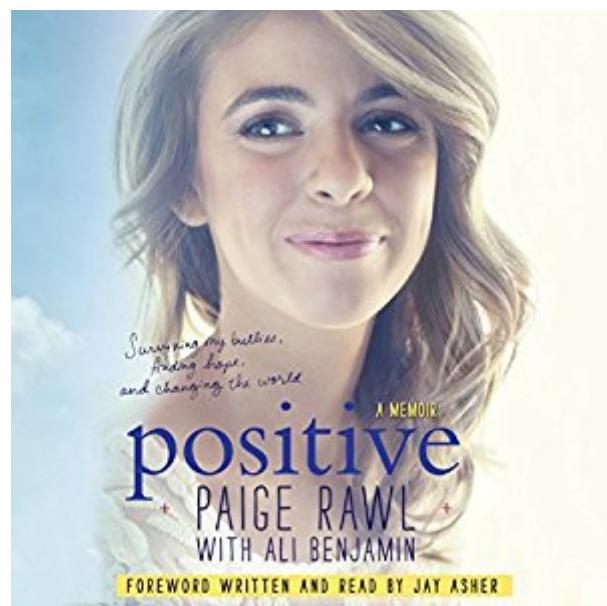


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Positive: A Memoir



Synopsis

An astonishing memoir for the untold number of children whose lives have been touched by bullying. *Positive* is a must-hear for teens, their parents, educators, and administrators - a brave, visceral work that will save lives and resonate deeply. Paige Rawl has been HIV positive since birth, but growing up, she never felt like her illness defined her. On an unremarkable day in middle school, she disclosed to a friend her HIV-positive status - and within hours the bullying began. From that moment forward, every day was like walking through a minefield. Paige was never sure when or from where the next text, taunt, or hateful message would come. Then one night, desperate for escape, 15-year-old Paige found herself in her bathroom staring at a bottle of sleeping pills. That could have been the end of her story. Instead, it was only the beginning. Paige's memoir calls for listeners to choose action over complacency, compassion over cruelty - and above all, to be *Positive*.

Book Information

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#43 in Books > Teens > Social Issues > Bullying #48 in Books > Teens > Biographies > Social Activists

Customer Reviews

Oh, how this book hurt and helped, with each page. One of my children is HIV+. After we adopted this child, my husband and I lost our best friends. It stung. Our child has no idea what happened with these friends, because our child never got to know them, so this time we were able to shield our dear one from that hurt. I know that won't always be the case, though. So in some ways, I think that rejection was a good lesson for us to learn. I won't ever know what it's like to be judged or bullied for having HIV, but that experience was the closest thing to it. In losing those friends who

wouldn't or couldn't understand that HIV was no risk to them or their children, we shared in the pain that people like our child and like Paige Rawl face. Paige was just a kid with a chronic condition, having no idea that HIV carried any more stigma than her diagnosis of asthma. She was an A+ student, a cheerleader, an all around good kid. Then she shared her status with her best friend - her first best friend - and everything changed. That girl told everyone, and Paige was called PAIDS, mocked in the halls, and - in the most heartbreaking sections - let down by the very adults who should have protected her: her school counselor, administrators, and soccer coach, the last of whom joked that they could use Paige's status as an advantage on the soccer field because opposing teams would be scared of catching AIDS from her. I'm so thankful for Paige's mother, who never once doubted her and who understood in a deeper way that I will because Paige's mother is also HIV+.

This book exceeded all of my expectations. Every. Single. One. I am so impressed and touched by this story. Paige Rawl was born HIV positive. She has always taken medication at the same time other children eat breakfast, and gone to doctor's appointments when other children were playing sports. Paige never seemed to have a problem with this, because for most of her childhood, Paige did not know of her HIV status. But times have changed for Paige. She was beginning middle school, meaning that a new reputation had to be created and upheld. This means that Paige would enter several beauty pageants, attend class lock-ins and dances, and make new friends. But one thing that Paige might not have expected, is the disastrous and painful aftermath of informing Yazmin - a friend she had known for the majority of her life - of her HIV status. She could have never imagined what would happen next. *POSITIVE* is a story, but most importantly, it is Paige's story. *POSITIVE* is a story about illness, bullying and a lack of acceptance, but *POSITIVE* is also a story about new hope when Paige believed there was none, new and better experiences when Paige thought she couldn't survive anymore, and reversing stereotypes when Paige was invited to speak at several HIV-centered events. *POSITIVE* is the story about change, inspiration and hope. *POSITIVE* is just that, remaining positive when everything else seems to crumble. That is what Paige does best. Paige Rawl has an exceptional writing style and a way with words. Her story clicks with me and resonates with me so much that I finished the entire memoir in one day. I never wanted to put this book down, and I never wanted the telling of her story to end.

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