

# ❧ Jamie's Healing ❧



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# Jamie's Healing

*In the first year of their life, Jack and Jamie were beautiful and growing perfect. Jamie was walking, had wonderful words, and was very agile and coordinated. However, after a traumatic illness, Jamie slipped away from us, falling into a place called Autism. This is the story of how we got him back.*

## 1990



At the age of fifteen, I left Santa Barbara, California and moved to New York City to work as a model. Moving to Hollywood at age twenty, I spent the next five years as an actress. A spontaneous ski trip to Park City, Utah changed my direction; I fell in love with a college student and the next chapter of my life began to take shape. My glamorous young adulthood was no sacrifice for the promise of love and family that James brought to my life.

## 1993-1997



Six failed pregnancies and many other complications later we were led to the alternative of in-vitro fertilization. The reward of that tedious process was a beautiful, perfect set of twins. Born seven weeks early, Jamie and Jack graced our world on December 15, 1997.

Although perfect to us, they had typical premature issues. Jamie was on a ventilator for four days and they both remained hospitalized for seven weeks after birth.

## 1998

### The Sickness



At five months, Jamie began having breathing issues that sounded like asthma. It was like he had a frog stuck in his throat. This breathing issue arose around the same time that I was unable to produce enough milk to meet the demand of my twin boys. I was able to breast pump enough milk for about half of their feedings, so I began to supplement their feedings with formula.

Once I started giving them formula they had terrible intestinal problems, frequent stomachaches, and chronic constipation. I tried everything my pediatrician recommended. I gave them apple juice, lots of water, prune juice, and even corn syrup in their formula. Whatever I tried would work for a few days, then it would stop working. I asked my pediatrician about the issue in regards to Jamie's breathing. He said that Jamie should have a commonly used procedure called a "bronchial scope." This would assist him in seeing what was causing the problem.

I wasn't comfortable with the idea of this procedure because we had just brought them home from seven long weeks in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). I continued to work with my pediatrician and Jamie's gastroenterologist, and I decided to find an M.D. that used holistic medicine in their practice. In my search I found Dr. Jay Wilson. He discovered that the boys were allergic to many ingredients in their formula. Jack and Jamie had severe food allergies. They had food sensitivities to most of the main ingredients of all the over-the-counter formulas, including dairy, soy, and corn. They even had sensitivities to prescription formulas, not to mention that the taste was awful. Dr. Wilson

put the boys on a special regimen and helped me determine the foods that they should be eating. I became so aggravated that I couldn't find one formula that worked for the boys, so I decided to develop my own. I worked simultaneously with Pat Frasier at Helios Health Center in Boulder, Colorado. She was very helpful in suggesting ingredients to include in a homemade formula. With her help, Dr. Jay Wilson, and Dr. Robert Vance, we put together a formula. Every night for two weeks, I made this formula, adding, subtracting, tasting and testing different ingredients, making sure I met all their nutritional needs. I gave the boys taste tests and they didn't like most of them until, finally, I made a batch that seemed just right. I was on the edge of my seat in anticipation, hoping that they would like this one and they loved it! Yeah, they drank it! From that day forward they never had any problems going to the bathroom again! Phewww!

At this point, I thought that the food allergies were the cause of Jamie's breathing problem. Both of the boys' intestinal problems seemed to clear up, but Jamie still had his breathing issues.

At seven months old, Jamie choked on some mashed potatoes while sitting at the dinner table. After we got through the choking, Jamie began having more difficulties breathing. I called our pediatrician, Dr. Jerry Rubin. He recommended that we go ahead with the bronchial scope to take a closer look at what was going on. The pulmonary doctors determined by a bronchial scope that at seven months, Jamie had *Tracheo/Laryngomalacia* with significant acid reflux. This was causing swelling in his throat making it hard for him to breathe.

Jamie began taking a drug called "Zantac" to combat the acid reflux and swelling of his throat. He took the drug for two weeks, but began experiencing bad side effects, often

waking up screaming in the night. My pediatrician and I agreed we should stop giving it to him.

Around the boys' one year birthday at Christmas, all thirty-six members of my husband's family paid a visit to Colorado. More than half of the family was sick with colds and, in one case, bronchitis. The boys both became sick, and just after bedtime, I took Jamie out of his crib to the living room to lay on the couch with me. I laid him on my chest and about every fifteen minutes, he would wake up screaming. There was something more that was wrong with Jamie, but I couldn't quite pinpoint it. I tried to give him oxygen (we had oxygen that we periodically used because we were living at over 9,000 feet elevation) to see if it would help, but he fought so hard, I couldn't do it.

In the morning, I took him to our pediatrician who took one look at his throat and told us to take him to the hospital. In the hospital, Jamie was given a breathing treatment every three to four hours. Each time, my husband would hold Jamie in his lap and with the help of two nurses restrain him while he was given the treatment. Something about blowing the air in Jamie's face made him afraid and hysterical, but we had to give the treatments to him to help him breathe.

After each treatment Jamie would be calm and eventually fall asleep in my arms. I would lay him down very carefully trying not to wake him up. He would lie there for about thirty seconds and then he would begin screaming, making his breathing worse, so I would pick him up again. In my arms was the only place he would stay calm. I held Jamie the entire night.

My husband came from a nearby hotel where he was with our other son, Jack, to give me a break so I could sleep. In the morning, Jamie's condition worsened so the doctors decided to transfer him to a hospital that had a pediatric intensive care unit. For the next

three days, I held Jamie. He continued to get a breathing treatment every two hours to try to keep his airway open. On the fourth day, my husband came to the hospital from work at about two a.m. He could see that I was completely exhausted and told me to go get some sleep while he held Jamie. I told James that I was only going to sleep for one hour and then I would return. I asked him to call me in the room if Jamie's condition worsened.

At about six a.m., James came into the room where I was sleeping and my heart dropped. I thought Jamie had died. It was more than three hours later and why wasn't James still with him? He was supposed to call me and tell me to come downstairs, but he wasn't supposed to leave him! James was visibly shaken when he explained that while holding Jamie, the breathing treatments stopped working. Jamie became limp and had to be resuscitated and immediately put on a ventilator. James and I embraced and wept as the emotion of the moment swept over us.

I was relieved Jamie was alive, but I was also sore from holding him for days. The hospital had him on steroids, antibiotics, and sedatives. His arms were tied down to keep him from pulling at the tube. It was so painful for me to see my one-year old on the ventilator and watch his appearance change. In the first few days, his face and body became swollen from the drugs. After being ventilated for five days, his throat wouldn't open back up. The doctors decided that surgery was necessary. The surgery would reveal if Jamie needed a cricoid split, (the cutting of the bones in the throat), a cyst removed, or both.

This time in the hospital was a very spiritual time for me. The boy in the room next to Jamie's had just passed away. That freaked me out to no end. I felt like I had lost all my control of Jamie's destiny. I felt very alone and sad for the family of the little boy and what they were going through. After a week of feeling like my head and heart were going to explode, I looked to a close friend, Janet Friese, for guidance. She advised me to stay away

from the energy outside of Jamie's room that drained my emotions. She said that I needed to spend time inside his room with the curtains drawn focusing all of my energy on Jamie alone. She also suggested that I bring him "light." She said that I should stand by his side, put my right hand six inches above his head and my left hand six inches below his feet. Within my hands I could envision light showering his body and that he would use this to get better. I did this every fifteen minutes before the surgery with all my faith. Additionally, I began to call everyone we knew to ask them to pray for Jamie at six p.m. the evening of his surgery. I was inspired to do this by an article that I had read entitled "The Power of Prayer." The article included amazing stories of astounding recovery and healing when groups of people pray for an individual.

As they wheeled Jamie into surgery, we walked next to him as far as we were permitted to go. I spoke with the surgeon right before they took Jamie in and I asked if there were any other possibilities besides the cricoid split or the cyst removal. In this question I was looking for something positive that he could give me. He responded cockily, "I have never lost one yet." This was just not enough of an answer for me. I held Jamie's hand briefly, gave him a kiss, and told him that I loved him as they wheeled him through the doors. James and I knew that it would be at least two hours before we would know anything, so we went downstairs and walked the empty hallways hand-in-hand. We spent the time talking about our two children and how blessed we were to have them.

We ended up in the waiting room and sat for what seemed like an eternity before the doctors came into the waiting room lighthearted and all smiles as they approached us. We were on the verge of tears as they informed us that Jamie would be okay! Not only was he better, but also his throat had opened on its own without the major surgical procedure they had gone in to do. We squeezed each other's hand as tears streamed down our faces.

Instead, they were able to do an exploratory procedure rather than use any knives. The doctors had no medical explanation for what had happened, it had simply opened up. They gave us hugs and told us we could see him immediately.

## 1999



After the long, traumatic experience that Jamie had endured, he finally returned home. I was amazed to find out that my one-year old had become a drug addict. They gave him so many different kinds of drugs in the hospital -- steroids, antibiotics, anesthesia, on and on. The hospital gave us several different prescription drugs once he was released to go home, two of which were to wean him off the other drugs.

Oh my goodness! As I administered the drugs, I saw a reaction from Jamie that shook me to depths of my heart. He would literally scratch the walls trying to pull himself up off his bed, smiling and laughing because he was so high. He slept only thirty minutes at a time and after thirty minutes he would wake up screaming. I couldn't bear to see this. I put my brain to work and searched out some alternatives.

I went to the health food store and bought valerian root. I gave this to him slowly and weaned him off the drugs completely. Wow! What an event. The other drugs they prescribed were Prilosec and Prupolsid and he was supposed to remain on for the next several months. **Prilosec** decreases the amount of acid produced in the stomach and is used to treat ulcers, gastroesophageal reflux disease -GERD, commonly referred to as "heartburn"- and other conditions involving excessive stomach acid production. **Propulsid** or **Cisapride** increases the rate at which your esophagus, stomach and intestines move during digestion. It also increases the rate at which your stomach empties into your

intestines and increases the strength of your lower esophageal sphincter (the muscle between your stomach and your esophagus). Cisapride is used to treat gastric reflux.]

The doctors told me that if I didn't give him the Prilosec and Propulsid, a relapse could occur and could result in serious complications. Of course, this scared me into administering each and every dose making sure he got it all. These drugs tasted sweet as candy and for the first several months, Jamie took them easily and happily.

Things seemed to be getting back to normal -- somewhat. Jamie "got his legs back," so to speak, but he wasn't the same active, agile, coordinated little boy that he had been prior to the hospitalization. He still woke up several times each night to what seemed like nightmares. Three months went by while he was taking these drugs faithfully, then one day, almost overnight, he decided he wasn't going to willingly take them anymore. It was as difficult as trying force-feed him cod liver oil. Fearful of the doctor's warnings, I continued to force the medicine down.

During this time things began to change. I noticed that Jamie seemed different. The sparkle in his eye seemed to be dimming. He didn't pay attention to his surroundings as much. Then something very troubling occurred -- his hair started falling out! I called the pulmonary doctor with whom we had been working. He assured me that the hair loss was not caused by any of the drugs he was taking and as for the change in his personality, they couldn't comment. I also called our gastro-enterologist and he also assured me that the hair loss had nothing to do with the drugs. I let it go for about a week and his hair continued to fall out. He barely had any hair left. I was furious. I called both of the doctors again and explained, "I have twin boys. They eat the same, live in the same environment, and breathe the same air. The only thing different is that one is on these drugs and his hair is almost gone". They still insisted that it couldn't be from the drugs. They pressured me to continue

giving him the medications, even with the drastic side effects. I called Dr. Jay Wilson in Boulder and told him the situation. He looked up Prilosec in the Physician's Desk Reference (PDR) and called me back the same day to read me what it said. Prilosec could cause hair loss in adults. I freaked out. These doctors who were supposed to be the best in their fields hadn't even looked it up in the PDR!

Dr. Wilson and I discussed taking Jamie off the drugs immediately. I called our pediatrician, Dr. Jerry Rubin, and explained Jamie was no longer cooperative in taking them and I gave him the information from the PDR about the side effects. It was as if Jamie was trying to tell us he didn't need the drugs anymore. I was uncomfortable continuing to administer the drugs and wanted to take Jamie off them. Dr. Rubin agreed with me.

I also called the gastroenterologist and, of course, I was very upset. I told him what I'd learned from the PDR. He had me bring Jamie in right away to do a 24-hour pH probe to see if he had reflux. The test came back that his pH was perfect and he did not need the drugs. Jamie knew...it was amazing.

A couple of days later, on a Saturday afternoon, the gastroenterologist called me on my cell phone. He seemed excited to tell me that Jamie was going to be famous. Jamie's side effects were now going to be included on the side effects list for Prilosec as "could cause hair loss in children." Needless to say, I didn't share his enthusiasm.

On December 31, 1999, the FDA announced that the use of **Cicipride** or **Propulsid** had been associated with 341 reports of heart rhythm abnormalities including 80 reports of deaths. This drug was taken off the market not long after Jamie stopped taking it.

## Jamie Disappears



A couple of months went by and Jamie's hair began to grow back, but I still noticed changes in him. One afternoon I was looking at Jamie sitting in the family room and I tried to get his attention by calling to him, but got no response. I called to him again, but still with no response. I looked at him. He was playing with an airplane, making it go around and around. He kept doing this over and over. I walked over to him, got on my knees next to him and spoke his name, but still there was no response. I put my hands underneath his shoulders and pulled him onto my knees and looked into his eyes. The sparkle had left his eyes. It was as if he didn't know who I was. It seemed as if he was looking right through me. I knew at that moment that Jamie was no longer the Jamie I brought into this world. My adrenaline immediately kicked in strong. I knew there was something wrong and I needed help.

In the following days and weeks his coordination began to decrease and I would catch Jamie staring off into space as if he didn't know that things were going on around him. His physical motions became very repetitive. His expressions became silent and he no longer spoke. He never pointed at anything, while his brother Jack spent his days pointing to the things he wanted. Every loud noise around him sent him into panic -- simple things like the sound of a blender. He wouldn't even let his dad pick him up. The only person he would let hold him was me. My son was living in a world that I could not enter and I needed help getting in, so I turned to our pediatrician.

## The "A" Word



During our visit to Dr. Rubin, our family pediatrician, we discussed some of the changes I had seen in Jamie. Due to the history that Dr. Rubin had with our family, he was aware of all of Jamie's health issues. This time he noticed something different in Jamie. He did a complete physical exam and the room remained quiet as he did his series of tests. We made small talk as he gathered his things to sit down to have a serious conversation.

"I don't want to alarm you but I think he has the 'A-word'," he said to me in almost a whisper.

"What?" I kind of laughed, confused by his carefully phrased message.

"I think Jamie is autistic."

The only understanding I had of that word was from Dustin Hoffman's character in the movie *Rainman*. I wasn't sure what it really meant. Dr. Rubin told me he had two other patients who are autistic. He gave me information on several people to help diagnose this problem. He gave me the names of two speech therapists and told me to check at the JFK Center in Denver for a psychologist who specializes in diagnosing autism. He also told me that the mothers of his other autistic patients had not received a very optimistic response when they went looking for help for their children. He explained that to his knowledge, at this time there is no cure. Dr. Rubin sent me away with a request to let him know what happens. I know that he didn't have a lot of information to share, but I did feel his concern. He was unable to give me any specific recommendations. I was devastated and felt incredibly overwhelmed by this task.

## Figuring It Out



I left Dr. Rubin's office highly motivated to figure it out. I began calling, reading, researching anywhere I could. I learned that trauma could be a possible cause of children slipping into autism. Clearly, all the breathing problems Jamie had experienced, along with the intensive medications he had ingested, had taken their toll on him, but I knew I couldn't let him go through life with autism and I was willing to do anything to get him well.

Dr. Robert Vance, my father-in-law, knew of a clinic in Tijuana, Mexico that dealt mostly with cancer patients, but specialized in analyzing the meridians of the body to find out the core of an illness. We drove from Denver to Mexico to see what we could find out. We worked intensively with a woman at the clinic, Deanna Jarvis, for one week. My husband, Jamie, and I spent seven days driving back and forth across the border from my family's home in California where we had left Jack. As the days went by I had many conversations with Deanna. I expressed to her how Jamie was a fanatic for red balls. He had a ball in each hand constantly squeezing them. At home I had more than 100 balls that I had purchased for him. Another thing he was fanatical about was the swing. He literally could sit in his swing for hours swinging back and forth. She told me that this was wonderful news -- that Jamie wants to get better. The things that he was doing were very calming and healing to his brain. He was giving himself his own sensory input that he needed. This excited and thrilled me so much because I was reassured that *he* wanted to get better and *he* wanted to be part of our world again. It was as if he was giving me signs that he wanted me to continue to fight for him. The information we received from the New

Hope Clinic was that we were to work with him to stimulate his brain activity. Armed with this information, we returned to Denver to pursue more help.

Before we left for Mexico we had already started visiting Dr. Jay Wilson for various health treatments, however, it became clear that more drastic treatments were needed. Bill Cunningham from the White Dove Healing Arts Center in Boulder was another name we received from my husband's father. We visited him for a similar analysis technique like the one we received in Mexico, but with quicker and more accurate results. The device he used was called a QX – Quantum Xeroid. His diagnosis was similar to that of The New Hope Clinic. He validated Jamie's condition with a name -- autism. We worked with him for at least six months, driving to Boulder twice a week, to receive his modalities of healing through homeopathy and energetic medicine. Jamie began saying the ABC's during his treatment with Bill Cunningham. Bill and his wife were always full of optimism, intelligence, and love for our family. Bill Cunningham's treatments brought slight increases in Jamie's speech as well as eye contact.

While seeing Bill Cunningham, I contacted Diane Osaki at the JFK Center in Denver. She came to our home and did some testing on Jamie. I continued working with Diane over the next year putting together a home therapy program. The plan included a speech language pathologist and an occupational therapist, both at home, and a special assistant for Jamie at school. This was one of the things we were going to include in our treatment for Jamie. We hadn't put her therapy into place yet due to the vast amount of research that I had done. I was constantly learning new alternatives, so we decided to wait and put her program into effect in the near future.

Our goal became to surround ourselves with people who could focus on the etiology (cause) and solution of the problem, not on gathering evidence to label it. Once we knew

the cause, we could find the solution. I knew that Jamie had been fine before the trauma with his breathing and deep down I just knew he could be healed.

In addition to the vitamin therapy that we began earlier with Dr. Wilson and Bill Cunningham, I continued to keep both boys on a diet, which excluded dairy (casein) and wheat (gluten). I also discovered a wealth of information in *Mothering* magazine, which frequently addressed the issues of mothers of autistic children.

Through various articles I learned the detrimental role that metals have on the body and brain function. When I read about the “Rh factor”, my mind was swirling with thoughts of my B-negative blood, the thimerosal, and my son with autism. The light went on! I knew this was an important link to my son and would be an integral step on the road to my son’s recovery. Fifty to eighty percent of autistic children have mothers with Rh-negative blood. Mothers with Rh-negative blood typically get RhoGAM (Immune Globulin Injection) shots while they are pregnant. Until the end of 2001, RhoGAM shots contained the preservative thimerosal. Thimerosal is a preservative that has been used in some vaccines since the 1930’s, when Eli Lilly Company first introduced it. It is 49.6% mercury by weight and is metabolized or degraded into ethylmercury and thiosalicylate. RhoGAM, also known as HypRho–D, is used to reduce problems that can arise when an Rh–negative woman becomes pregnant. A mother receiving an average dose of RhoGAM would take in about 10.5 micrograms of mercury. The EPA safe limit for mercury exposure is .1 micrograms per kilo per day. Mothers who hemorrhaged early in pregnancy would receive multiple doses and a much larger mercury intake. High levels of mercury can permanently damage the brain and kidneys, resulting in tremors, memory and vision problems. Mercury in a mother’s body can be passed to her fetus. According to a recent Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) report, mercury accumulates in the umbilical cord blood at a level that is 1.7 times higher

than that in the blood of the mother. I had six lost pregnancies and received six RhoGAM shots, including two more during my pregnancy with Jack and Jamie. At this point, I realized that it would be important to rid Jamie and myself of the mercury toxicity.

Through additional research, I discovered the Autism Research Institute in San Diego, California founded by Dr. Bernard Rimland. They faxed me a list of the doctors in Colorado who specialize in the treatment of autism. There were only a few doctors listed in Denver, but one doctor stood out among the rest. His name is Dr. Terry Grossman. It's interesting how I found Dr. Grossman. This was not the first time I had seen his name. A nutritionist who I'd been seeing gave me a flyer about a conference where Dr. Grossman would be speaking. The talk he was to give was on Chelation Therapy. Prior to the fax from the Autism Research Institute, I had thought about contacting Dr. Grossman because my father-in-law also used Chelation in his practice. I thought to myself, *If I could find a doctor who does Chelation Therapy, he'd have a lot of knowledge on detoxification of the body.* When I got the fax and I saw Dr. Grossman's name, I was excited to learn that he helped children with autism. I couldn't believe it. With all these coincidences that had occurred, I knew Dr. Grossman was meant to be in our life. I called his office immediately.

It seemed that each direction we went uncovered different leads that kept us discovering better options and alternatives. Another direction I wanted to go was getting more information on the Son-Rise Program in Massachusetts. I had read the special issue article on autism in *Mothering* magazine that explained many alternative therapies in dealing with autism. I was determined to try every single one of them.

After learning more about the program by phone, they recommended I read the book, *Son Rise, The Miracle Continues* by Barry Neil Kaufman. After reading this book, I was

completely taken by this family and awestruck by their amazing pioneering spirit in healing their son. They gave me the inner power to do the same with Jamie.

We decided to take a trip back east to Massachusetts to the headquarters of the Son-Rise Program. We rented an RV to see the beautiful parts of our country (my husband's idea) and return home by plane. I would never advise anyone to try this idea (an RV cross-country trip), instead take planes, planes, planes all the way! Here is why. The first night on our adventure, Jamie suddenly had difficulty breathing and we had no idea where we were, other than in the state of Kansas. We immediately got off the freeway and pulled into a gas station. I was screaming at James to call 9-1-1. He jumped out of the RV while calling 9-1-1 on his cell phone and asked the attendant where the nearest hospital was. I looked outside where there was nothing to see but darkness and thought to myself, *there is no way there's going to be a hospital nearby.*

At that moment, James jumped in the driver's seat. He looked at me said, "There's a hospital five minutes away." I thought *thank God* and told James to drive as fast as he could. I stood in the doorway of the RV with Jamie in my arms. I was ready to jump out as soon as we arrived at the emergency room. As I stood there, I turned to look over my shoulder and was horrified to see Jack crying in panic, "What's happening? What's happening?" Everything was in chaos, things were falling out of the cupboards and the doors were slamming open and shut. I closed my eyes as the tears ran down my face, turning my head forward because I couldn't answer him. I was too focused on holding Jamie and keeping my balance as we raced to the hospital.

The instant James slammed on the brakes at the emergency entrance door I swung the RV door open and ran inside screaming for help. I didn't see anyone as I ran up and down each hall yelling. There was a phone on the wall that read "for emergencies." James

picked it up and an operator came on the line. He told her our son wasn't breathing well and we needed help immediately. She said, "Go to the emergency room!" He said, "*We are* at the Emergency Room! We're here and there's no one around!"

Just at that moment, I looked up and two nurses came running towards me. I demanded that they give Jamie racepinephrine. The nurse said that she needed a doctor's orders to do that. I said, "Get it." She said, "There's no doctor here now, but I'll get him on the phone immediately." I told her that I knew that the racepinephrine was what he needed and to make sure to tell the doctor that we'd been through this before. (This was the third time of having the breathing issues since the time of the first story I related above.) She returned in seconds with a shot. She gave it to him and instantly his breathing got better. She also administered the epinephrine through a nebulizer. He was okay.

We ended up staying in Kansas for three days in the hospital. Of course, I didn't sleep for those three days. The doctors sent us on our way with a bottle of recimic epinephrine, a bottle of antibiotics and a nebulizer and told us to have a good trip. The rest of the trip got better each day...really!

Once we got to Massachusetts, we happily exchanged the RV for a brand new Ford Excursion. We literally jumped for joy at being rid of the "boat" and putting those bad experiences behind us. We were relieved and tired, but ready to focus on the Son-Rise program.

The Son-Rise program is geared toward teaching parents how to manage a home program with the goal of leading the child out of autism. The family who started the program had an autistic boy named Raun. The Kaufman family helped their son fully recover from autism by the age of four using the philosophy they developed. We were lucky to have Raun as our counselor for the first day. He was bright, witty, and intelligent and had

me giggling throughout our session. The people we met were incredible. We had the experience of a lifetime. We all shared a common bond, our children, which we spoke about each day. Our teachers included Bryn Hogan, the daughter of Barry and Samahria Kaufman, William Hogan, Bryn's husband, and Barry "Bears" Kaufman himself. What an outstanding team! They made us laugh and cry and feel like we weren't alone, especially Bryn made us laugh so hard we couldn't catch our breath. What a fantastic teacher and a true inspiration for me.

We left the program after learning how to come into Jamie's world instead of being frustrated that he wasn't in ours. We learned to celebrate the place he was in, rather than being frustrated by it. All the principles were centered on consistent and unconditional love and acceptance.

On our way back from Massachusetts, we took a train to New York City and spent three great days there. We decided to take the boys to see *Beauty and the Beast* on Broadway. I didn't think about how loud a Broadway show would be and how it would affect Jamie and his sensitivity to loud sounds. When we got to our seats, Jamie was squirmy and uncomfortable. The show started with loud noises and he began to whine and crawl onto my chest, gripping me tightly and burying his head into my shoulder. Remembering what I'd learned from our week at the Option Institute about autistic children and their hearing (that the sounds autistic children hear are magnified tenfold) I immediately covered his ears with my hands as tightly as I could. He quickly sat up and turned around to watch the stage. He spent the rest of the show fascinated while my hands cupped his ears. About halfway through the show, he fell asleep. Covering his ears really worked for him. We flew home the next day excited, tired, and glad to be home.

Back in Colorado, I asked everyone I knew -- people from church, people from the health club, friends and family to volunteer to interact with Jamie. The Son-Rise Program functions by providing support to the child twelve hours a day, seven days a week to bridge the gap between their world and our world. The idea is that friends and family work as a team to spend ongoing time with the child. This might entail conversation, playtime, or just sitting with them. If the child sits and rocks quietly, the support person does the same in an effort to unite with the child. This requires the parents to change their thinking in regards to autistic behavior from expectations to acceptance. Do not expect children with autism to act in a certain way as “normal” or typical children, but rather accept them with unconditional love and see the beauty and perfection they possess. Once this transformation of perception or paradigm shift occurs you will find, like I did, that you more fully understand your child. You will connect to your child in a way you never thought possible.

Jamie's way of communicating was to scream to get the things that he wanted. Our new philosophy required the patience to slow down the communication, de-escalating the process, while training Jamie to communicate to the best of his ability. This meant that I could no longer just give him what he wanted. I needed to help him calm down. I had to talk at half-speed in order to convey calmness. For example, if he wanted some almonds, he would point and scream. I wouldn't immediately give him almonds, instead, I would first ask what he wanted by pointing to an orange and say, “orange”, then to an apple and say, “apple”. Once we got to the almonds, he was more focused and calm listening to my slow voice. I could tell a difference immediately in Jamie's attitude. This really worked. This began our journey.

## 2000 Stepping Stones



We continued to seek various avenues for treatment, intending to try the procedures that promised the most progress. The Autism Research Institute provides different self-administered experimental supplements to willing participants. Some seemed to have potential, while others, such as DMG, we excluded because it brought out drastic behaviors in Jamie. Parents should always try to remember that each child is individual and unique in their chemical makeup; therefore, what works for one child may not work for another. Dr. Bernard Rimlan heads the Autism Research Institute and he has a 40-year old autistic son. He advised the use of Super Nu-Thera in combination with other supplements through Kirkman Laboratories. Jamie did well with some and not with others. It was a process of trial and error.

The next major advancement for us came after we started working with Dr. Terry Grossman. Our first visit was very eventful, just getting Jamie through the door took several minutes. Finally getting him into a treatment room, Jamie's behavior was almost uncontrollable. He was climbing the walls and refused to be touched by Dr. Grossman; however, despite Jamie's lack of cooperation, Dr. Grossman's staff took hair, urine, blood, and stool samples for analysis. Dr. Grossman provided another verification of Jamie's condition calling it "Autistic Spectrum Disorder." He began taking different measures and enforcing certain practices for us, one of which was to continue withholding dairy (casein) and wheat (gluten) from Jamie's diet. Dr. Grossman was also one of the few doctors who administered Chelation Therapy, the removal of harmful metals from the body. I learned

about the connection of harmful metals to autism. These metals came from various things, including vaccinations, RhoGAM shots given to Rh-negative mothers, environment, antibiotics, and medications. Chelation Therapy has been used effectively to detoxify lead poisoning. The testing, not surprisingly, revealed that Jamie had high counts (and some levels were off the charts) of many metals. The odd thing was that the mercury level was the only one that didn't show high. I thought, *the mercury has got to be in there, it must be hiding*. Dr. Grossman's protocol also included putting Jamie on a supplement called "Captomer," a supplement that helps pull metals from the body. This began our treatments using these strong supplements with Jamie.

I continued expanding my knowledge base and the treatment we sought. We had regularly visited eight different doctors, learning and experimenting, waiting to identify that which would continue bringing improvement to Jamie's condition. I read one book that became a bible to me, called *Biological Treatments for Autism and PDD* by William Shaw. The book suggested additional tests that would be important to get more information about Jamie's body. The book recommended going through the Great Plains Laboratory because they work with children with many variations of Autistic Spectrum Disorder. Dr. Grossman was very supportive of my desires for additional testing through blood, urine, and stool with this specific laboratory.

At the Great Plains Laboratory, Jamie had these additional tests. This analysis revealed an elevated level of yeast, mold, and bacteria in Jamie's body. This was definitely a source of Jamie's ongoing gastrointestinal problems. Around this time I learned that the intestines influence 80% of the brain's functioning, so this was obviously an area that required attention. In order to address the very high yeast levels, Jamie began to take Niastatin along with intestinal flora, which was ordered by Dr. Grossman.

Up to this point, Jamie had taken an ambulance ride every month because of his trouble breathing. Each time he was given recimic epinephrine and Decadron, a steroid used to open up his airways, as well as antibiotics. This steroid, along with the antibiotics, had impacted his body chemistry and added to the abundance of yeast. Because of Jamie's medical past, his body had been more open to absorbing everything, contributing to his leaky gut syndrome.

While working on the internal aspects, we also continued on Jamie's external aspects. We started him with his first speech language pathologist, Joan Eckert. We visited her three times a week. Joan was the best candidate for teaching Jamie because she had done the Son-Rise Program and could support the principles we were practicing at home. She had started out spending most of her time trying to keep Jamie in the room with her, but he had come a long way since this slow beginning.

## 2001 Something is Working



Through my new connections, I discovered Dr. Gary Klepper, DCND, another alternative health provider from Boulder. Dr. Klepper functioned as a monitor of the products Jamie was taking. Between Dr. Klepper and Dr. Grossman, we had a comfortable checks-and-balances system. All the different products, such as Wobenzyme, Primal Defense, and many other brands of probiotics, were working to heal Jamie's gut. While his intestinal tract was receiving what it needed, his brain was being treated with high doses of Vitamin A, Omega 3, and other essential oils. We continued to add and take away amounts

of different products as we identified Jamie's needs and the product's effectiveness. We began to see significant improvement in Jamie. I consider Dr. Klepper's work to be a key part in Jamie's healing as well as my own healing.

I decided we needed to get away from the cold and the snow for a winter and chose to spend the winter of 2001 in Santa Barbara, California. Prior to our leaving Denver we connected with a pulmonary doctor, Dr. Gwen Kirby, at Presbyterian St. Luke's Hospital. She was the first to suggest that Jamie try a new inhaled steroid called "Flovent." We saw an amazing improvement in his breathing from this medication. This change was obvious because we managed to stay out of the hospital for a year after he began using it.

Upon our arrival in California, the boys began a new preschool. The first school was not a good match for us. I had spoken to the Director of the school extensively regarding Jamie's condition. She was very nice and had a good understanding of the situation. My idea was to hire an assistant for Jamie while he was in school so that he wouldn't disrupt the rest of the class. During that time I was searching for an assistant for Jamie. Each day I would pick the boys up and speak with the teacher about how the day went.

After two weeks of my usual routine, I asked the teacher how everything had gone that day. She answered in front of Jamie that he wasn't listening, couldn't sit still, and had very autistic behaviors. At that moment I realized that I needed to remove the boys from that school because I knew she wasn't the right person to be in our lives.

We moved on and I got a recommendation through a friend about another school that was only a block away from our home. It was a Jewish preschool called "B'nai B'rith." I spoke to the Director of the school and I was so excited because they were up for anything. They were willing to take Jamie, his condition, and his assistant along with him. The boys' teacher was very gentle

and kind and had a huge understanding and empathy for what Jamie was going through. I hired an incredible assistant, Emily Potts, who came over every morning and walked the boys to school, stayed with Jamie in his class, and walked them home at the end of the school day. She brought joy to the boys' lives and helped me feel at ease while Jamie was at school. After school she would help them complete their homework and play games with them. She was a perfect fit in our lives at that time!

Through other friends in California, I got the name of a homeopathic doctor, Luc Maes, NDCC. At that point Jamie was still waking up six to ten times a night, screaming at the top of his lungs. Dr. Maes directed me in several ways. One way was to take soy out of his diet because he had been constantly sick. This was an important change in his life. His continuous cold and allergy like symptoms went away almost immediately after removing the soy. We worked with Dr. Maes several times for very long appointments. We spent the time explaining Jamie's behaviors and his sleeping patterns. He gave us two homeopathic remedies which had no change effect on Jamie. The third one, which Dr. Maes worked diligently to figure out, was "Stramonium." After Jamie began taking it, for two weeks he seemed out of control. He was hyper, he wasn't sleeping, and he was very difficult to manage. During this time I worked closely with Dr. Maes, speaking with him on the phone everyday, weekends, and evenings. He was incredible. After those two weeks, for the first time ever, Jamie slept through the night. He was four years old. Three cheers for Dr. Maes!

The next stepping-stone revealed itself when I read about a product called "Metal Free." Jamie had been continuing his Captomer to rid his body of metals, but Metal Free was a new product that promised more effective treatment and was gentler on

the body. It just so happened that Dr. Maes had it available in his office. Two weeks after starting the Metal Free, Dr. Maes ordered another round of stool and urine tests. This was called a purge test. It would show us what was coming out of Jamie while on the Metal Free. The test revealed Jamie was dumping metals out of his body. It was amazing! After this single addition to his treatment, Jamie had begun to improve even more with his eye contact, as well as his verbal skills. I was so excited to have him actually look at me and to be able have a conversation with him. At this point, I realized he was making gigantic improvements. All of the things that we were doing were helping.

During our time in Santa Barbara we also met Shelly Greenbaum, a speech language pathologist. We worked with her twice a week. Each time I took Jamie to his appointment, she was so organized, she knew exactly where Jamie was with his therapy and tested him continuously. She was, and continues to be, an outstanding therapist. She really helped Jamie further his language skills. She is one of the best in her field.

We were lucky enough to also meet Serena Sutherland, an occupational therapist, who truly gave me insight on what to work on with Jamie and what kind of person and group to look for to help Jamie when we returned to Colorado. She is continuously providing resources and encouragement to help Jamie. I felt so blessed getting to know the people in Santa Barbara. They really contributed to my life and my son's.

2002  
Healed  


Back in Denver we started to work with Diane Osaki again with regard to putting Jamie's program together. His program consisted of speech therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and music therapy. She helped place these professionals in our home on a daily basis. We continued with the Son-Rise Program. Maintaining our diet was difficult inasmuch as it included no wheat, dairy, soy, corn, or sugar products. We continued Jamie's supplements regimen, as well as closely working with Dr. Grossman, Dr. Klepper, and Dr. Maes. At this point, the majority of the conversations I was having with Jamie, he was keenly aware and observant to what I was saying and what was going on around him; but there were still portions of our exchanges where he wasn't with me and I wondered if Jamie would ever fully recover. We kept forging ahead.

My father-in-law told me about Dr. Max Collins in South Carolina. His therapy involved using a laser, which he had designed, to help continue the detoxification of heavy metals, radiation, and parasites in the body. We decided to make the trip because even though it sounded kind of "out there," we learned about it from a reliable source and wanted to continue our open-minded pursuit of Jamie's cure.

Prior to our arrival in South Carolina, even with the help of a friend, it took me calling Dr. Collins each day, sometimes twice a day, leaving messages each time, in order to get hold of him. After two weeks of leaving messages, one evening about eleven o'clock I was walking by the phone as I was heading upstairs to bed when the phone rang. It was Dr. Collins. I was on the phone with him for two hours while he explained what he does and the treatment. I understood about half of what he said, but the half that I understood made so much sense to me. Obviously, he was highly intelligent. I spoke to James about it the next day. He wasn't quite as excited about it as I was, but he trusted my instincts and we packed up the family and flew to South Carolina.

As we flew in and were exiting the plane, the temperature was about 90 degrees with 100% humidity. We all looked at each other, sweating and giggling, thinking, *What are we doing here?* I remember driving to Dr. Collins' home where he has a lovely, new office. Before we got there I told James that if we pulled up to his house and it was a shack and all of his teeth were missing that we were going to turn around and take a vacation. James and I laughed out loud together when we arrived at his office. We entered the building and I heard his voice in one of the examining rooms. I was so curious about what he looked like that when I went to use the restroom, I peeked into the examining room to get a glimpse of him. He was a young, vibrant man with glowing skin. After I saw him I was relieved to know that we hadn't come this far for nothing.

Dr. Collins treated Jamie, along with our entire family, twice a day for eight minutes each time along with certain manipulations throughout Jamie's body. We stayed in South Carolina for seven days and really enjoyed our time there, but when we returned home to Denver, Jamie became very sick. Dr. Collins had warned us that this could happen. He advised us to help move along the parasites from Jamie's body with black walnut. Jamie's improved sleeping habits had continued for a year, but after the South Carolina visit, they became interrupted again. Dr. Collins expected this change in Jamie and told us to continue giving him the black walnut for eight days. He said after the eight days Jamie should be fine.

Exactly eight days later, Jamie was better. He resumed sleeping through the night. I was so relieved. We saw a drastic improvement in Jamie over the next couple of months, just as Dr. Collins had predicted. We decided to make another trip to South Carolina, feeling that a second treatment would make him all that much better.

Towards the end of the second trip, during which we stayed two weeks, the night before we were to leave to return to Denver, around 2 a.m., Jamie

started having difficulty breathing. He vomited as he struggled for air, screaming and gasping for air. I had all the equipment available to help him open up his airway, but as I opened up the nebulizer, I couldn't remember how to put the medicine in the machine. It had been so long since he'd had these breathing difficulties. I acted quickly, called the hotel operator and told her that I needed 9-1-1. The ambulance arrived and as we were on our way to the hospital I realized that Jamie was breathing okay. We ended up spending the night in the hospital where Jamie was administered steroids and kept for observation. They released us early the next morning, and Jamie and I took a taxi back to the hotel. I was exhausted. I felt like Jamie would be okay to travel, so we packed and got ready to go home. On our way to the airport, we stopped at Dr. Collins' office where I explained what had happened. He gave Jamie and me another treatment. Jamie seemed to be better. Dr. Collins explained that Jamie was detoxing and a lot of things were being released from his body. We gave the Collins family hugs and kisses as we waved goodbye. We rushed to get to the airport in time to make our flight, and we arrived home safely.

One day, after the summer of 2002, I was giving Jamie a bath when I suddenly became aware of what was happening between us. We were talking about the day, just going back and forth in conversation completely connected. Jamie was connecting with me! I could hardly believe it! Jamie's ability to connect had come in such small increments that I had to stop myself to recognize just how amazing his progress had been. A flood of emotions enveloped me. These weren't anxious or excited feelings, but rather a calm

assurance that at that moment I knew my son was no longer autistic. It was then that I remembered Dr. Collins telling me that within two to three months, we would start seeing significant improvements in Jamie.

On a return visit to Dr. Rubin, the doctor who first suspected autism in Jamie three years earlier, Jack and Jamie were given their routine pediatric exams. Dr. Rubin looked them over physically as well as using a round of questioning to check their development. Dr. Rubin was stunned.

“I would never have believed it if someone told me three years ago that Jamie would be like he is right now. I would have told you that this child would have been autistic the rest of his life. He’s an angel! He must have come to you because he knew you would help him.”

It was undoubtedly the highest compliment that I had ever received. It made me feel very proud to have someone outside of our family recognize just how far Jamie had come and how hard we had worked to get him there. I was finally able to take one of my first deep breaths since Jamie’s diagnosis.

Over the next year Jamie continued to have speech therapy twice a week and continued to work with Unique Prints for intensive therapies including OT, Music Therapy, and Jin Chin. (In my opinion, Unique Prints is the best group in Denver. Kristi Phelps, the owner and operator, continues updating their education on the newest therapies.) We also had fun with music therapy at home with Jenny Lee. As time passed, we slowly began to not need these therapies. Jamie no longer needed assistance in preschool and continued improving on a daily basis that was simply astounding.

In the last five years I have probably learned the most as far as human behavior and what makes up the human spirit. I also learned so much about the anatomy and physiology

of the human body. Because of my perseverance and my huge desire for Jamie to be “normal,” I pushed Jamie, my family and myself to places we never knew existed. The people with whom I surrounded myself were vital to our ability to accomplish what we did. This is the most important advice that I could give to another mother: surround yourself with the kind of people whose hearts and minds are open to all things and have the same goal for your child as you do. Always go for the tenth opinion. Keep searching until you find the open door.

***One in every*** 166 kids is labeled with some form of autism and few are expected to recover.

We *should be* expecting that they will.