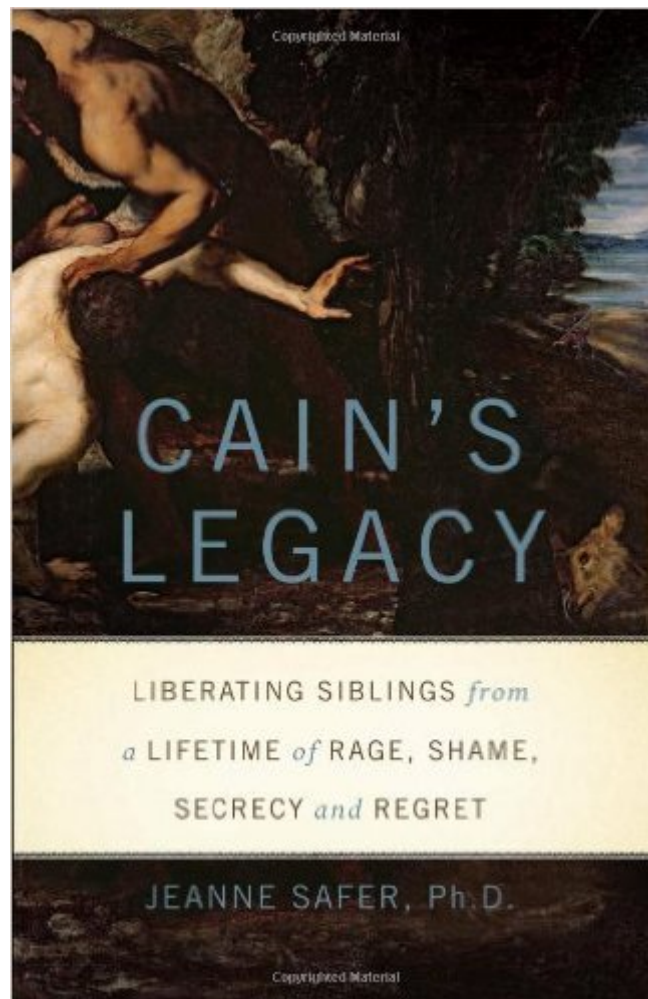


The book was found

Cain's Legacy: Liberating Siblings From A Lifetime Of Rage, Shame, Secrecy, And Regret



Synopsis

Bonds between brothers and sisters are among the longest lasting and most emotionally significant of human relationships. But while 45 percent of adults struggle with serious sibling strife, few discuss it openly. Even fewer resolve it to their satisfaction. In *Cain's Legacy*, psychotherapist Jeanne Safer, a recognized authority on sibling psychology (and an estranged sister herself) illuminates this pervasive but hidden phenomenon. She explores the roots of inter-sibling woes, from siblicide in the book of Genesis to tensions in Freud's family history. Drawing on sixty in-depth interviews with adult siblings struggling with conflicts over money, family businesses, aging parents, contentious wills, unhealed childhood wounds, and blocked communication, Safer provides compassionate guidance to brothers and sisters whose relationship is broken. She helps siblings overcome their paralysis and pain, revealing how they can come to terms with the one peer relationship they can never sever—even if they never see each other again. A heartfelt look at a too-often avoided topic, *Cain's Legacy* is a sympathetic and clear-eyed guide to navigating the darkness separating us from our brothers and sisters.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

But I am so glad that I gave this book a chance! I found much of this book very validating...other folks out there have struggled as much as I have (and some much more!). The anecdotes and some quotes from affected sibs were absolutely spot on. It is good to read a book that is almost like looking at your own life in a mirror. I found that reading about the subjects in the book was akin to

turning a release valve. It took some of my steam and made me look more objectively at my own situation. If you have struggled with a sibling... I think this book may be of interest to you.

As someone with bad relations with my siblings I appreciated that someone was addressing this fundamental and overlooked aspect of development. But it felt as though the author repeatedly labeled a good sibling and a bad sibling and invariably the good sibling was the one with financial success and the bad sibling was a pot smoking bum. I'm sorry, pot smoking bums don't grow up in a vacuum! And really, people are much more complicated and deserve deeper examination than "mom did prefer the good sister". My siblings and I run the gamut from apparent success to really struggling, and from being utterly shut down emotionally to trying to gain some understanding of what happened to us. I was really hoping to read more varied and deeper examinations, and maybe even some examples of healthy sibling relationships... how do healthy adult siblings get along? I gave the book 2 stars just because the author broached the subject. Maybe she'll go back and try again.

I suppose, given that her previous book is "The Normal One," that I should have expected the author would be too self-congratulatory to move past herself and properly address the issue. Almost without exception, she champions her patients as being the "good" sibling, and casts the patient's sib (who, the save one or two exceptions, the author did interview/meet/treat), as the "bad sib." Just as she describes her own situation. What a surprise. Author routinely fails to properly account for how VERY much the great advantage of being the parent's favorite child accounts for the issues -- the favored sib, now realizing he/she is the favored one, could actually incorporate that information into re-assessing the sibling situation, and take responsibility for part their conduct played-- they felt entitled to be the favorite one. Think that didn't contribute to the sibling strife? And, now knowing they were the favored one, what does author suggest the favored one do to work that knowledge into the way they deal with the sibling strife? Nothing. As with any other unearned privilege, the favorite child is, to her, the one in the right. But, if the favored sib wasn't so blind to the effect that their participation in marginalizing the unfavored sib has had, something the author should be pointing out, not me, perhaps the favored sib could repair a few things. For example, author says she refused to give her brother money. Okay, sometimes that's called for. BUT-- what DID she do to address the sibling issue that she helped create? She's the one who took full advantage of the opportunities her parents created for her by virtue of her being the favorite, so why does she blame her brother for everything? The book lacks the fair balance that the subject deserves, and for that

reason, fails. It's the author's personal growth project, another pat by her on her own back.

In the most insightful and illuminating way, Dr. Jeanne Safer goes beyond analysis to provide practical, helpful advice about how to deal with - or even repair - troubled family bonds that can circumscribe and distort our lives. As in her previous books -- such as *Death Benefits: How Losing a Parent can Change an Adult's Life--For the Better and The Normal One: Life with a Difficult or Damaged Sibling*, among others -- *Cain's Legacy* is fearless in its examination of the painful possibilities of difficult sibling relationships. Dr. Safer makes transparently clear why these relationships are so complicated, why the emotions involved, rooted deep in childhood, are so often not just intense but obscured by all those explanations we all manage to weave around issues and events whose full pain or destructive force we don't want to (or can't) confront. She writes with a kind heart and a penetrating intelligence. I really can't imagine anyone not benefiting from her compassionate descriptions and analyses. I know I did.

I really valued reading *Cain's Legacy*. What it helped me better realize is how siblings can suffer in very toxic relationships. I felt less isolated after the reading. It's not only me with a crazy family! I gathered from my reading that lack of self and other awareness can be such an issue. My own sibling relations are very troubled. I come from a family where there was significant domestic violence, and have had a lot of really great help in therapy over the years. Reading this book further supported my 'therapy education' which has helped me to feel more compassionate to my siblings, both who suffered greatly at the hands of my parents- both my parents were physically and psychologically abusive. Both my parents were raised in such households. I feel so sad for us all knowing that these inter-generational patterns of dysfunctional behavior, are, in a sense, no-one's fault. Though my situation with one of my siblings is still very difficult, I now better accept that he suffers from many unresolved issues surrounding his childhood. He has had no therapy help in his life and is hell bent on making as much money as he can to prove his worth. Just writing that makes me want to tell him I love him and that he's a good guy. He can't hear that at this point. May be he never will. Who knows? I recommend the book to anyone who wants to gain insight and compassion into the complex and often heart-breaking world of sibling issues.

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