

# Atlanta woman reveals she gave drug to kidnapper: Smith was struggling with meth addiction

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A book by Ashley Smith, the Atlanta woman who read portions of Rick Warren's *The Purpose-Driven Life* to the man who held her hostage and persuaded him to surrender, says that she also gave the man some of her crystal methamphetamine and did not immediately tell police.

The news is disclosed in her book, *Unlikely Angel: The Untold Story of the Atlanta Hostage Hero*, which was released late last month. Apparently, the night she was held captive, Smith was asked by Brian Nichols if she had any marijuana. Nichols had escaped from an Atlanta courthouse after stealing a guard's gun and shooting four people.

Smith told him she had no marijuana, but she did have some "ice," or crystal meth, the *New York Times* reported September 28. Smith revealed that she had been struggling with a methamphetamine addiction when she was taken hostage, and the drug problem had even led to time in a psychiatric hospital and the loss of custody of her five-year-old daughter.

The last time she used crystal meth, Smith said, was 36 hours before Nichols held a gun to her and entered her home. Nichols wanted her to use the drug with him, but she refused.

"Suddenly, looking down at my drug pouch," Smith wrote, "I realized that I would rather have died in my apartment than have done those drugs with Brian Nichols. If the cops were going to bust in here and find me dead, they were not going to find drugs in me when they did the autopsy. I was not going to die tonight and stand before God, having done a bunch of ice up my nose."