

MEDIA KIT

Read *My Heart Behind Bars*—an honest memoir and guide to processing the imprisonment of a child—and finding help to make sense of it logically and emotionally as you heal.

TITLE

MY HEART BEHIND BARS

*A Mother's Journey of Grief,
Incarceration, Love and Forgiveness*

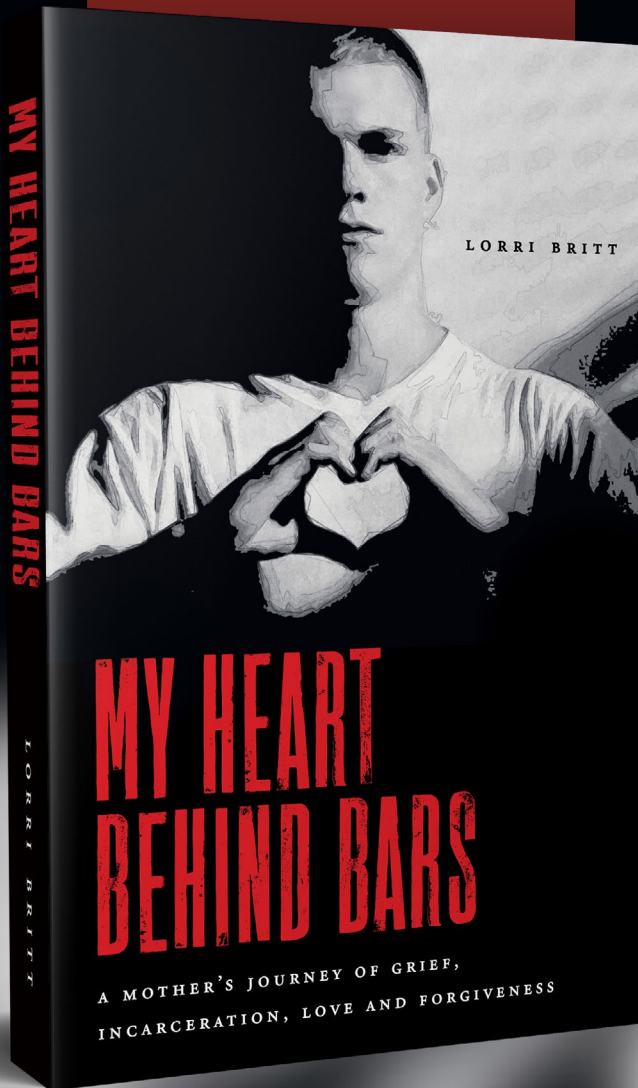
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TOPICS COVERED INCLUDE



MEMOIR



MENTAL
HEALTH



FAMILY
RELATIONSHIPS



MOTHERS
& SONS

ABOUT THE **BOOK**

Title: *My Heart Behind Bars: A Mother's Journey of Grief, Incarceration, Love and Forgiveness*

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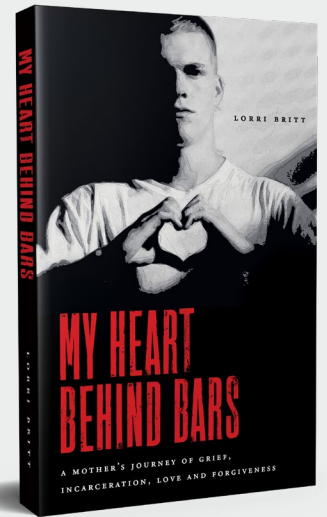
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Hear this first: you didn't screw up.

Kids don't have to be bad, have bad parents, or live in bad homes to suffer mental health breakdowns, addiction, or incarceration. Everything can change instantly, and if it's happened to your family member, you know the emotional chaos and the feelings of losing control that threaten your survival.

Lorri Britt was caught in a cycle of guilt, shame, sadness, and loneliness, feeling judged and ostracized when her two boys ended up in prison. In *My Heart Behind Bars*, she bravely shares her true life story and the raw reactions she experienced before, during, and after they were incarcerated. Readers dealing with similar heartbreak will find help and comfort knowing they're not alone.

You'll discover

- What to know and how to prepare when visiting an adult child in prison.
- New and healthier coping skills to release emotions, like taking on creative activities.
- Common responses to a child returning home from prison, like parental protectiveness and worry.
- Emotional triggers to watch out for and where you can direct the intense feelings when they arise.
- How the pain of having a child in prison parallels the grief of a loved one's death—and why it's okay to grieve the loss of the child you knew while greeting the person they've become.

Your child's choices are not yours; you're on separate paths bound together by love. Read *My Heart Behind Bars*—an honest memoir and guide to processing the imprisonment of a child—and finding help to make sense of it logically and emotionally as you heal.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

LORRI BRITT comes from a family filled with mental health challenges and addictions passed down from generation to generation. So, when two of her children—one by birth and one she took in—began to struggle, she wasn't in unfamiliar territory.

But when they were incarcerated, Lorri wasn't prepared for the emotional tailspin of grief, shame, anger, and loneliness in which she found herself. Now she's emerged with a heart for helping others navigate the chaos of similar circumstances, making sense of it as they heal.

Lorri was born and raised on Vancouver Island. She's married with two biological children, but many others call her Mama B. A straight shooter with a big heart, Lorri has many interests, including various physical and creative pursuits. From archery, axe throwing, and golf to painting, reading, and writing, many of her hobbies have served as coping mechanisms during difficult days.

Learn more online at www.lorribritt.com.

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SAMPLE TOPICS

Talk to Lorri Britt about her parenting journey, finding support with children in prison, and processing grief associated with shame

- Tell us a little bit about your journey as a mother. What led to your boys going to prison?
- What were some of the biggest obstacles you faced when your children went to prison?
- How did your relationship with your boys change when they were in prison?
- How did you feel about yourself as a mother during that time?
- What have you faced since then that led you to writing a book?
- How would you describe the process of dealing with loved ones in jail?
- Share some methods to deal with the trauma when a loved one commits a crime.
- What do you want other parents to know who may be experiencing something similar?
- What do you hope someone reading this book can take from it?



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BOOK EXCERPT

INTRODUCTION

My heart, or pieces of it anyway—my sons—were behind bars. I was unable to see, touch, or talk to them on a regular basis. There were no final goodbyes because they were very much alive, though maybe not well. Their presence was missed daily, and it seemed there was no end to the grief cycle I was in. What I know to be true is that this can happen to anyone. A poor choice and some bad timing, and your heart is behind bars.

It Happens in an Instant

Everything changed that night, when a friend and her son showed up at my door at 2 a.m. explaining that Drake had called her son crying, asking for help. He'd given a street name for them to pick him up, and when they got to the location, the police had apprehended him and he was in the back of the police vehicle. He definitely was not waiting on the street corner as they had expected, and I had no idea what to do next.

Hearts Are Fragile

When my son was arrested, I found most people were unable to wrap their heads around the idea of grief associated with incarceration. They found it difficult to be supportive and often focused more on the crime and the criminal instead of the grief and the griever. It felt like there was more judgment and less compassion. That people were unable to comprehend the pain, the loss, and the heartbreak of things they never experienced or didn't have the capacity to understand. I believe because of this, most people were unable to be supportive or show up in a way I needed. Honestly, most just did not show up at all.

If He Had Died

Had my son died, compassion, empathy, and care would've poured over me; but instead, my grief was dismissed. My heartbreak was just as real as any other loss, yet in society's eyes, it was unacceptable because my son had committed a crime and was in prison.

It's similar to the way society reacts if a drug addict dies of an overdose, expressing thoughts like, "Well, they shouldn't have been doing drugs." When a drunk driver crashes and dies, somehow it is deserved, because they "should've known better."

But the family of that addict or drunk driver is probably heartbroken, and yet they're left to feel alone, in a place where shame is attached to their grief. And because of that, instead of just being able to grieve, they have to defend or deny their own feelings.

And yet no one ought to feel ashamed for loving someone, no matter what that person's choices were...you have every right to cry. You have no need to be embarrassed or ashamed about loving your child, friend, mother, father, or partner— no matter how that grief is viewed by society.

No Compassion, No Grieving

There is much less compassion in the world than I thought— thankfully, I have a friend who understood grief better than I had ever hoped to; she knew that I would not be able to go through the whole process. Not just because of the restrictions placed by the prison walls, but also due to the lack of understanding among my social circle and society. She unfortunately

had experienced a loss deeper than I can imagine, she understood the process, she knew that closure was a part of it along with support. She knew that I would get stuck in the process.

She was right. I was not able to fully grieve; there was no closure, there was no end to my sense of loss from the time of the arrest to sentencing, to time served, or even in release.

...

I know most people will say, "Well, it won't happen to me, not my kid, not in my life." I totally understand that, and I've heard it from many. And you're right, until it does—the shock that shakes your entire world. I never imagined that I would be writing this book with my children's names as the characters I write about. For a moment when you're reading, imagine your child in place of mine. It's harder when it's your own, it affects you differently. Maybe you will see some similar things, maybe you won't. Maybe you see it in someone else's child, in someone you love and care about. Maybe it helps you to have conversations you didn't think about.

The impact of my sons going to jail affected me as a mom, friend, partner, employee, pretty much every aspect of my life. It shifted my entire world. It was like having a brand-new pair of prescription glasses—how I saw of the world prior to my sons going to jail is vastly different than the way I see it now. I pray that you never experience what I went through, that you are always able to view the world in a brighter light, but if you do, I hope that I was able to help by sharing my pain.