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## When Family Members Stop Talking

(LAS VEGAS, Nev.) Everyday, we read a new story about family estrangement; about fathers and mothers and their grown children who enter a cold war of silence. Lindsay Lohan, Jennifer Aniston, and the Reagan family are just a few celebrities whose family strife has topped national headlines. Few statistics are available on the subject of family estrangement, in part because ordinary people rarely speak out on these matters, except in the company of close friends, confidants, and therapists.

Psychologists say estrangement has become much more common than it used to be and pastors of all faiths say that family rifts are an increasingly frequent problem brought to the clergy's attention. This contemporary issue is woven into the fabric of a unique coming-of-age story, *A Dedication* (Synergy Books, June 2005, ISBN: 0-9755922-3-8, \$21.95) by former Episcopal priest, John Zaiss.

"I wrote the book as a cathartic exploration of the themes of loss and redemption in my own life," says Zaiss, "with the hope that others will be inspired by the story." Zaiss' father died of cancer just months after he graduated from college.

Protagonist Quinn Marshall is a bright but underachieving teenager who is angry at the world. When he fails several classes in his junior year of high school and is caught plagiarizing a term paper, Quinn is sentenced to summer school and grounded for life. Just when Quinn reaches rock bottom, a former Marine with a tragic past of grief and estrangement, unexpectedly comes into his life.

What follows is an unusual friendship that develops between 74-year-old Joe Toscano and 17-year-old Quinn that provides both with an opportunity for redemption. When Joe reveals a secret illness that may cut his life short, Quinn makes a final, desperate effort to reconcile Joe with his estranged family. Though the attempt ends in failure, the experience inspires Quinn to plan a unique celebration of Joe's life that galvanizes the entire community. Anyone who has struggled with death, grief, estrangement or how to parent a strong-willed teen, will benefit from this inside peek into the mind of a rebellious teen and the mentor who changed his life.

"*A Dedication* lovingly explores the gains and losses of growing up," says Sherman Frederick of the *Las Vegas Review Journal*. "Zaiss has provided his readers with an insightful and fun read reminiscent of both *Ordinary People* and *Tuesdays with Morrie*."

John Zaiss is the president of Crescent Capital Management and the father of three teenagers. He divides his time between Las Vegas and Whitefish, Montana. For more information about Zaiss and *A Dedication*, visit [www.johnzaiss.com](http://www.johnzaiss.com).

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To schedule an interview with John Zaiss, or receive a review copy of *A Dedication*, contact Jennifer McAndrew of Phenix & Phenix Literary Publicists at (512) 478-2028 ext 221 or [jmcandrew@bookpros.com](mailto:jmcandrew@bookpros.com).