

Voices Heard

TRUTH NEEDS A VOICE

STOP

ARE WE CRAZY?

REDEFINING JUSTICE

SOCIETY SILENCES SURVIVORS

THE GARDEN WITHIN

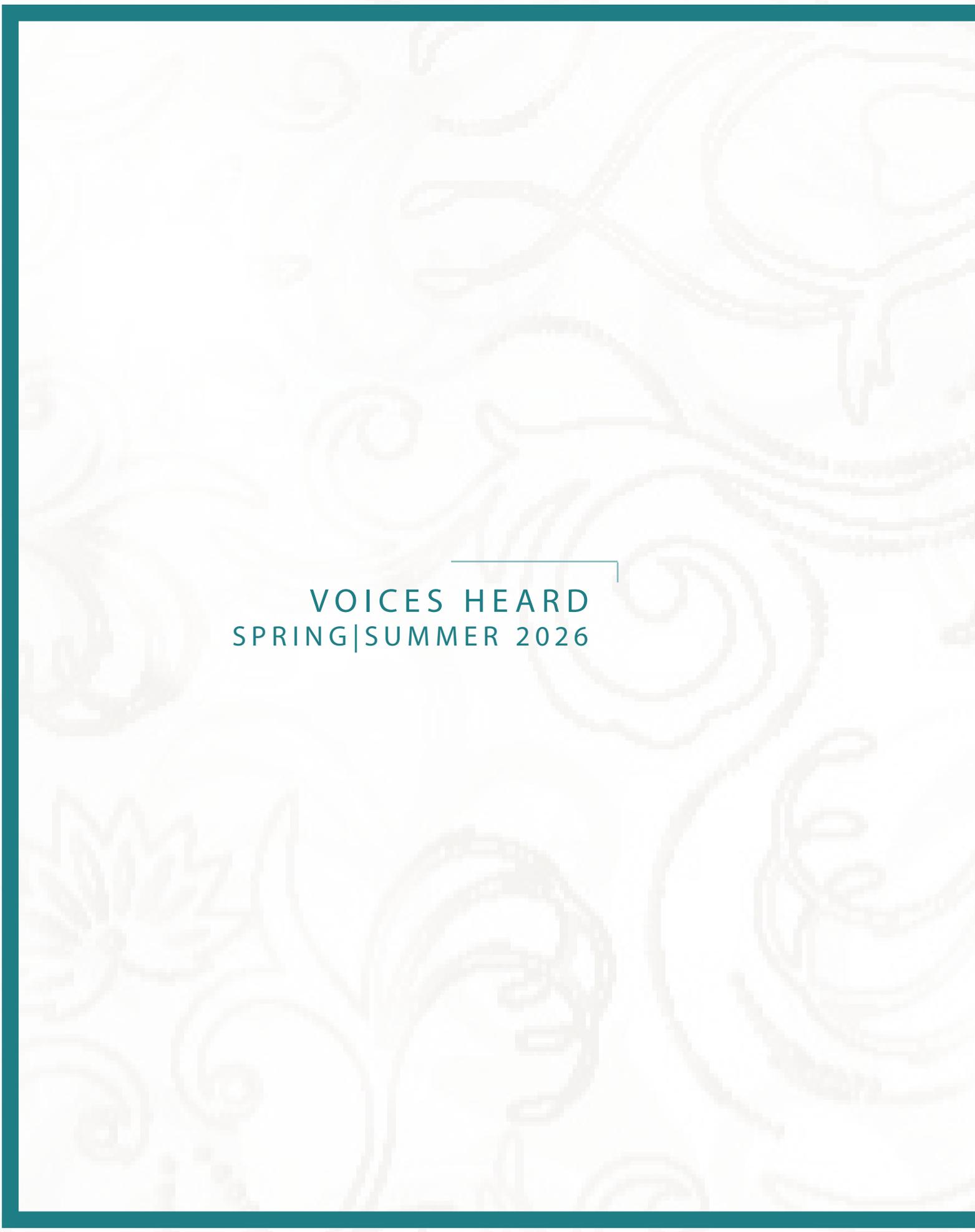
FIERCELY BELIEVE

SUDDENLY SEEKING SAFETY

INTIMACY AS JOY

THE HOME I KNOW

You

A thick teal border frames the entire page. The background is a light beige color with a faint, repeating pattern of stylized floral and scrollwork designs.

VOICES HEARD
SPRING|SUMMER 2026



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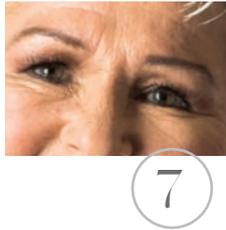
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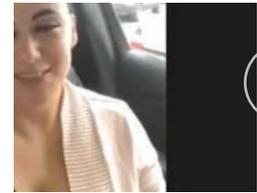


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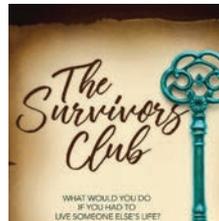
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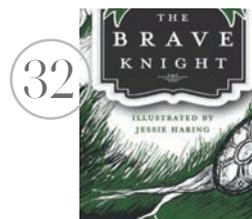
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ARE WE CRAZY?



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mary Knight treasures her varied life. Happily married, she is a Bellingham psychotherapist, filmmaker, and author. Her memoir, "[My Life Now: Essays by a Child Sex Trafficking Survivor](#)" is available on Amazon and can be ordered from any indie bookseller. It is also available on Spotify and Audible. Her films include a personal documentary, *Am I Crazy? My Journey to Determine if my Memories are True*. Go to [MaryKnightProductions](#) for more information.

Do you have recovered memories?
If so, would you like to be in a feature-length documentary film?

As many of you know, Mary Knight is a filmmaker. Her film *Am I crazy? My Journey to Determine if My Memories Are True* is now available on Tubi, [YouTube](#), and Amazon prime.

Mary is using FilmHub to distribute her films. When discussing the new film with a FilmHub representative, they gave her the impression that the upcoming documentary, *Are We Crazy? The Truth About False Memories* has a good chance of going onto all the above channels. There's a slim possibility it will also be on Netflix.

Note: Only those survivors who have recovered memories will be in this film. *Are We Crazy? The Truth About False Memories* will feature those who have forgotten or repressed memories of any type of abuse at any point in their life. If you have continuous memories of your abuse, meaning that you never forgot the abuse, you are not eligible to be in the film UNLESS you have retrieved some details about the abuse later in life. "*I am making (another!) statement to the people who say recovered memories like mine are not valid,*" declares Knight. Mary will also use existing footage of Bessel Van der Kolk, the author of *The Body Keeps the Score*. And footage of Marilyn Vanderber, former Miss America, as those names help sell films.

For an opportunity to be in the film, [schedule a zoom interview](#) with Mary which will be made into a short clip for her YouTube channel. She and the two other filmmakers editing the film will choose which Zoom interviews to use in the film as not all 100 Zoom interviews will fit.

The Zoom interview will take only 30 minutes. You do not need to use your real name in the interview, but it is only open to survivors who are willing to go public to the extent of showing their face on camera. A release will be requested after you have seen the edited clip from the interview.

Reach out to Mary to [schedule your interview](#).

FROM THE EDITOR: BECAUSE TRUTH NEEDS A VOICE

By Claire O'Leary



Photo by Tomo Saito

Justice needs agency the way truth needs a voice, says Darlene Lekowski.

Truth Needs a Voice rang in my mind as I edited this issue of Voices Heard.

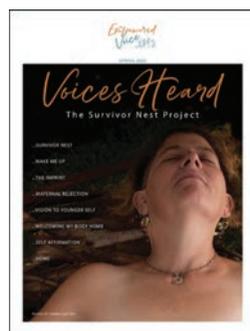
From the first article *Are We Crazy* featuring filmmaker **Mary Knight**, pg. 6 through the end of this eZine nothing rings more true than "Truth Needs a Voice."

Redefining Justice by **Darlene Lekowski**, pg. 8, is a great example of the reality survivors live through when finally speaking their truth. **Nubia Duvall Wilson** could not say it better than "Silence Is the System We're Breaking" in her story *Society Silences Survivors* on pg. 12. Frequent contributor **Donna Bulatowicz** uses a garden as allegory to describe her survivor story in *The Garden Within*, pg. 14. The on going abuse that frequently follows a survivor is described in *I Fiercely Believe*, pg. 20 and Suddenly Seeking Safety, a poem, pg. 21 by **Claire O'Leary**.

Three new books have been added to the Resource section: *The Home I know* by **Josephine A. Lauren** and *The Survivors Club* a novella by **Nubia Duvall Wilson**, and *Shattering Silence: A Story of Survival, Justice and The Power of Telling the Truth*, by **Darlene Lekowski**.

As always the resource section is full of memoirs, books for adult survivors, advocacy, teens, young adults, kids, and parents. It also offers many online resources, links to websites and helpful groups, pg 36.

We're always looking for new articles and resources. Share your wisdom and your stories with me at Claire@ClaireOLeary.com.



April is SAAM, Sexual Assault Awareness Month. In honor of SAAM, the one and only (thus far) printed issue of **Voices Heard** is on sale all of April for only \$19 (reg. \$25)

+ shipping. **Take Advantage of the SALE.** It would make a lovely gift for another survivor or those associated with survivors.

...**REACH OUT ANY TIME!**



These intimate stories of abuse by parents, siblings and teachers all have the common theme of speaking out, speaking up!

REDEFINING JUSTICE

By Darlene Lekowski



The volcano inside me erupted—fifty years of secrets, shame, and shattered innocence overflowing. The lack of an apology, the years of having to pretend that everything was fine. Mom was dead. Dad’s dementia made him incapable of holding on to the current moment, much less the past. There was nothing holding me back anymore. My fingers flew over the phone, my rage palpable, as I text-shouted at the Don of our childhood, the Don that raped me, the one who told me to be quiet, who threatened me, who hunted me.

I was no longer communicating with my adult brother. I was letting loose on my rapist.

It’s not unusual to shield your perpetrator from retribution. There was so much at stake for me, and I knew that even as a young girl. My brothers threatened me after every assault—that nobody would believe me, that I would be the one to blame, and that I would be an orphan and end up alone.

I knew that it would have destroyed my family if I said anything; especially my mother. So, I remained silent. Staying silent is far more prevalent than people realize. We know that sibling sexual trauma and abuse often goes unreported, but it’s hard to estimate how often. What we expect is that about 2-5% of children have been harmed by a sibling’s sexual behavior or traumatized by a sibling’s sexual behavior. To put it in perspective, that’s similar to the number of children affected by a food allergy.

I managed the best I could. Times were different then; sexual assault within a family was called “incest” and was highly taboo. There was no public discussion of this type of thing amongst siblings and remember, this is before the internet, so it was also incredibly isolating.

I truly believed I was the only one because there was no way to prove otherwise. The shame of it all was so overwhelming. I was also super conflicted because I loved my family, and I knew this secret would destroy them. I felt certain my parents would have believed me, but I knew they would cover it up, afraid of what it would do to all of us. People didn’t open up about their problems back then, especially in a conservative Midwestern Christian family like mine. So, I learned how to survive, largely by staying in control at all times. And, for the most part, it worked, but always having to be in control makes it difficult for people to be in relationship with you, and I saw that play out in my marriage as well as my relationship with my kids.

At first, I just wanted an apology, a simple acknowledgment that it happened and a sincere “I’m sorry.” I never got that, but I also never expected this secret to go beyond my brother and I. Even when I confronted him, it never occurred to me that he would take it any further than us, and I certainly never thought that he would sue me. So, after multiple attempts to settle out of court and move on, I finally got to the point where it was game on, and justice felt like winning. But it didn’t quite turn out that way. Even after I won both his suit against me and my counter-suit and was awarded damages by the jury, I just felt angry, bitter and hollow.



*I knew that it would
have destroyed my
family if I said
anything, especially
my mother. So,
I remained silent.*



Today justice means the ability to live my life freely, without the shame of a secret I should have never had to carry. Justice is about reclaiming my voice, being able to speak my truth.

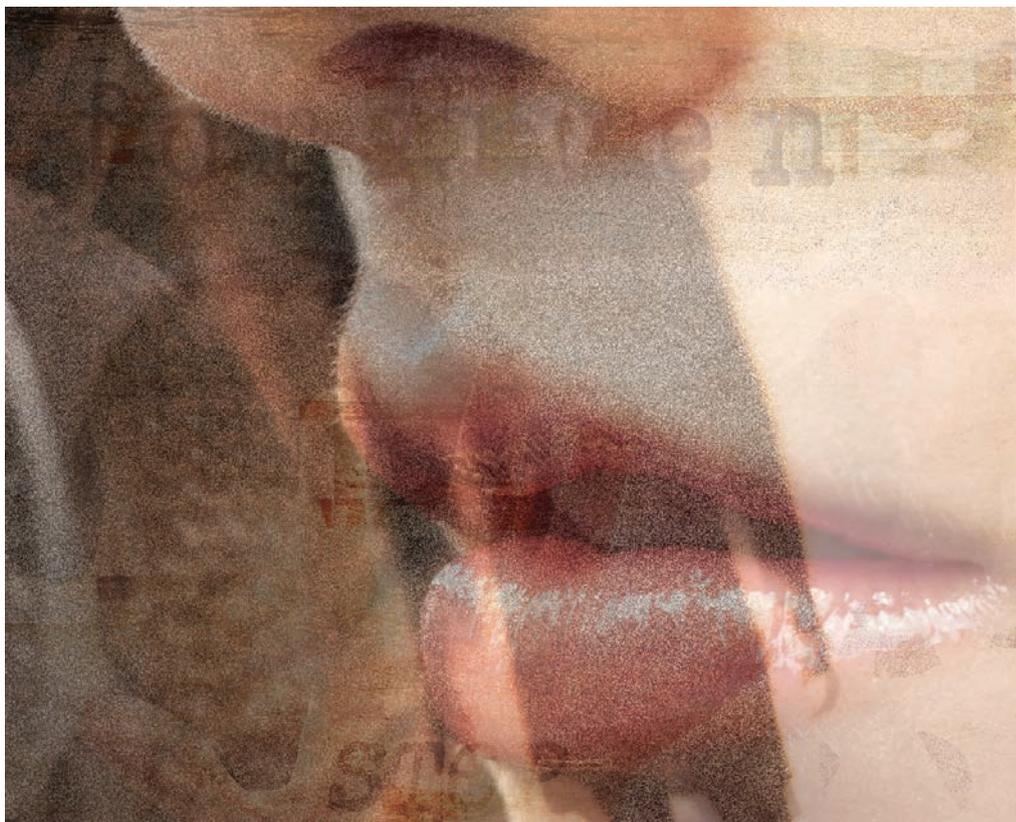


Image created by Claire O'Leary

Justice needs agency the way truth needs a voice. For me to be truly free from the trauma of my past, I had to rely on my own agency. It sounds odd to say, but I had to own and confront what happened to me to let it go; to disown it.

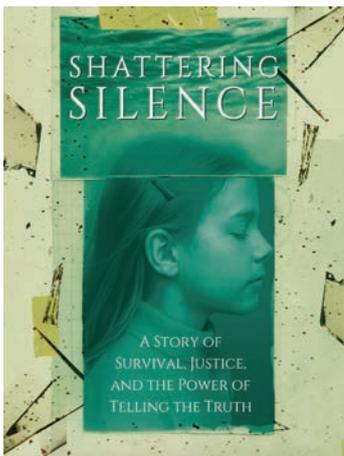
Today justice means the ability to live my life freely, without the shame of a secret I should have never had to carry. **Justice is about reclaiming my voice, being able to speak my truth. It's so ironic because in suing me, my brother gave me a gift.** I would have never been able to speak about this publicly without winning the trial, never able to write a book, or get involved in advocacy in the way I have. So, in an odd way, the justice did come from the result of the trial but looked nothing like I expected it to.

I thought that I began to heal when I won the lawsuit. But I still felt angry and resentful all the time. What was the point of feeling that way after 50 years of suffering? The real healing began for me when I recognized that I didn't need to win to be loved or believed. All my friends and counselor who testified on my behalf at the trial believed me decades ago. The support, of my husband, Tom, and my children was there from day one. Then there was that jury—a jury of my peers—who heard my story and believed me. They heard all the facts and knew the truth. That realization allowed me to start letting go—letting go of the need for constant control—letting go of the bitterness and anger, of always having to win, of just needing to survive. I finally feel like I can now live forward with hope for what's to come instead of that constant darkness about what was.

What does Justice & Agency look like for you?

1. Seek Support : First, reach out for support – therapy, family, community, friendships that strengthen you—choose not to go it alone. For so long, I felt like I was crazy because I was trapped in this nightmare alone, by myself. But every single time I told someone what happened to me, they believed me. It’s hard to transition to even thinking about justice if you’re still carrying the secret.
2. Release The Shame: Reject the idea that what was done to you determines who you are or who you can or will be. Know what happened to you is not your fault!
3. Figure Out What Was Actually Taken From You: I think the reason winning the lawsuits and being awarded the money wasn’t enough for me is because it didn’t really address what had been taken from me. My childhood innocence, my sense of safety and security, my belief that people could love me and not betray me, my self-esteem, and not receiving the apology that I needed. The verdict couldn’t really address any of those things. It was only when I got my voice back, when I felt loved and believed and safe that I really felt as though I got justice.
4. Let Go Of The Anger: Even after I won, I was so angry—especially at my brother. How dare he sue me over his lies? Because of the laws in NC, he’s likely never going to have to pay me a dime, and I felt like even after all of this, he still got off Scot free. That he has still never had to pay for his actions. But I’ve had to. But that anger wasn’t serving me. It was like a sticky, black tar inside my soul getting in the way of my relationships, my mental health, and my ability to live forward. And it just wasn’t worth it.

Live Intentionally: Craft a future around meaning, joy, and growth, even when the past cannot be changed.



Darlene Lekowski’s memoir, “*Shattering Silence: A Story of Survival, Justice and The Power of Telling the Truth*”, launches on Amazon on Thursday, April 2, 2026, where people can buy her eBook on Launch Day only for \$.99!

On April 2, 2026, and thereafter, to buy Darlene’s memoir, “*Shattering Silence*” on Amazon as an eBook, paperback, hardcover, and audiobook!

To get the latest, behind the scenes information about her memoir [Sign Up for Book Updates](#).

Darlene will also be at the first ever conference devoted to SSTA (Sibling Sexual Trauma Awareness) in the US — the upcoming [SWAVES SSTA Conference](#), [Breaking Silence Conference in NY on June 23, 2026](#). Darlene will participate at the conference in multiple ways:

- A “*Shattering Silence*” Booth where you can meet Darlene at her booth, buy her memoir and get it personally signed.
- “*Letting Go to Live Forward*” Presentation: Darlene will present a 40-minute breakout session about how many of us as survivors become ‘experts at survival’. But what happens when survival is no longer the goal, and healing becomes the focus? In this survivor-led session, **Darlene Lekowski explores the pivotal transition from surviving to Living Forward.**



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Darlene Lekowski is a survivor, speaker, advocate, and business leader who transformed decades of pain into hope and healing—for herself and others. After fifty years of silence about the sibling sexual trauma and abuse (SSTA) she endured as a child, she found her voice, winning the civil lawsuit brought against her by her own brother.

Her debut memoir, *Shattering Silence: A Story of Survival, Justice & the Power of Telling the Truth* (April 2026), shares her journey of resilience, justice, and healing.

She speaks publicly about her journey and partners with SSTA and sexual assault organizations worldwide to raise awareness and give a voice to all survivors.

Darlene lives in the Charlotte, NC suburbs with her husband, Tom, their dog, Pepper, and is the proud mother of three adult children.

Visit darlene-lekowski.com | [Instagram: @darlenelekowski](#)

SOCIETY SILENCES SURVIVORS

By Nubia Duvall Wilson



Image from: [nytimes.com/2026/01/08/opinion/](https://www.nytimes.com/2026/01/08/opinion/) "My Grandfather Abused Countless Children. Here's What I've Learned About Prevention"

When abuse is committed by someone with wealth, fame, or political value, the question is never "What happened?" The question becomes: Who benefits from silence?

Unsilenced: Surviving Abuse Silently Isn't Justice—Silence Is the System We're Breaking.

I didn't need another documentary to understand how power and a biased society protects those who abuse. I've lived it as a survivor of sibling sexual abuse (SSA) and child sexual abuse (CSA). But watching *The Reckoning*—the documentary produced by 50 Cent about Sean Combs' alleged abuse, crimes and greed—reminded us how money, influence, and public loyalty operate as a shield against accountability.

The Reckoning reminds us of the social constructs that allow powerful people like Diddy to remain untouchable long after the harm is an open secret. Long after whispers have turned into patterns. Long after survivors have spoken.

What we are watching—again—is not the failure of evidence, but rather the success of power. And I'm so tired of hearing things like, "But I like his music, so I don't care what he did," or "But he seems like a good guy, how could he be capable of this?" We are not with people 24/7 and therefore cannot say with 100% accuracy that we know what someone is or is not capable of doing.

As a survivor, I know this truth intimately.

When abuse is committed by someone with wealth, fame, or political value, the question is never "What happened?" The question becomes: *Who benefits from silence?*

We are seeing this play out in real time across our political landscape. Trump demanded the Epstein files be released in interviews when he was not President, but once in office, called the files "a hoax". He refused to release them until recently, which was a pitifully redacted half-assed attempt. All the while, courageous survivors were sharing the truth publicly.

The casual dismissal of sexual abuse as "old news" or "irrelevant" is unacceptable, especially because the long term effects of surviving it are interminable and contribute to generational trauma.

The eagerness of some to excuse harm if the accused shares their ideology, their party, their promise of dominance or even



Image from: [Unsensored: Reclaiming Our Voices. Rewriting Our Power](#)

their genes...this sounds all too familiar for SSA or incest abuse survivors like me. Why? Because of those who also have to navigate people closest to us choosing to ignore or make up excuses for the transgressions of the perpetrators who harmed us.

WE'RE TIRED OF WAITING

Survivors are always asked to wait:

- Wait for the courts.
- Wait for more evidence.
- Wait until it's "safe" to speak.
- Wait until the timing is better.

If survival were justice, there would be no need for accountability. **But survival only means you lived. It does not mean you were protected or that those who harmed you were held accountable.**

WHY I'M UNSILENCED

My new Substack, *Unsensored: Reclaiming Our Voices. Rewriting Our Power*, exists because silence has never kept us safe.

Being "unsensored" means:

- A refusal to accept survival as the finish line.
- A refusal to allow power to rewrite harm as misunderstanding.
- A refusal to pretend that wealth, fame, allegiance or a bloodline should outweigh a child's body, a survivor's truth, or a survivor's right to heal out loud.
- A desire to connect with fellow Survivors and collectively heal as we live life on our terms and take back our power.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Nubia DuVall Wilson is a nationally recognized writer, activist and speaker who is using her voice to break the cycle of generational trauma and *unsilence* survivors of sexual abuse, especially sibling sexual abuse (SSA). In 2026, she became the Community Organizer for the [Incest AWARE Alliance](#), running and overseeing the quarterly meetings while bringing on more members from the survivor community worldwide. In May 2018, she published her second book, *The Survivors Club*, a supernatural novella inspired by her journey to heal as a survivor of sibling sexual abuse. The novella catapulted Nubia into co-founding [Starfury Productions](#) with two partners, which develops, packages, pitches and distributes TV and film projects by underrepresented creators. When she is not managing the day-to-day operations of her PR and marketing firm, [Cielo Consulting](#), she works to break through the silence around the high prevalence of child sexual abuse in the United States—especially among women of color—and the long-term effects of abuse into adulthood. She is currently writing a memoir to raise more awareness for incest and its impact on the Black community. Nubia graduated from Barnard College, Columbia University, with a degree in English and a minor in Religion. She lives in New Jersey with her family. Learn more at nubiaduvall.com and follow on [IG](#) and [TikTok](#).

THE GARDEN WITHIN

By Donna Bulatowicz



*I don't view hope as
something delicate,
fragile, quick to fade.
I see it as a tenacious
warrior.*



Photo credit: Donna Bulatowicz

Healing moves in cycles and breathes like waves. It switchbacks up mountains and blazes new trails, travels smoothly and chaotically, and embodies contradiction. Embarking on a healing journey often requires hope, love, courage, strength, community, and so much more. Hope gives me a guiding light as I travel along this path.

I don't view hope as something delicate, fragile, quick to fade. I see it as a tenacious warrior. **No matter how many times hope is knocked down, it rises. It's resourceful, courageous, creative, and strong.**

Hope shelters the weary, comforts the grieving, and advocates for better than the status quo. It's matriarchal, rooted in community, equity, equality, inclusion, and love. I see hope as resilient, compassionate, peaceful, loving, and restorative. And, as part of love, hope encourages us to move into our growth zones, helping us transform and become more than we dreamed.

In spring, hope bursts forth in riots of wildflowers, new leaves, and life. This got me thinking about a writing prompt I read from Danielle Dahl of Resilient Stories: *"If your inner world was a garden, what would it look like this spring?"*

Of course, I never do prompts exactly as they're written.

I pictured my inner garden like a local Victorian garden cemetery. Traditionally, these cemeteries were places of beauty, planted with trees and flowers carefully selected for the meaning they convey.



Photo credit: Donna Bulatowicz

AUGUST 2022

In August 2022, my inner garden would have been filled with broken headstones, brambles, and trees struggling to live. I felt overwhelmed and burned out. My long covid combined with blatant discrimination at work demoralized me and made everything more challenging.

I'd been experiencing synchronicities for over a month. People would start mentioning my abuser's name, even though she'd died over a decade prior. I had more dreams of her, some nightmares and others not.

The wall behind which I usually stuffed my memories became less secure. Yet I didn't want to heed the call to heal at first.

The child psychologist I'd seen after telling on the abuser had told me that I was fully healed from the abuse, even though she hadn't really worked much with me. I figured that if I was having challenges related to the sexual abuse, I was failing. But more dreams came. Memories leaked through more frequently.



*I honor my rebirth,
transformation, and
spirituality as
symbolized by these
flowers.*



I grieve what I thought my life would be, and I'm beginning to create what it can be. I am planting new hopes and dreams amid the tombstones.



Photo credit: Donna Bulatowicz

When I could no longer ignore it, I ventured into my inner garden. My brain and body let go of what it had been holding back, and my inner garden flooded as grief, sadness, and anger filled me. My inner garden resembled an abandoned disaster area more than it did something beautiful. But hope lies even in the most unlikely of places. Flowers can bloom where there was once bare rock.

MY INNER GARDEN TODAY

After three and a half years, my inner garden has transformed. While rubble still lies in some areas, flowers thrive in others.

Tended paths lined with stones and benches meander through the garden. Solar-powered faerie lights festoon the trees, and solar-powered multicolored orbs provide faint light, though in May or June, the fireflies will steal the show.

I have uncovered bits of myself and planted some of what I wish to grow. A water lily pond, filled with a variety of flowers

reminds that me that I, too, have the strength to blossom from mud. This image fills my soul with peace and tranquility. I honor my rebirth, transformation, and spirituality as symbolized by these flowers.

Flowering trees fill the air with perfume. The dogwoods, cherry trees, apples, magnolias, and witch hazel inspire me to honor the inherent love, magic, joy, and resilience that have always been within. They encourage me to treasure the hope, enjoy the wonders in the natural world, and cherish myself.

The wildflowers speak to me of ephemeral beauty, gratitude, sweetness, courage, wisdom, renewal, happiness, and more. They fill the area with unexpected bursts of beauty and remind me to find the magic in everything, including myself.

As I look within more, I see much that needs tending and planting.

Sometimes when we plant seeds, they take a while to bloom. Habits take a while to become embedded in our lives as well. I'm



Photo credit: Donna Bulatowicz

working on being more present in my body, allowing myself to do things imperfectly, and speak up more. I'm rewiring myself, and I can see small changes take root. Some seeds are buried deeply and need additional time and tending. I'm working on resurrecting some of my dreams.

DORMANT DREAMS

Abusers, enablers, and bullies shattered my confidence and some of my dreams. I picture them buried in the middle of the cemetery with dogwoods and weeping cherry trees standing watch. The dream graves are lovingly tended, with flowers and statues bringing life and beauty amid the pain.

Some will reincarnate in a different form.

I may not be able to have my own stained glass or glass blowing place, but I can take some classes someday. While I'm late learning drawing, painting, watercolor, and more, I can still practice and have fun with art.

I have reclaimed my dream of writing children's books.

I have a picture book written, revised, and submitted to a contest. Thousands of people submit to this same context, but trying is a

win for me. I am currently revising the first three chapters of a novel for middle grades, to submit to another contest that will likely attract thousands. **I am an author, whether I win these contests or not. I have proven to myself that I can write and revise (and revise and revise and...) my children's books.**

As part of RAINN's Congressional Day of Action, I am manifesting a new dream of legislative advocacy. I've sent testimony in for a few state bills, and now I will be part of a group speaking to some members of Congress about national bills.

My advocacy work, research, and teaching combine to help me create, revise, and give sexual abuse education and prevention trainings for various groups. An important goal of mine is doing all I can to prevent sexual abuse. I dream of a world free of abuse.

Each dream restored or re-imagined is an act of hope, faith, courage, and love.

I grieve what I thought my life would be, and I'm beginning to create what it can be. I am planting new hopes and dreams amid the tombstones.



I write her unsent letters at least once a month, getting out everything I wish I could say to her.



Occasionally I thank her for the good things she did for me, such as telling me everything she loved about me, making me feel seen and heard more than any other teacher had, and giving me the hugs and cuddles I desperately craved.



Photo credit: Donna Bulatowicz

ANCESTRAL HEALING

So that I can tap further into my destiny as a custodian of generational gifts and a healer of generational trauma, I need to know at least some of my ancestor's stories. My grandmas handed down family stories, and I'm learning more through various records and oral histories. **My ancestors had more generational trauma than my grandmas had shared (or perhaps known).** I'm embracing the gifts my ancestors handed on as well: **creativity, strength, loyalty, compassion, love, artistry, and more.** I'm learning more about the spiritualities they practiced, and learning more of the languages spoken, though I've long known a few words of Anishiaabemowin and Gaelic.

I picture my ancestors' headstones in a section that is partially cleaned up. I imagine wooden benches carved with Celtic, Scandinavian, and Anishinaabe decorations. A bottle tree, wish tree, sacred sage, and sweet-grass watch over the four directions, while a fire pit in the center serves as a place for meditation, ritual, and magic.

My dad has red roses growing above his urn. My grandpa and grandma have prairie roses, bachelor buttons, and irises growing wild. My grampy and grammy have hydrangeas and

roses all around. My biological grandfather and his ancestors are in an empty, overgrown section. I haven't befriended them yet. The wounds from that generational trauma run deep, and repair will take time.

This part of the garden is growing wild with volunteer flowers. I may leave them. What some label as a weed, I view as a gift.

THE UPPER ELEMENTARY TEACHER

My upper elementary teacher has been dead for over a decade. Due to what she did, she is part of this garden as well.

I sometimes attempt to clear up her area, but it's not high on my priority list. She centered herself when she harmed me and others, and I don't need to center her in my healing journey too. This area is messy and complicated, like she.

Mushrooms enrich the soil, though they contain poison within. Contradictory flowers like foxglove, datura, and nightshade tempt passers-by with gorgeous blooms, hiding the deadly poison. My abuser hid behind a sociopathic facade. She was a complex



Photo credit: Donna Bulatowicz

person who suffered extreme abuse. Likewise, my thoughts and feelings about her are complicated.

I write her unsent letters at least once a month, getting out everything I wish I could say to her. Sometimes anger fills the letters. Other times sadness and pain leak onto the paper. When I feel compassion for all that she suffered and/or gain new understandings of the impact her childhood trauma had on her, the letters become gentler.

Occasionally I thank her for the good things she did for me, such as telling me everything she loved about me, making me feel seen and heard more than any other teacher had, and giving me the hugs and cuddles I desperately craved. I'm learning to hold the contradictions, including that the grownup who hurt me the most also saw me the best.

If I'm ready, this part of the garden will transform. Bleeding hearts and forget-me-nots, two of her favorite flowers, will bring color and beauty. White poppies, symbols of sympathy and forgiveness, will bloom amidst tulips, daffodils, crocuses, and hyacinths. Each of these flowers symbolizes forgiveness, though several also stand for hope and resilience. I may never forgive her, though, as that isn't a goal.

THE EDGE OF MY HEALING JOURNEY

In addition to what I've already named, my overall edge of healing is grief. I'm mourning what the abuse took from me and how it altered me and my path. My abuser and her accomplices shattered so many possible selves and timelines.

Thus, my imaginary inner garden provides space for grief and bring solace to my soul. Tending and transforming parts of this healing inner garden will ease grief. The growth of new plants reminds me that I too can transform, as well as that life is a cycle. Rest (winter) is part of the cycle.

Grief will be a lifelong companion, though our relationship will transform, just as this garden has. Tending a garden doesn't just stop once all the debris is gone. There will always be more to do, just as with healing. It's a cycle, and no two years are the same, just as in nature.

I am composting my negative beliefs and working on honoring my truths. I am not responsible for what others did to me. I am a change-maker, author, artist, advocate, and leader, and I am more than what was done to me.

I will continue to create my own paths and bring beauty, love, healing, joy, wonder, and hope to my life and the world.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Donna Bulatowicz has recently moved to the beautiful state of Maryland to be closer to family. She studies and advocates for inclusive children's literature as well as sexual abuse prevention. She is a former chair of the Charlotte Huck Award for Outstanding Fiction for Children and a former president of the Montana Association of Teachers of English Language Arts (MATELA). Dr. Bulatowicz has created and given sexual abuse prevention trainings for teachers and other school officials.

You can reach Donna on her [Facebook page](#), or [email Donna](#).

FIERCELY BELIEVE...

By Claire O'Leary

I want to fiercely believe I'm worthy of it all, even when my fears tell me not to.

It's always such a challenge for me—believing I'm worthy. Maybe because I feel sullied after what happened, all the things, not just the big stuff. Not just my uncle and my father.

My former boss, who, in his creepy way, would trap me from behind with an arm on each side while I was at the front counter and whisper in my ear. *"Mind, if I call you Charmin, you look so squeezably soft"*. Ewe, that same feeling as with my uncle, gross!

Even though he was fired after I told and I felt vilified in the moment, I still never really let go of that feeling—that sense of guilt.

Maybe it was **the nice man** who picked me up at the bus stop when I was just 19. I missed the bus, to work, so I was grateful for the ride. That is, until he reached for my thigh as we were slowing down in the hospital parking lot. I jumped out of the moving car and ran into the hospital where I worked. I was so afraid.

Then, in my 20s, I was married and had a child by then. **My boss's father**, who was working with us at the time, cornered me in a closet and kissed me. Ewe! He must have been in his 60s or 70s. I pushed him away, but still, I felt grossed out.

Around the same time, I went to the doctor's office for a bladder infection—a common occurrence for me at the time. I explained my symptoms—pain in my lower back, strong urge to urinate often, burning sensation... Rather than have me sit or lay on the examination table as usual, he pulled me against himself and felt my bladder. *"Touch me again like that and I'll scream"* I said angrily. I'd heard stories before from my mother's friends but the way they talked about it, I'd never laid credence to any of it. It was a small town, and we only had one

doctor, **Dr. Gutierrez**. I never went in again without holding my daughter in my arms as protection.

When my daughter was a teen another manager made a lewd comment regarding a skirt I wore. *"Ooooh you can wear that skirt any time,"* he said leering at me. I just gave him a dirty look.

I guess in my way, I took back my power by stopping them, but I'd never really thought of it that way until recently.

I just felt gross, dirty, unworthy.

Why were these things always happening to me? Did I have a sign on my forehead saying, "hey, violate me"? It sure felt like it.

Eventually, as I took my Voice back, thus my power back—as I began to share my story, it stopped. But that feeling of shame never completely went away.

Maybe now that I've shared the *'lesser sins'* (not mine, theirs) out loud, I can feel worthy again. **Maybe now I can return to the rebel I once was and feel worthy again.**

I know I'm not alone in this. Time after time, I hear women talk about similar experiences. I ask myself again and again, *"why is it that so many men feel entitled to just take what they want"*?

I fiercely believe that I am worthy!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Claire O'Leary is Founder, Editor in Chief and Creative Director of *The Empowered Voice* (Traveling Art Exhibit & Symposium) and *Voices Heard*, the interactive e-Zine that empowers survivors to shatter the silence of their sexual abuse which helps them heal and help others heal through sharing their stories.

She lives in Donnelly, Idaho with her husband, and enjoys being a mother and grandmother. Claire's a CSA (incest) survivor, an avid reader, meditates and dances her heart out any time she can.

She's an advocate, speaker, and mentor.

SUDDENLY SEEKING SAFETY

By Claire O'Leary

I find myself at a loss...

After all this time

Over 60 years...

I begin to get flashbacks of my abuse.

Just remnants of things I know but suddenly the memories are intense.

My reactions so deep

Violent

Suddenly I understand why people cut.

The memory of my father touching my thigh creeps in again.

I can feel it burning

I want to stab his hand

But I know if I stab it will go all the way through his hand

And I will bleed and hurt even more

That's how hard I want to stab him!

I want to take a razor blade and peel off my skin

Everywhere he touched me

I don't because

There is part of me that is just conscious enough to know

It's just a memory

But OMG it's so intense

I just want it to stop!

My whole thigh contracts

My hip contracts

The pain is unbearable

I can't walk without limping

I can't seem to move forward

I call my massage therapist but she can't fit me in

I massage it on my own

Dig deep into the muscles that are cramping up

A small release

It's temporary

Will I have to live this way forever?

It's been weeks

And the pain is still there

Off again

On again

I know I have to face this

I have work through this flashback

This new memory

Finally I find someone to help me

Hypno therapy

I begins to subside at last

But not completely

And then...

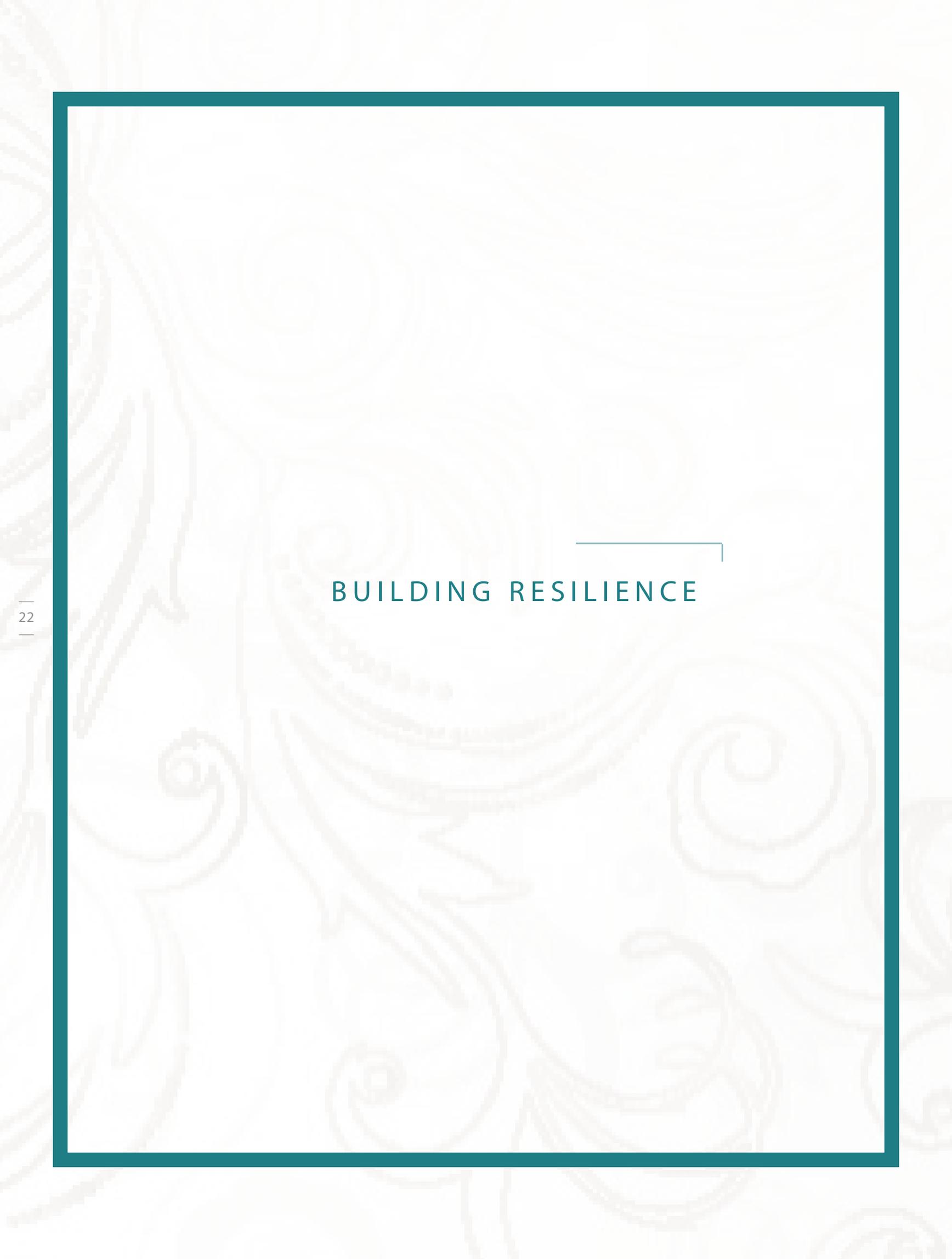
In a moment of helping others

Of no longer focusing on myself

On my pain

It's gone.

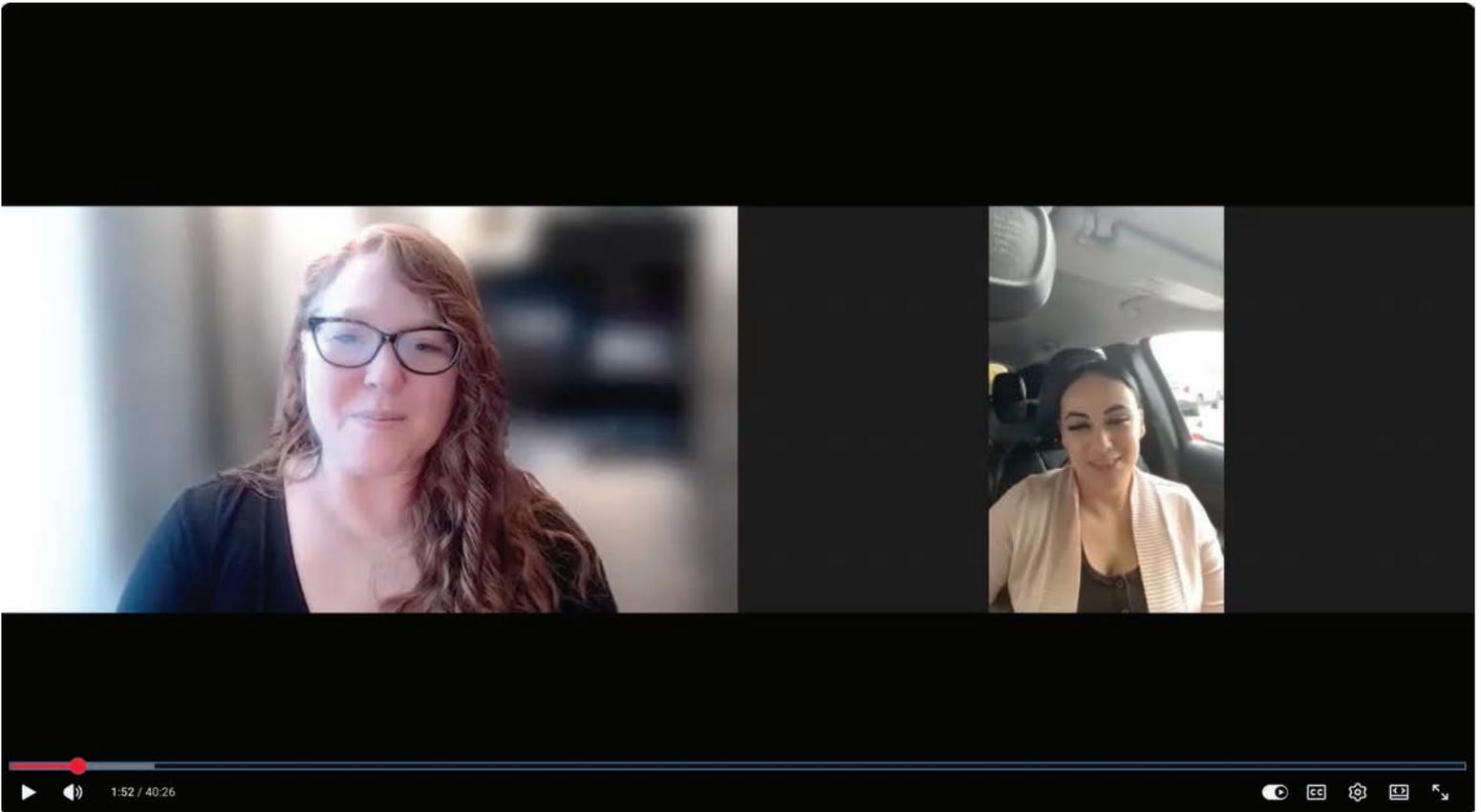
My body is safe again



BUILDING RESILIENCE

INTIMACY AS JOY — EMBRACING CONNECTION, PLEASURE, AND PLAY

By Rachel Grant



Camil's message is simple and powerful: "Telling your story is for yourself — no one else."

Sexual Abuse Recovery Coach Rachel Grant chats down with Camil Martinez to talk about her journey of healing from childhood trauma, the process of writing her book, and the unexpected ways sharing her story has continued to deepen her healing.

In this heartfelt conversation, Camil reflects on the courage it takes to speak openly about the past and the freedom that can come from doing so. [Hear more great stories and interviews here.](#)



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

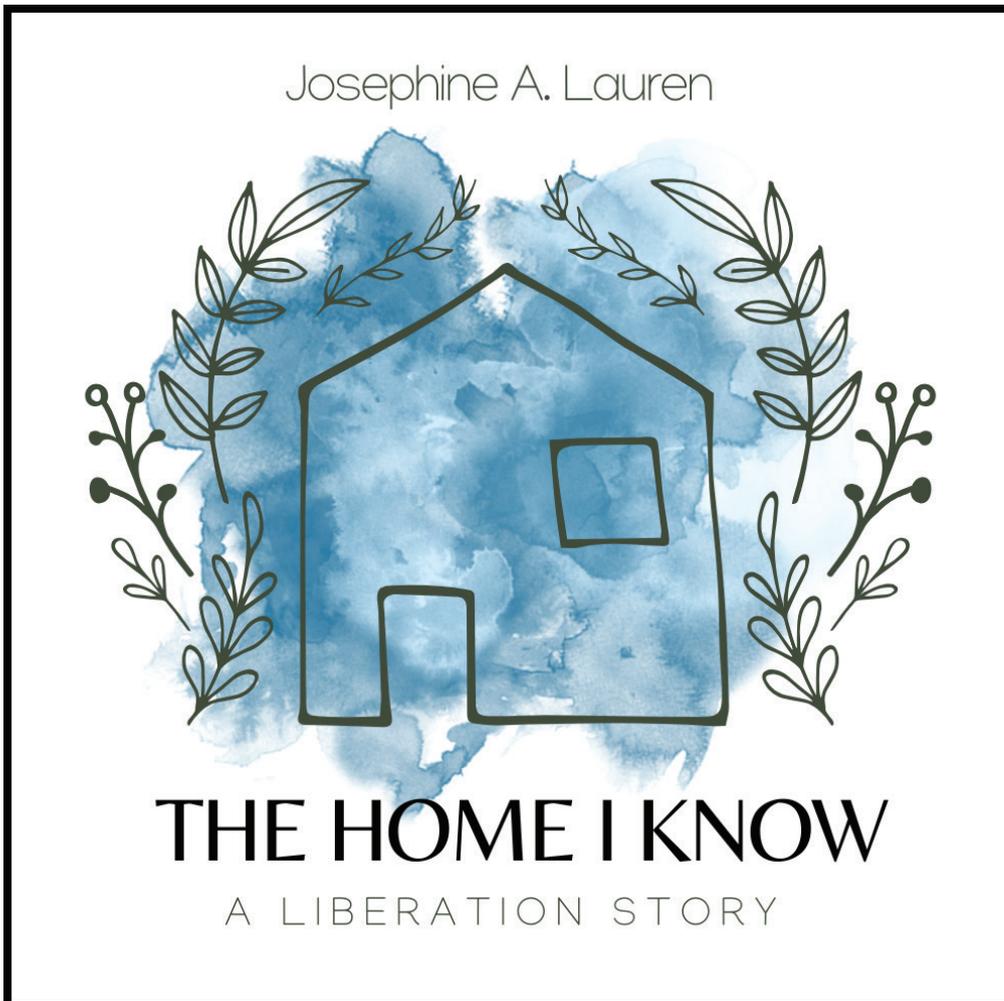
Rachel is the owner and founder of Rachel Grant Coaching and is a Sexual Abuse Recovery Coach. Rachel holds a Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology and is the author of [Beyond Surviving: The Final Stage in Recovery from Sexual Abuse](#) and [Overcome the Fear of Abandonment](#). You can download both free on her [website](#).

She works with survivors of childhood sexual abuse to help them let go of the pain of abuse and finally feel normal.

Her program, [Beyond Surviving](#), is specifically designed to change the way we think about and heal from abuse. She has successfully used this program to help her clients break free from the past and move on with their lives. [Reach Rachel here](#) or on [Facebook](#).

THE HOME I KNOW

By Josephine A Lauren



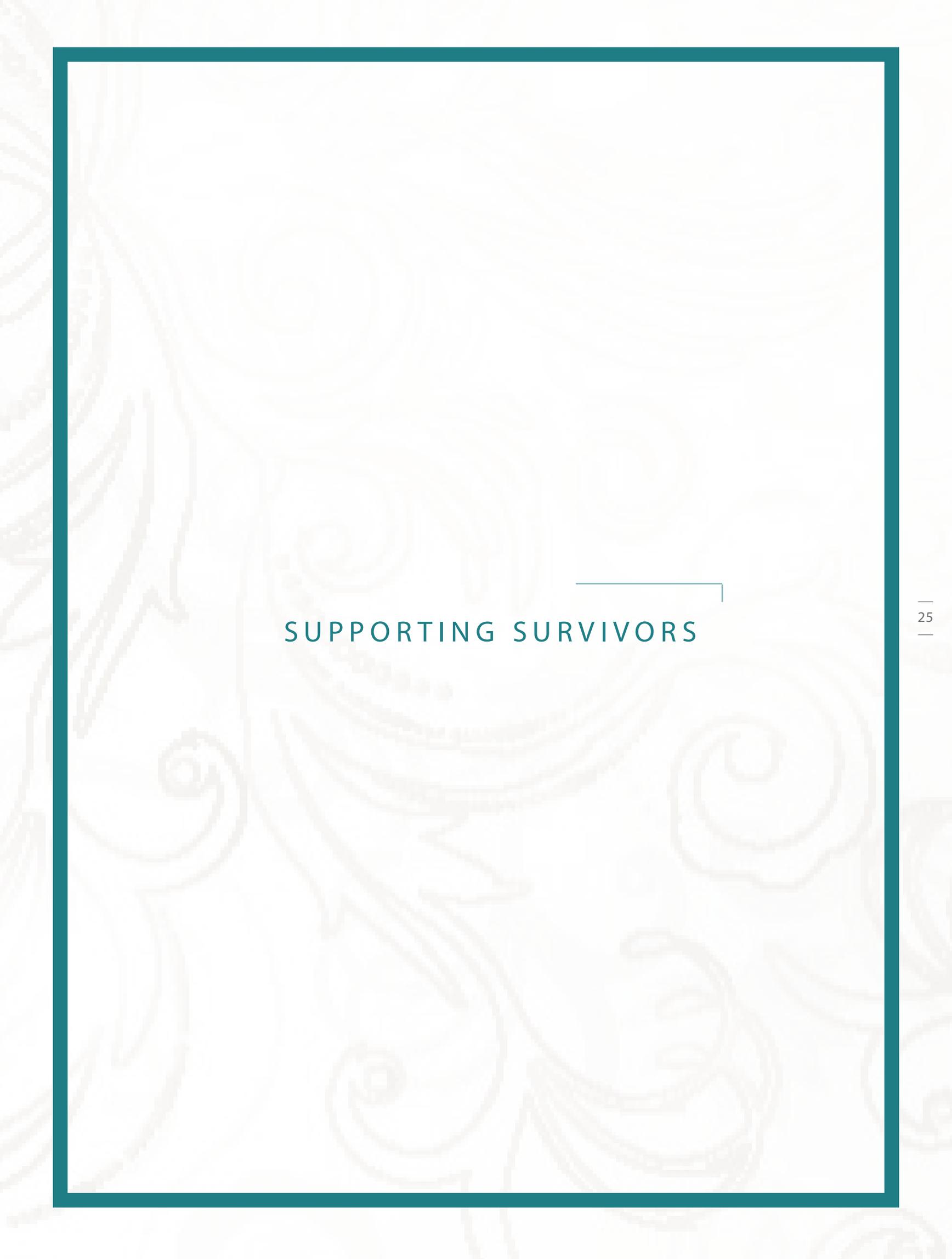
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Josephine A. Lauren, MTS (she/they) is an internationally recognized, queer, disabled author and activist. They have been featured in outlets like The New York Times, Ms. Magazine, Yes!, America, Spirituality & Health, and Elite Daily. Jo also consulted on a children's book published by Scholastic, *Extra-Ordinary: Celebrating Neuro and Physical Diversity*. As the co-founder of **Incest AWARE**, Jo serves an alliance of individuals and organizations seeking to improve methods of incest prevention, intervention, recovery, and justice. Say hello to Jo and read their memoir, *The Home I Know: A Liberation Story*, on their website at josephineanne.com.

Annie's childhood by the sea seemed to be an imaginative dream—until she moved away from home at eighteen and her body began to tell a very different story. What followed was a lifelong reclamation of history, identity, and name.

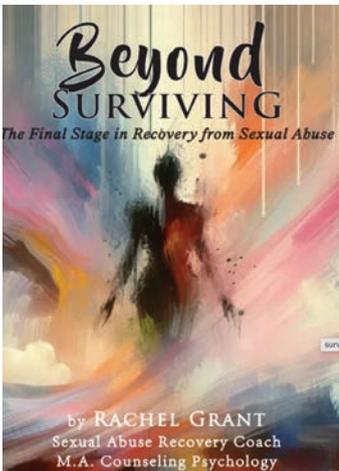
Now writing as Josephine A. Lauren (she/they), the author offers a powerful, forty-year retrospective on their journey from a traumatic past to a liberated future. This raw and resilient story uncovers the complex reality of safety and sexuality in society, and especially at home.

Here is a link to their free memoir: [The Home I Know: A Liberation Story](#)



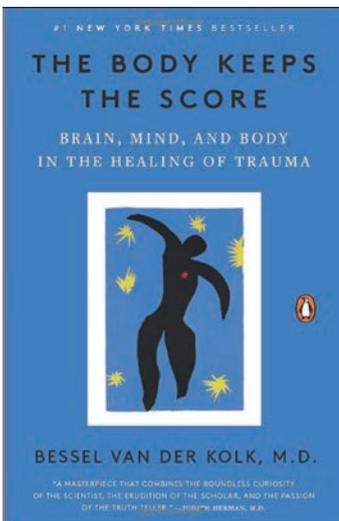
SUPPORTING SURVIVORS

RESOURCES: BOOKS FOR ADULT SURVIVORS



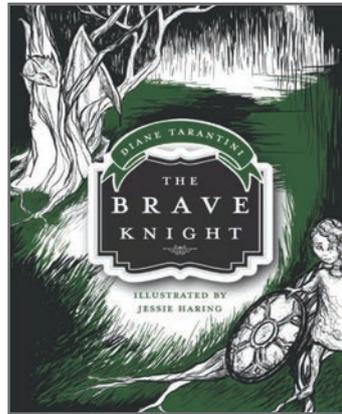
***Beyond Surviving: The Final Stage in Recovery from Sexual Abuse* by Rachel Grant.**

In *Beyond Surviving*, author Rachel Grant, a Sexual Abuse Recovery Coach, provides an understanding of the three stages of recovery: victim, survivor, and beyond surviving – and offers survivors guidance and tools for empowerment and healing.

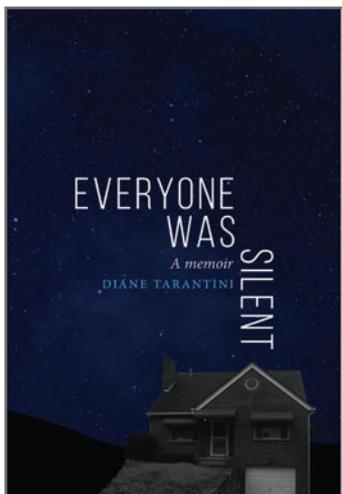


***The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma* by Bessel van der Kolk M.D.**

Dr. Bessel van der Kolk, uses recent scientific advances to show how trauma literally reshapes both body and brain, compromising sufferers' capacities for pleasure, engagement, self-control, and trust. He explores innovative treatments—from neurofeedback and meditation to sports, drama, and yoga—that offer new paths to recovery by activating the brain's natural neuroplasticity.



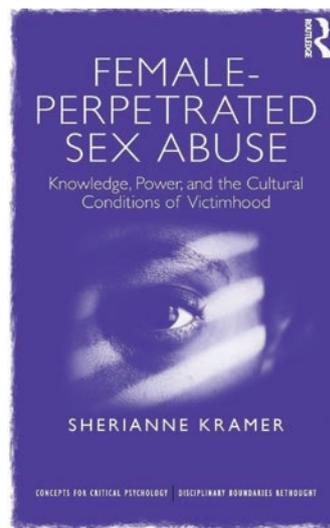
***The Brave Knight*, by Diane Tarantini (Author), Jessie Haring (Illustrator)** In *The Brave Knight*, Tarantini articulates incredibly complex child abuse grooming techniques/dynamics (ie. desensitizing physical contact, isolation from familial supports, love for perpetrators, disparity of social power), and somehow does it in an age-appropriate, non-threatening way. A brilliant, compelling, and inspiring resource for kids and those who love them."



***Everyone Was Silent: A memoir* by Diane Tarantini**

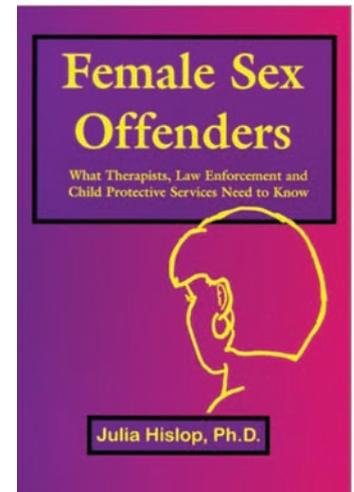
Dina Martinelli grew up in a family where everyone was silent. And everyone kept secrets, including Dina. For over three decades, Dina Martinelli—now a young wife and mother—keeps quiet about what happened in her family all those years ago. She doesn't disclose what her brother Jude did to her, and she doesn't discuss her lifelong relational war with her mother, Jean, due in part to Jean's struggle with mental illness.

But one day, Dina breaks her silence, and after that—with counseling and faith—her life gradually begins to improve. She even manages to forgive Jude for abusing her in multiple ways for years, until the day Jean reveals that Jude is abusing the next generation of the family. Can Dina convince the family that never protected her to speak out and act to stop Jude?



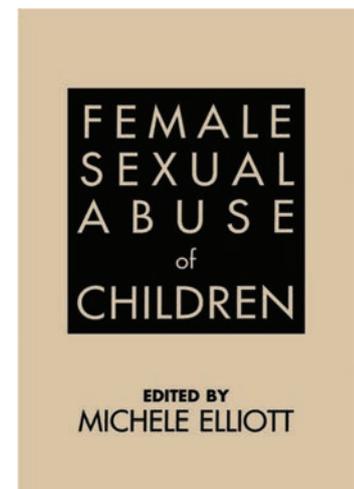
***Female-Perpetrated Sex Abuse (Concepts for Critical Psychology)* 1st Edition, by Sherianne Kramer.**

Female-Perpetrated Sex Abuse is a groundbreaking study into gender, sexuality and victimhood. It examines the cultural conditions of possibility for FSA victimhood as a means to advance contemporary critical understandings of the role of gender and sexuality as instruments of modern power. By tracing the historical and cultural conditions of the emergence of FSA broadly and FSA victimhood specifically, Kramer illustrates how deeply ingrained constructions of gender and sexuality both produce and constrain the possibilities for reporting, disclosing and self-identifying victimhood.



***Female Sex Offenders: What Therapists, Law Enforcement and Child Protective Services Need to Know* by Julia Hislop Ph.D.**

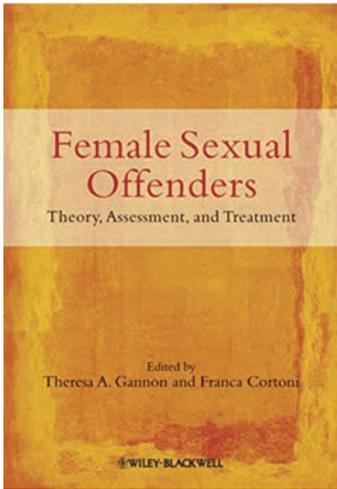
For everyone responsible for the well being of children, this book explains one of the hardest to detect threats to their safety. Female sex offenders have victimized an estimated two to three million people in the United States. As a society we find it nearly impossible to believe that females, usually seen as nurturing, are capable of sexual abuse. The result is that each year hundreds of thousands of youth are not protected, not believed, and not treated for the trauma associated with the abuse.



***Female Sexual Abuse of Children 1st Edition* by Michele Elliott**

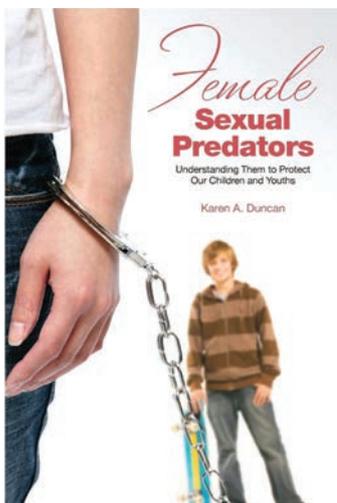
This courageous and powerful book is a first step in addressing the secrecy, distress, anger, and

fear surrounding female sexual abuse of children. Refuting the rationales for our lack of attention to the problem and contradicting some commonly held beliefs about sexual abuse, it combines accounts from survivors with input from professionals working with both survivors and abusers.



Female Sexual Offenders: Theory, Assessment and Treatment 1st Edition, by Theresa A. Gannon (Editor), Franca Corton

Featuring a collection of essays by leading experts, *Female Sexual Offenders: Theory, Assessment and Treatment* is the first book to bring together current research, clinical assessment, and treatment techniques of female sexual offenders into one accessible volume.

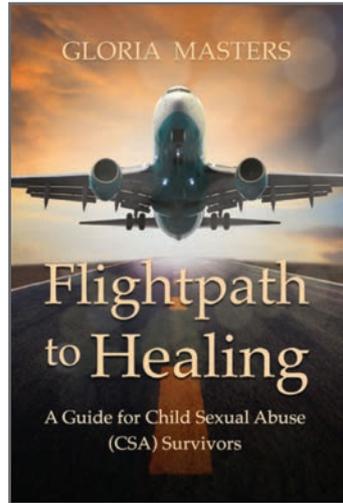


Female Sexual Predators: Understanding Them to Protect Our Children and Youths (Forensic Psychology) by Karen A. Duncan (Author).

This unprecedented look at female sexual predators explains why and how they prey on our children

and youths and what adults and children and youths themselves should understand to prevent victimization.

Karen A. Duncan helps adults be proactive so children will not fall prey to this violation.

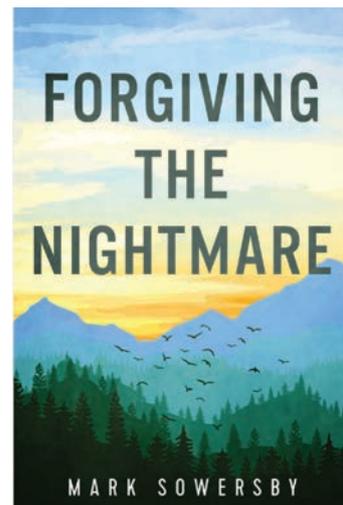


Flightpath to Healing: A Guide for Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) Survivors by Gloria Masters.

To all Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) Survivors out there, this book is for you. Are you seeking support while navigating your way to recovery? Are you hoping for insight on reclaiming the life you should have had?

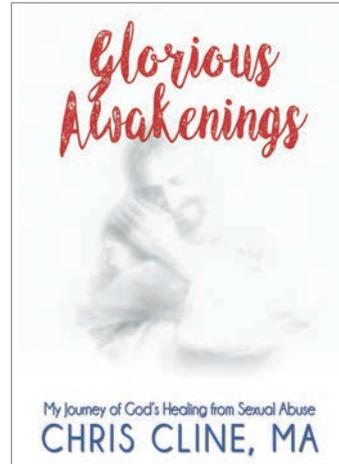
Do you want the freedom to finally shine your light in the world?

Look no further. This step by step guide includes excerpts, teachings and exercises you can try, to start rebuilding your way back to yourself. Beginning with where you are, it gently leads you to a more peaceful place of healing

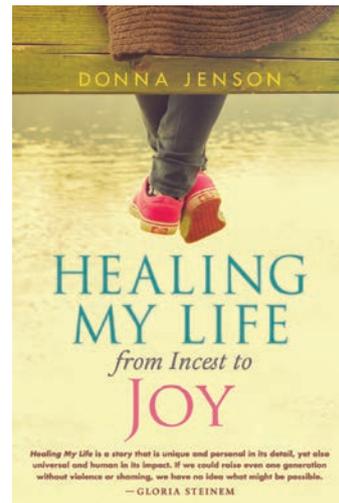


Forgiving The Nightmare, by Pastor Mark Sowersby begs the

questions "How do you forgive when you've been wounded deeply?" "How do you move past the pain that keeps you up at night, leaves you isolated, untrusting, and afraid? How can you possibly forgive them, especially when they don't deserve forgiveness?"



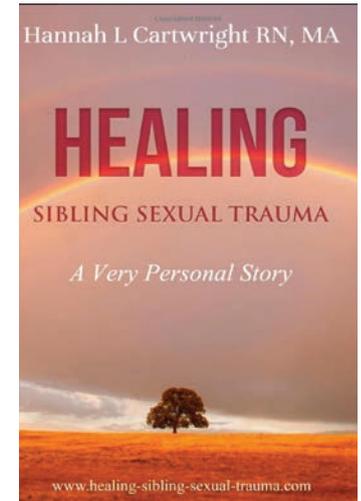
Glorious Awakenings, My Journey of God's Healing by Chris Cline is about her journey of God's healing from sexual abuse. It shares the abuse and the path she took to heal – God redeeming the pieces of her that were broken emotionally, physically, spiritually, and sexually. Chris says "It is a beautiful story of how Jesus saved me – how my journey healed me and brought me to a closer relationship with God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit."



Healing My Life: From Incest to Joy by Donna Jenson.

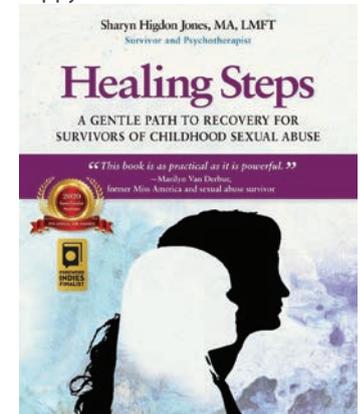
A deeply personal story that explores the sexual violence Jenson endured at the hands of her father, the refusal of her family to acknowledge her pain, and a rocky escape as a teenager from the Midwest to start anew in sixties-era California. Jenson writes with

her sense of humor firmly intact, reminding us that joy is possible in the face of great pain. Poignant, brave, and helpful, *Healing My Life* offers a much-needed testimony for anyone affected by childhood sexual abuse.



Healing Sibling Sexual Abuse: A Very Personal Story by Hannah Louise Cartwright RN, MA

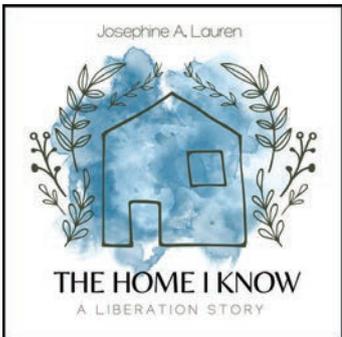
Memoir and self-help book for adult survivors of sibling sexual abuse written by a psychotherapist. Her book tells the personal story of recovering from sexual abuse at the hands of a sibling. Cartwright aims to help victims understand the impact sibling abuse has on survivors, provides tools to help them begin their healing journey and emphasizing that survivors can leave the past behind and build happy lives ahead.



Healing Steps by Sharyn Higdon Jones:

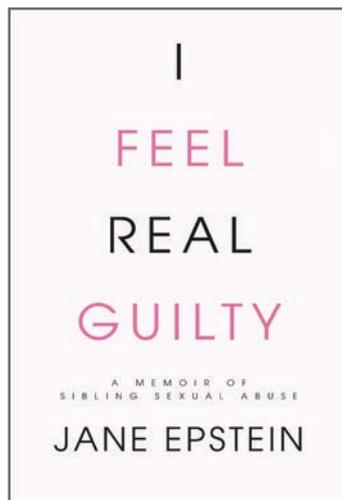
A Gentle Path to Recovery for Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse is a step-by-step guide to healing from the deep pain of early sexual abuse. Such profound abuse touches the core of a woman's being: in unwanted

memories, confusing feelings, distorted self-image, ongoing relationship struggles, and more. This frank and thorough book, written by a therapist who has herself survived sexual abuse, offers clear-eyed advice, stories of struggles and recovery, and exercises to guide you in y healing.



The Home I Know: A liberation Story by Josephine A Lauren.

Annie's childhood by the sea seemed to be an imaginative dream—until she moved away from home at eighteen and her body began to tell a very different story. What followed was a lifelong reclamation of history, identity, and name. This raw and resilient story uncovers the complex reality of safety and sexuality in society, and especially at home.



I Feel Real Guilty: A Memoir of Sibling Sexual Abuse by Jane Epstein

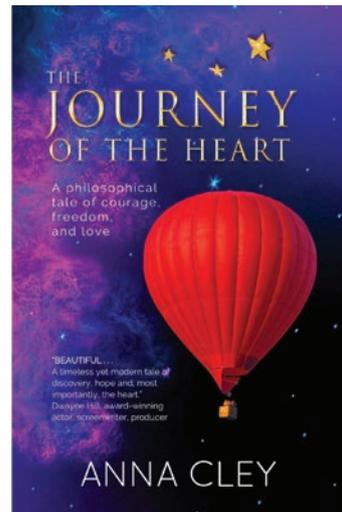
I'm sorry for what I did to you when you were younger.

When Jane Epstein's brother makes this confession, a tsunami of memories floods over her. She remembers the years of sexual abuse at his hands. The pain. The shame.

Suffering from trauma few talk about, Epstein searches for solace

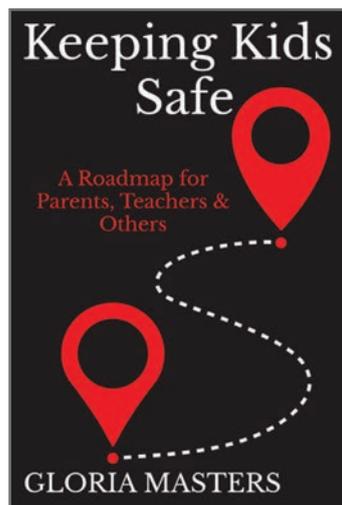
in strip clubs and hotel rooms. She finds love, loses it, and loves again. Years pass before she dares to dive into the depths of her past. Only then does she begin to heal.

It's a call to arms, an invitation to survivors to speak out and reclaim their power.



The Journey of the Heart by Anna Cleary. From floating boxes to lifesaving riddles to an enlightened mirror, *The Journey of the Heart* is a timeless tale that speaks to the inner child in us all.

The Journey of the Heart offers heartfelt assurance that no matter what circumstances we are born into, our future is ours to write.



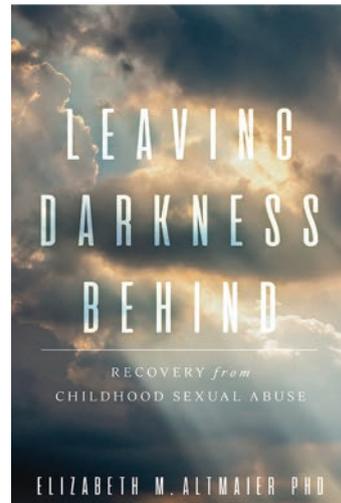
Keeping Kids Safe: A Roadmap for Parents, Teachers & Others by Gloria Masters. "Notice and trust children's behavior, over their words: That is where the truth lies."

Did you know that children are at risk of sexual abuse, now more than ever?

While your children are 'playing on their laptops' online grooming could be occurring.

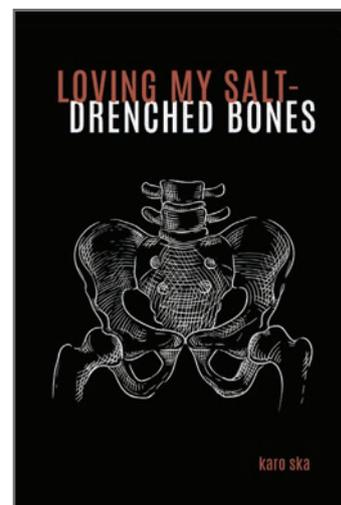
Sexual abuse and grooming of children across the world are both frightening realities, and ways to manage this are desperately needed.

This road-map is for parents, teachers, grandparents, and front-line staff everywhere.



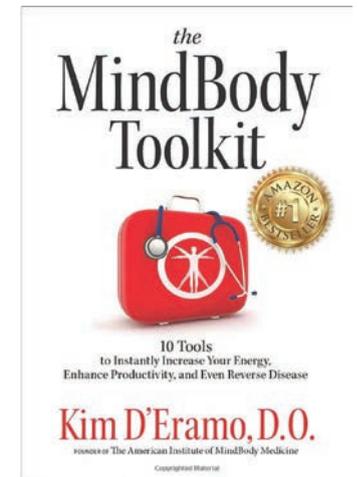
Leaving Darkness Behind by Elizabeth M. Altmaier. This book helps survivors find the road to recovery and learn healthy practices that will lead to thriving, not just surviving.

Survivors of childhood sexual abuse can begin a recovery journey informed by accurate understandings, not myths, and empowered by processes that help them thrive. Written for men and women by an author who is herself a survivor, this guide tells the truth about what complex trauma means for your physical and mental health.



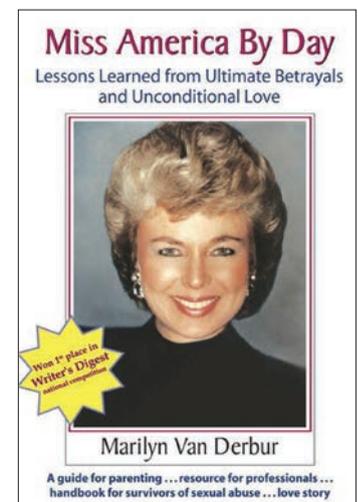
Loving My Salt Drenched Bones by Karo Ska. Karo Ska delivers an ensemble of poetic magic in her highly anticipated book, loving my salt-drenched bones. Ska's mastery of emotional and interpersonal subject matter takes

the reader on a journey into the bright side of darkness filled with love, heartache, joy, and the poetic tone that only Ska can manifest.

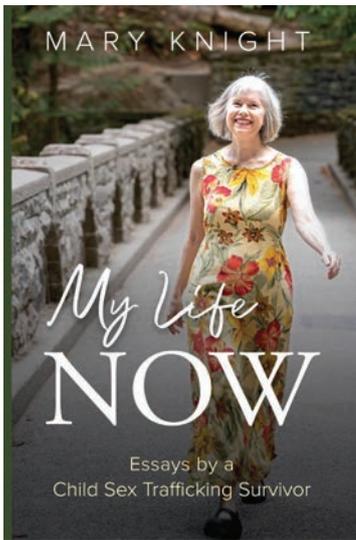


The MindBody Toolkit by Kim Deramo, D.O. Ten Tools to Instantly Increase Your Energy, Enhance Productivity, and Even Reverse Disease.

The MindBody Toolkit explains the science behind the mind-body connection and gives you 10 tools you can use anytime, anywhere to activate self-healing and awakening now!



Miss America by Day by Marilyn Van Derbur. Former Miss America, Marilyn Van Derbur, tells the story of how she was sexually violated by her father from age 5 to age 18. She was 53 years old before she was able to speak the words in public: "I am an incest survivor." Van Derbur describes in detail what specific "work" she did on her successful journey from victim to survivor.

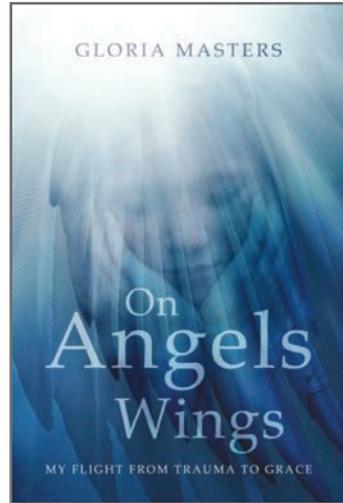


My Life Now: Essays by a Child Sex Trafficking Survivor by Mary Knight. A unique survivor memoir. Essays that range from heartwarming to brutal. Individual trigger warnings (TW) allow readers to practice self-care. Washington State native Mary Knight, MSW, experienced various forms of child sex trafficking, sometimes in her own home. Her parents were her pimps. Knight's current life is filled with safety, love, joy, and children. Happily married, she is a child advocate, a foster parent, and a grandmother.



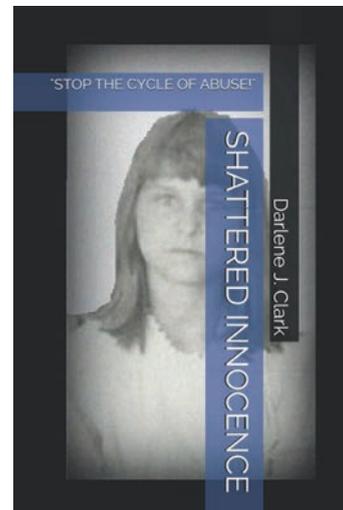
My Pain is My Power by Tanisha Bankston.

Tanisha's life changed before it began at the age of 5 or 6 years old when she was raped by a friend of the family and she wasn't believed. The damage caused her to have to relearn how to walk. Her pain continued through adulthood before she could finally enjoy life.

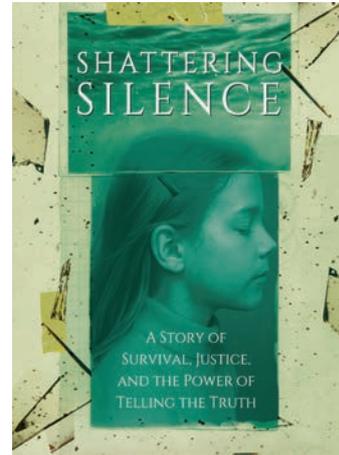


On Angels' Wings: My Flight From Trauma To Grace by Gloria Masters. This extraordinary, powerful story of Gloria's journey from darkness into light is one of hope, resilience and the unrelenting power of the human spirit to survive.

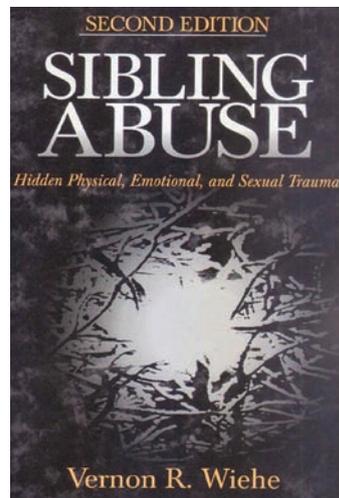
It's June 1960 and in middle-class suburban New Zealand, a child was born into sex slavery. For the first sixteen years of her life, Gloria suffered horrendous sexual, physical and psychological abuse at the hands of her father, with no one to protect her. Experienced through the eyes of a child, *On Angels' Wings* will forever highlight the way we deal with child abuse, shining a light on this darkness, and challenging us not to assume that every child is safe. One voice speaking out is all it takes to save a life.



Shattered Innocence by Darlene J. Clark. Abuse happens too often. Back in the 1960's, it was taboo to speak about this - especially the sexual abuse. "Shattered Innocence" takes us on Darlene's journey of discovery and healing.



Shattering Silence: A Story of Survival, Justice and The Power of Telling the Truth, by Darlene Lekowski. Her debut memoir, (April 2026), shares her journey of resilience, justice, and healing.



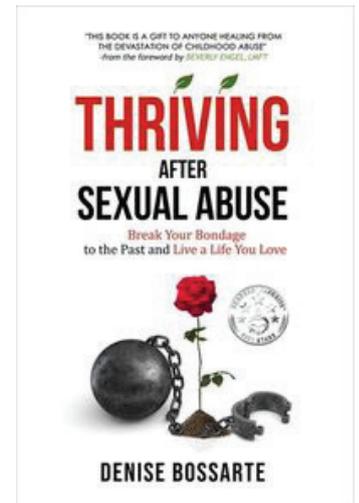
Sibling Abuse: Hidden Physical, Emotional, and Sexual Trauma Second Edition by Vernon R. Wiehe

Often excused by parents as 'kids will be kids' behavior, sibling abuse remains largely unrecognized. Symptoms of such abuse and its devastating effects on victims go undetected, victims do not receive appropriate therapeutic intervention, and transgressors do not come to the attention of the courts.



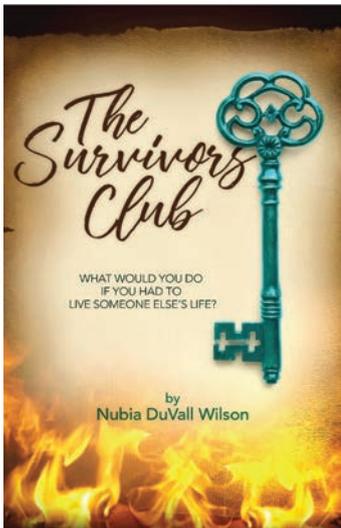
Sibling Sexual Abuse: A Guide for Confronting America's Silent Epidemic by Brad Watts.

This book is written by a counselor who rehabilitates offenders. The author gives insight into sibling sexual abuse—the causes, the effects and the devastating statistics.

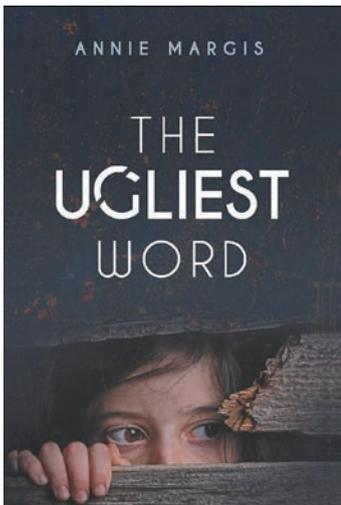


Thriving After Sexual Abuse: Break Your Bondage to the Past and Live a Life You Love by Denise Bossarte.

This book is an eloquent and empathetic self-development book laying out a blueprint for survivors to heal themselves. Bossarte writes with fierce candor as she shares her own traumatic experience with childhood sexual abuse.



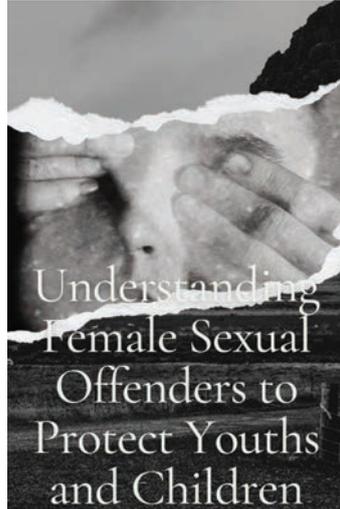
The Survivors Club by Nubia DuVall Wilson Eva wakes up and finds herself in a 1920s lounge with four strangers. One by one, each is mysteriously pulled back in time by an invisible force to keep an unknown boy named Quentin alive. With no sense of time and no way out, the group becomes entangled in a life or death situation, while they piece together a puzzle that reveals more than a complicated boyhood. Ultimately, each stranger has a secret that creates more unity than they could have



imagined.

The Ugliest Word by Annie Margis tells the story of a little girl named Lark whose father is molesting her, as she navigates childhood, and the woman she becomes. An aspiring writer and artist, Lark's spunk and creativity buoy her as the abuse progresses.

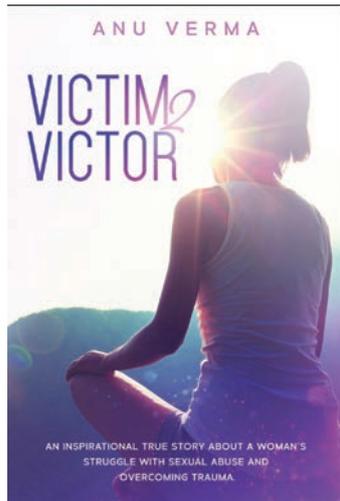
The Ugliest Word is for those who survived childhood incest and for everyone who loves a survivor, is



friends with or works with one.

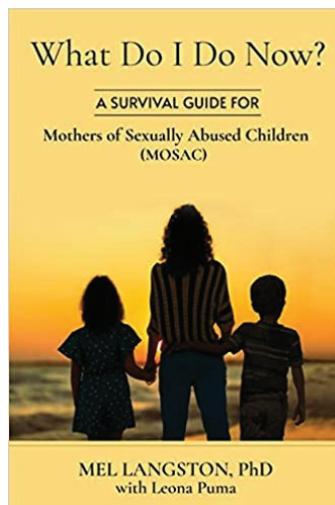
Understanding Female Sexual Offenders to Protect Youths and Children by Whitney Ezeh

This book explains why and how female abusers prey on both



youths and teens and how one can avoid them.

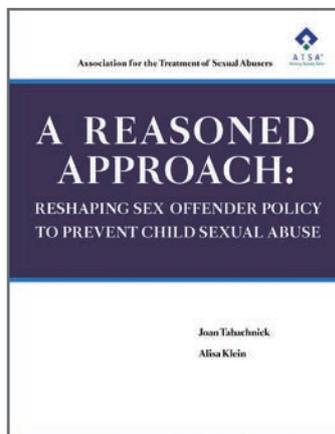
Victim 2 Victor by Anu Verma. This inspiring and brutally honest memoir details the struggle for survival and the search for healing and happiness. Raised in abuse and navigating through consequences, a young, broken soul finds the strength to embark on a journey to reclaim her self-worth. Her inspiring journey is a lifelong struggle to find self-worth on the ruins of self-esteem.



What Do I Do Now? A Survival Guide for Mothers of Sexually Abused Children (MOSAC) by Mel Langston PhD and Leona Puma.

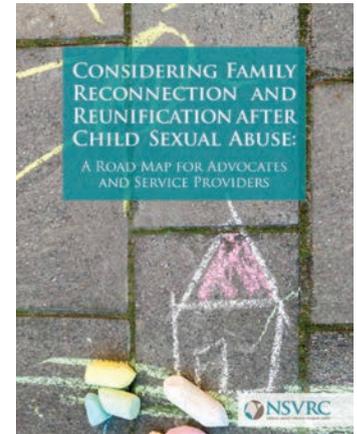
What do I do now? is a mother's cry after she learns her child has been sexually abused. A mother's belief in her child's disclosure and her active support and protection after disclosure are essential to recovery from the horror of sexual abuse

FREE PUBLIC EDUCATION MATERIAL



A Reasoned Approach: Reshaping Sex Offender Policy to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse by Joan Tabachnick, and Alisa Klein.

Published in April 2011, provides an in-depth analysis of current sex offender policies and their impact on preventing child sexual abuse.

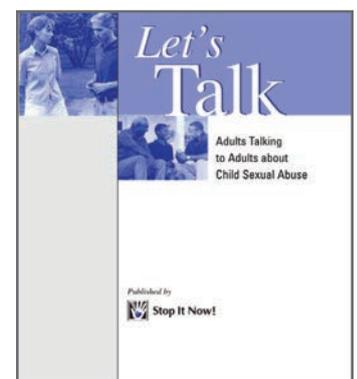


Considering Family Reconnection and Reunification after Child Sexual Abuse: A Road Map for Advocates and Service Providers by Joan Tabachnick. Few topics stir up such deeply emotional responses as the sexual abuse of a child. When we began talking about this guide we were met with a range of reactions from anger and fear to a deep appreciation for taking on a project that will provide a thoughtful examination of this important issue.



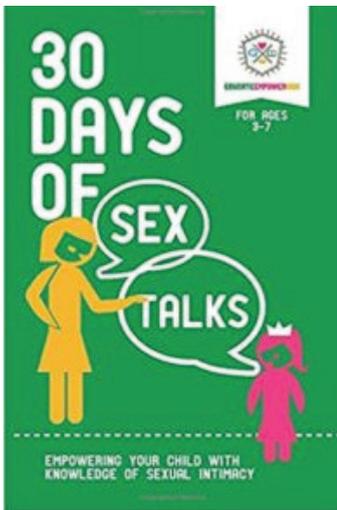
Engaging Bystanders in Sexual Violence Prevention by Joan Tabachnick.

This booklet reviews the concept of bystander intervention and some factors that lead people to act. It considers who bystanders are and some circumstances that would motivate people to get involved.

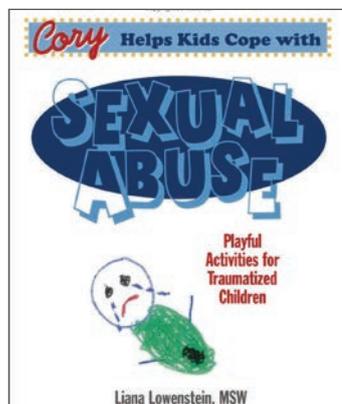


Let's Talk, Adults Talking to Adults about Child Sexual Abuse by Stop It Now!. Educational Brochure about talking with someone when you are concerned about their behaviors.

BOOKS FOR KIDS



30 Days of Sex Talks for Ages 8-11: Empowering Your Child with Knowledge of Sexual Intimacy by Educate and Empower Kids. This is a series that helps you discuss sex education as a family. Having these talks with your child will establish a pattern of healthy conversations for the future. As you move through the discussions, these interactions will gain depth and your relationship will strengthen. Your child will become more comfortable talking to you about anything as he or she grows into the healthy, knowledgeable person he or she will become.

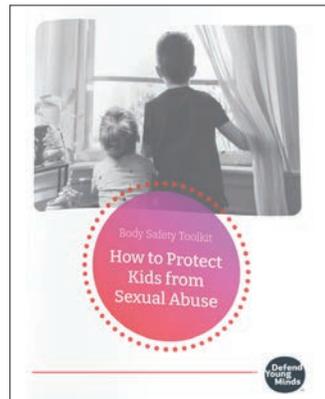


Cory Helps Kids Cope with Sexual Abuse First Edition by Liana Lowenstein This therapeutic story and collection of creative activities are designed to help children cope with sexual abuse and trauma. Therapeutic games, art, puppets, and other engaging techniques address the eight components of TF-CBT (Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy). Includes a reproducible

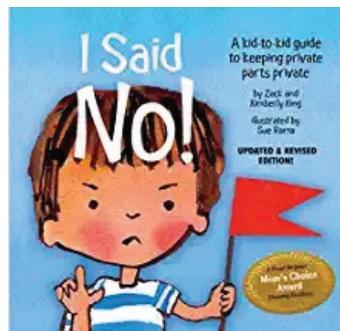
story, assessment and treatment activities, and detailed parent handouts. Geared to children aged 4 to 12.



Good Pictures Bad Pictures Jr.: A Simple Plan to Protect Young Minds by Kristen A. Jenson (Author), Debbie Fox (Illustrator) It's not if our kids come across pornography, it's when. This is a great book for parents to read to kids about why pornography can be harmful.

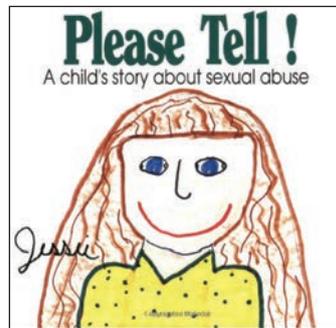


How to Protect Kids from Sexual Abuse Body Safety Toolkit by Defend Young Minds. For parents and professionals. Help your child create a body safety plan and learn to recognize and report 3 "red flag" situations to stay safe. Every child deserves to be empowered with self-defense!

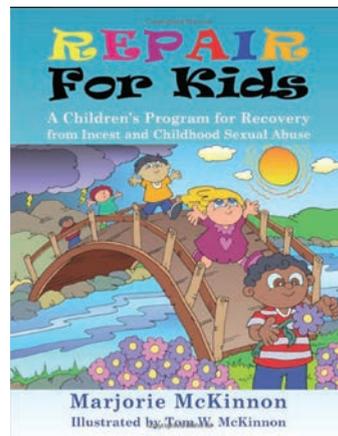


I Said No! A Kid-to-kid Guide to Keeping Private Parts Private by Kimberly King and Zack

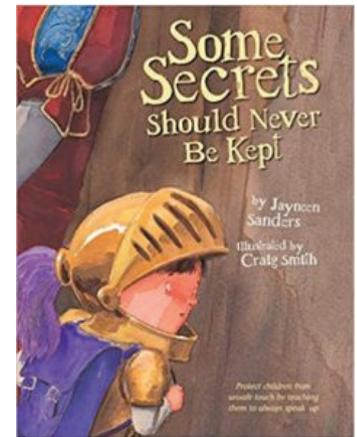
King (Authors) and Sue Rama (Illustrator) Helping kids set healthy boundaries for their private parts can be a daunting and awkward task. Written from a kid's point of view, I Said No! makes this task a lot easier.



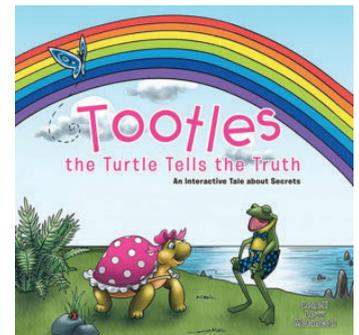
Please Tell: A Child's Story About Sexual Abuse (Early Steps) by Jessie Written and illustrated by a young girl who was sexually molested by a family member, this book reaches out to other children in a way that no adult can, Jessie's words carry the message, "It's o.k. to tell; help can come when you tell."



Repair for Kids: A Children's Program for Recovery from Incest and Childhood Sexual Abuse by Margie McKinnon (Author), and Tom W. McKinnon (Illustrator) R.E.P.A.I.R is Recognition, Entry, Process, Awareness, Insight, and Rhythm. Enter a Six-Stage Program with your child to cross the Bridge of Recovery and make available a whole new world of hope.

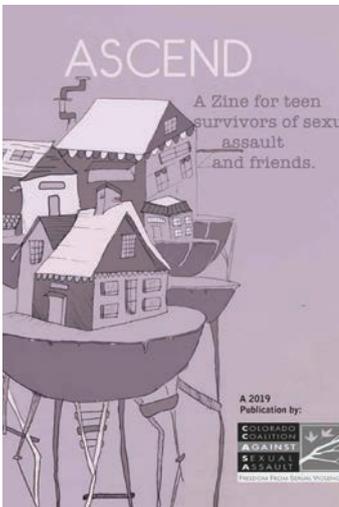


Some Secrets Should Never Be Kept by Jayneen Sanders (Author), and Craig Smith (Illustrator). A beautifully illustrated children's picture book that sensitively broaches the subject of keeping children safe from inappropriate touch.



Tootles the Turtle Tells the Truth by Lenell Levy Melancon. This is a lovely book that playfully walks a child through a story about someone scaring a child into not telling. The characters ask interactive questions at the end of the book to engage readers in a candid discussion of good, bad and scary secrets.

BOOKS FOR TEENS

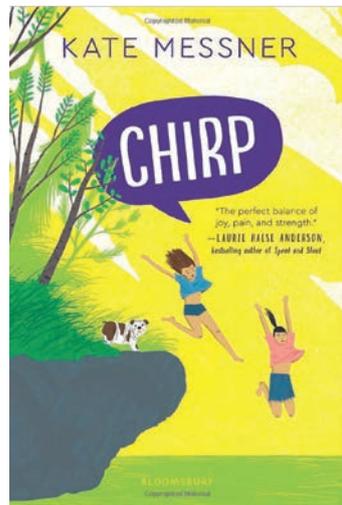


Ascend, a Zine for teen survivors of sexual assault and friends. Ascend supports young people who are survivors of sexual assault.



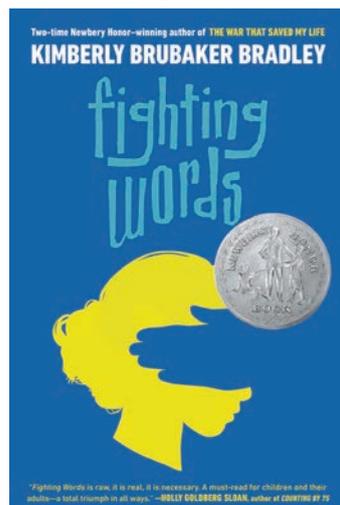
Caprice by Coe Booth, written with extreme sensitivity and honesty for middle-grade readers, is a painful but ultimately healing novel about finding support from your parents and friends, articulating your truth, and choosing your own path.

As Caprice tries to figure out her future, she is pulled back toward her past, and the abuse she endured from her uncle when she was little -- an abuse she's never told anyone about.



From acclaimed author Kate Messner comes **Chirp**, the powerful story of a young girl with the courage to make her voice heard, set against the backdrop of a summertime mystery.

When Mia moves to Vermont the summer after seventh grade, she's recovering from the broken arm she got falling off a balance beam. And packed away in the moving boxes under her clothes and gymnastics trophies is a secret she'd rather forget.



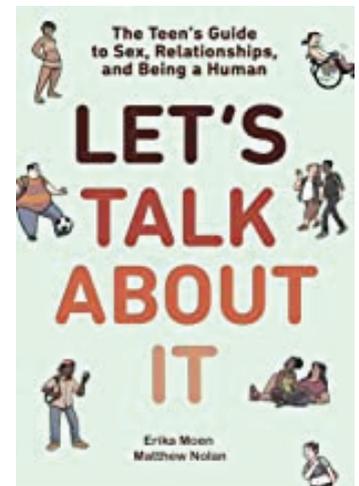
Fighting Words by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley In this powerful novel that explodes the stigma around child sexual abuse and leavens an intense tale with compassion and humor, Kimberly Brubaker Bradley tells a story about two sisters, linked by love and trauma, who must find their own voices before they can find their way back to each other.

Ten-year-old Della has always

had her older sister, Suki. When their mom went to prison, Della had Suki. When their mom's boyfriend took them in, Della had Suki. When that same boyfriend did something so awful they had to run fast, Della had Suki. Suki is Della's own wolf--her protector. But who has been protecting Suki? Della might get told off for swearing at school, but she has always known how to keep quiet where it counts. Then Suki tries to kill herself, and Della's world turns so far upside down, it feels like it's shaking her by the ankles. Maybe she's been quiet about the wrong things. Maybe it's time to be loud.



It Happened on Saturday by Sydney Dunlap. Thirteen-year-old Julia would much rather work with horses at the rescue barn than worry about things like dating and makeup. But when her BFF meets a boy at camp, Julia's determined not to get left behind. After a makeover from her older sister, she posts a picture of herself online and gets a comment from Tyler a seemingly nice kid who lives across town. As they DM more and more, Julia's sure that Tyler understands her in a way her family never has. Even better, their relationship earns her tons of attention at school. Then Julia finds out Tyler's true plan...



Let's Talk About It by Erika Moen and Matthew Nolan. The Teen's Guide to Sex, Relationships, and Being a Human. Inclusive, accessible and honest graphic novel guide to growing up, from gender and sexuality to consent and safe sex. Perfect for any teen starting to ask questions.



The Secrets We Keep by Cassie Gustafson In the vein of *The Way I Used to Be* and Kelly Loy Gilbert's *Conviction*, this "exceedingly well-written, powerful, and suspenseful" young adult novel follows a girl's struggle to reconcile friendship, sexual abuse, and the secrets we bury deep down inside to survive.

High school freshman Emma Clark harbors a secret—a secret so vile it could implode her whole world, a secret she's managed to keep buried...until the day her best friend, Hannah, accuses Emma's father of a heinous crime.

ONLINE SUPPORT

ONLINE SUPPORT GROUPS FOR SURVIVORS:

1 in 6 sponsors free anonymous chat-based support groups for male survivors of sexual abuse seeking a community of support. Sessions are offered Monday through Friday. These written chat (no audio or video) groups focus on education and mutual support for males and are facilitated by a counselor.

5Waves promoting Worldwide Awareness, Voice, Education, and Support around Sibling Sexual Trauma—child sexual abuse caused by a sibling.

Defend Young Minds We call it “digital self-defense.” Let our best-selling books, curriculum, guides and newsletter help you raise empowered, resilient, screen-smart kids.

Exodus Cry is committed to abolishing sex trafficking and breaking the cycle of commercial sexual exploitation while assisting and empowering its victims.

Enough Abuse is a citizen education and community mobilization initiative working to prevent child sexual abuse in our homes, schools, youth organizations and communities.

We are providing adults and communities with the knowledge and skills they need to put an end to the silence, and eventually, the epidemic of child sexual abuse.

Healing PTSD Naturally Kathryn Berg, of Lotus Homeopathy offers support on Facebook for people who suffer from PTSD to help them discover natural methods of dealing with PTSD, no matter what the cause. This group supports all trauma not only sexual abuse survivors.

HelpRoom Offered by 360 Communités an affiliate of RAINN, HelpRoom is an anonymous online group chat option that allows members of the community who have been affected by sexual violence to connect with one another. Trained staff facilitate group discussions to ensure a safe environment for all visitors to discuss topics and experiences related to sexual violence.

Hidden Water Healing Circles meet weekly — either in-person or online — and are designed to enable participants to find the growing edge of their healing alongside others who have had similar experiences with childhood sexual abuse.

Incest AWARE is a group for those working to end incest and help survivors of incest abuse to heal.

Isurvive is an online abuse survivor support group. Their forums/chat rooms are open to adult survivors and their loved ones seeking to heal from all forms of abuse including sexual, physical, verbal, emotional and ritual.

Jane Epstein is a website and blog for sibling sexual abuse survivors.

The Lamplighter Movement is dedicated to recovery from incest and child sexual abuse. They have chapters located throughout the US that organize groups for survivors.

MASOC is the Massachusetts Society for a World Free of Sexual Harm by Youth. Since our founding in 1986, MASOC has provided education and training services to professionals; educated legislators on emerging issues; and coordinated efforts with the partners critical to this important work.

National Association of Adult Survivors of Child Abuse NAASCA has a list of recovery groups and services worldwide for adult survivors of abuse, including incest. Their online daytime recovery meetings are an open discussion forum about child abuse trauma and recovery and are hosted by volunteer members.

NSVRC (National Sexual Violence Resource Center) has compiled a list of linkable websites and resources offering support and help for survivors, which includes links to support groups.

Sexual Assault Advocacy Network (SAAN) Facebook Group was founded to support the people who support sexual violence survivors. Their active Facebook group connects survivor-advocates who are working to support other incest and other

sexual abuse survivors, change policy and raise awareness.

RAINN's National Resources for Sexual Assault Survivors and their Loved Ones_resources and references.

SiblingsToo Podcast The voice of sibling sexual abuse survivors and their families. Reducing stigma with heartfelt stories and real science.

Stop It Now! Stop it Now! Prevents the sexual abuse of children by mobilizing adults, families, and communities through direct support, information, and resources to take actions that protect children before they are harmed.

Survivors Of Childhood Trauma is a friendly Facebook group that offers help and advice to fellow survivors from all walks of life.

Survivors of Incest Anonymous (SIA) is a 12-step recovery program for adult survivors of incest. They offer a range of peer-support groups including virtual, phone and in-person – all free of cost. Their website also contains resources and information of interest to incest survivors.

Wings Support Groups offers a variety of virtual and in-person groups in the Denver Metro area. Wings supports adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse to live their fullest, healthiest lives as they speak about, heal from and thrive beyond CSA trauma.

SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES OF SURVIVORS

M*OASIS Support (Mothers* Of Adult Survivors of Incest and Sexual Abuse) is a resource website and blog for anyone looking to understand how to support a survivor of incest and sexual abuse.

StopSO Support for Families Online Group is a safe and supportive space for family members of a sexual offender or for family members of someone who is worried that they may cause sexual harm. (StopSO also provides services for those at risk of offending and concerned about their thoughts or behavior.).

JOURNAL ARTICLES

Uncovering Female Child Sexual Offenders—Needs and Challenges for Practice and Research

The Proportion of Sexual Offenders Who Are Female Is Higher Than Thought: A Meta-Analysis Authors Franca Cortoni, Kelly M Babchishin, and Clémence Rat

Insights on Female Sex Offenders from the Missouri Registry

SEARCHABLE DATABASE

Psychology Today's website has a “Find a Therapist” directory of therapists, psychiatrists, treatment centers and support groups located throughout the US that is searchable by city or zip code.

ONLINE ARTICLES

Insights on Female Sex Offenders from the Missouri Registry by Elias Ghossoub and Nadia El Harake. The sociocultural description of women as being nurturing, non-aggressive and, more significantly, nonsexual has diverted the attention from female sexual offending. The true rate is remarkably higher because the care-taking behavior of women masks their sexual offenses.

The Proportion of Sexual Offenders Who Are Female Is Higher Than Thought: A Meta-Analysis by Franca Cortoni, Kelly M Babchishin, and Clémence Rat. Women commit sexual offenses, but the proportion of sexual offenders who are female is subject to debates.

Uncovering Female Child Sexual Offenders—Needs and Challenges for Practice and Research by Safiye Tozdan, Peer Briken and Arne Dekker. This article provides a short literature overview on female child sexual offenders (FCSO) focusing on the discrepancy between prevalence rates from different sources, characteristics of FCSO and their victims, as well as the societal “culture of denial” surrounding these women.



the
*Empowered
Voice*
INTERACTIVE EZINE

Voices Heard shatters the long held silence of sexual abuse survivors through story-telling and expressive arts.