



American College of Neuropsychopharmacology

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David Sheff given the ACNP Media Award

The American College of Neuropsychopharmacology (ACNP) has named David Sheff as the winner of the 2017 ACNP Media Award. David Sheff is a New York Times journalist and best-selling author who has made seminal contributions to the public's understanding of addiction. In 2009, Sheff was named to the Time 100, *Time Magazine's* list of the World's Most Influential People, for his efforts to end the stigma of addiction and improve prevention and treatment of the disease. He is on the advisory boards of The Jed and Clinton Health Matters Campus Program, which is designed to help colleges and universities promote emotional wellbeing and mental health programming, reduce substance abuse and prevent suicide among their students," and the International Bipolar Foundation. The Media Award, presented at the 56th Annual Meeting of the ACNP in Palm Springs, California is intended to be an expression of appreciation from the College toward outstanding public education leaders who provide complete, accurate, and unbiased information to our society about brain diseases. Considering the dramatic increase in the abuse of prescription opioid pain medications in recent years, and increasing public interest in understanding the causes and impact of drug addiction, David Sheff's accomplishments make him highly deserving of this award.

David Sheff's first book, *Beautiful Boy* (Mariner Books, 2009), a New York Times number-1 best seller, was a first-person account of his experience of living through his son Nic's addiction to drugs and tentative steps toward recovery. By providing this very personal account, David offers hope to other families struggling with addiction, and helps to reduce stigma by providing a face to this epidemic that is impacting so many families in our communities and the world. *Beautiful Boy* was based on his article, "My Addicted Son," which appeared in the *New York Times Magazine*. The article won a special award from the American Psychological Association for "outstanding contribution to the understanding of addiction." *Beautiful Boy* was named the year's Best Nonfiction Book by *Entertainment Weekly*, an *Amazon* "Best Books of 2008," and it won first place in the Barnes and Noble Discover Award in nonfiction. Sheff also contributed to HBO's *Addiction: Why Can't They Just Stop*.

Sheff's second book, *Clean* (Eamon Dolan/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013), was equally valuable in providing the public with an evidence-based resource that dispels common myths about addiction, and recommends valuable approaches toward prevention and intervention. This latest book resulted from endless interviews with leading scientists, doctors and counselors in the addiction field as well as a critical review of the latest scientific data. By communicating this information to the reader, *Clean* has the potential to help our community re-frame addiction as a public health challenge that warrants research, treatment and compassion rather than a moral

failing deserving of punishment. The New York Times describes Sheff's passion educate that "addiction must be considered a disease, as devoid of moral overtones as diabetes or coronary artery disease, just as amenable as they are to scientific analysis, and just as treatable with data-supported interventions, not hope, prayer or hocus-pocus."

David Sheff knows addiction as no parent would ever want. Through it all, he's tapped into a unique ability to convey the pain, wisdom and love that he's experienced through many turbulent years with his son Nic. As a journalist, father and clear-eyed chronicler of addiction, David is without peer."

– *Sanjay Gupta, MD*
Chief Medical Correspondent, CNN

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ACNP, founded in 1961, is a professional organization of more than 1000 leading scientists, including four Nobel Laureates. The mission of ACNP is to further research and education in neuropsychopharmacology and related fields in the following ways: promoting the interaction of a broad range of scientific disciplines of brain and behavior in order to advance the understanding of prevention and treatment of disease of the nervous system including psychiatric, neurological, behavioral and addictive disorders; encouraging scientists to enter research careers in fields related to these disorders and their treatment; and ensuring the dissemination of relevant scientific advances.