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Will To Live Foundation

MY LIVING WILL

A Father's Story of Loss & Hope

CHAPTER 32 REPRINT

John Trautwein
foreword by Joe Girardi

An Excerpt From:

My Living Will

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Chapter 32

“All We Have Is Today; Let Us Begin”

As Christmastime slowly turned into New Years' time, many people told us, “I bet you'll be happy to get this year over with.” In reality, we found it to be just the opposite. We did not want our last year with Will in our lives to end. We wanted to go *backward* not *forward*. For the first time in my entire life, I wanted to go backward.

I found New Year's Eve to be extremely difficult. The excitement of Christmas had died down, and tomorrow would be New Year's Day, 2011. The following day, I would be back at work and the kids back at school. I felt like a young boy at the end of Christmas break again, with that dreadful “holidays are over” feeling as if school were starting again tomorrow. I described it to Susie as if a sea of Mondays lay before me. I felt like I had nothing to look forward to.

We were spending the New Year's weekend in the mountains of North Carolina with our friends the Connollys. After a somber New Year's Eve, where Susie and I simply kissed and said, “I love you,” when the clock struck midnight, with tears in our eyes, we quietly turned in for the night. It was awful.

As I quietly sipped my bloody Mary during the morning hours of New Year's Day, I noticed on the Connollys' coffee table a book about Mother Theresa. It was a hand-sized, hardcover book. I picked it up and slowly started to thumb through it. I didn't know much about Mother Theresa, other than she was known for her wonderful works of love, charity, and sacrifice throughout her life. As I skimmed through this little book, flipping the pages three or four at a time, I inadvertently stopped on the beginning of a chapter about three-quarters of the way through the book. Each chapter appeared to begin with a quote from Mother Theresa, and this one was no different, other than the fact it seemed to jump out at me.

Yesterday is gone,
Tomorrow has not yet come,
All we have is today,
Let us begin.

As I read that quote, I sat back in my chair and just said “Wow.” Joe Connolly looked up from the magazine he was reading and asked, “What’s that, Johnny T?”

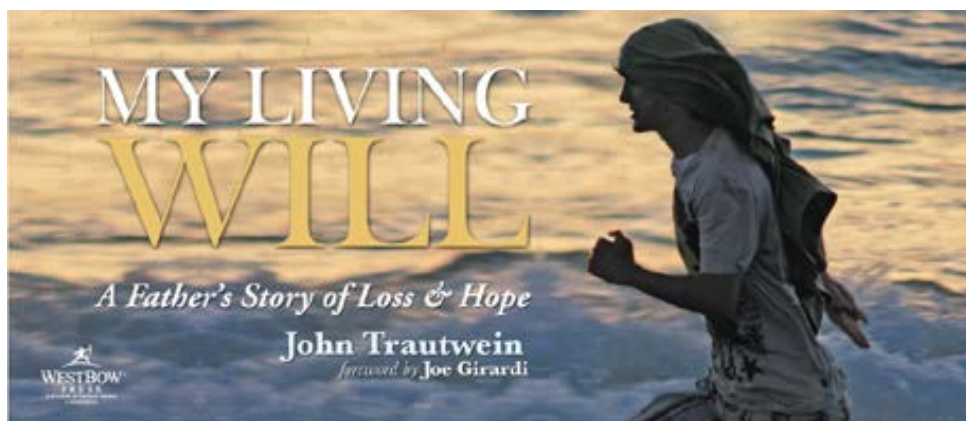
I handed him the little book, open to the page that affected me, and said, “Joe Joe, every once in a while I come across something that I needed to come across, like it was placed there for me to find. This quote is one of them.” I went on to tell him about my sea of Mondays feeling about New Year’s. Joe smiled. He had tears in his eyes as he listened to my words.

Joe loved Will, and over the years when we were neighbors, he would often ask me questions about my relationship and fathering of Will. Joe’s oldest boy, PJ, was three years younger than Will, so Joe would ask me things like, “Hey, Johnny, when Will was in fifth grade, did you notice this?” Typical father questions, as he was wondering if PJ’s actions were normal. Perhaps it’s better to say that Joe was worried if *his* reactions were normal.

I looked at the quote from Mother Theresa again: “All we have is today. Let us begin.” Once again, my senses were back to life, and I could feel my creative juices flowing again. This wonderful woman’s words hit me right between the eyes, and it was another “save” as far as I was concerned. It fit with my one day at a time approach to getting through Will’s death. It actually made me remember what the minister said to Susie and me on our wedding day: “Take life one day at a time, love each other with all your might—one day at a time.”

It was time to begin again, but not a whole new life; just a whole new *day*. Then tomorrow I would do the same thing. I’d begin again. Each day I would begin again. I stopped looking out at a sea of Mondays, and just looked out at one day—today. It made it easier.

Coming across this little book and that quote was one of those God winks, or Will winks, that I seemed to experience on a regular basis in the months after Will’s death. I showed the quote to Susie, and she smiled. I don’t believe it had the same effect on her, but I know she knew that it had helped me, and she and the kids needed me to be me. This quote, for whatever reason, was going to get me back to being me.



***MY LIVING WILL IS NOW AVAILABLE
AS AN AUDIO BOOK ON AMAZON/AUDIBLE***

Click Here To Purchase:

<https://www.audible.com/pd/My-Living-Will-Audiobook/B07Y8NWQF6/>

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<https://will-to-live.org/product/my-living-will/>

All Proceeds From your purchase through the link above, go to the Will To Live Foundation. A 501(c)(3) Public Charity that was created for and by the kids to:

- **Raise the Awareness** of teen suicide in our communities
- **Increase Education** around mental illnesses and their stigmas
- **Deliver Hope** to teens everywhere!

Thanks and Love Ya Man,

John Trautwein

Author of My Living Will

Co – founder of the Will to Live Foundation

Visit Will To Live at: <https://will-to-live.org/>
Email Will To Live at friends@will-to-live.org

If you or a loved one is in need of help – please ‘ACT’ now and call:
1-800-SUICIDE (1-800-784-2433)

To learn more about the Will to Live Foundation,
visit www.will-to-live.org



My Living Will is the story of former major league pitcher John Trautwein, and the unbelievable tragedy which befell him and his family when his fifteen-year-old son, Will, took his own life. There had been no warnings, no obvious signs of anxiety, depression, or unhappiness; nothing. A family and a community were left stunned as they pondered how a young man like Will Trautwein, a healthy, happy, popular, athletic, and musical teenager, who came from such a loving home, could lose the will to live.



"If the most powerful transformation known to humanity is taking something negative that happens to you and turning it into something positive for others—and I fully believe that to be the case—then John Trautwein is one powerful man. He writes straight from the heart. And his words will save lives. The story Trautwein shares in these pages—a remarkable journey of passion and purpose—will literally save lives."


• **Jeffrey Marx, Pulitzer Prize winner and author of *Season of Life***

"John Trautwein's story inspires hope. It empowers people, and it gives its readers the 'hope for life.' The triumph that this story imparts arouses the goodness in everyone as it drives people toward action."

• **Joe Girardi, Manager, The New York Yankees**

"In my twenty-two years of broadcasting, I have told many stories of triumph over tragedy but the story of Will Trautwein and his family has stayed with me. The loss of such a vibrant young man and the strength of his family to use their heartache to help has had an impact on how I parent my daughter, and how I report stories of teenage depression and suicide. This is a must read if you have a teenager in your life."

• **Stephany Fisher, Anchor, CBS News, Atlanta**


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