



# Healing from the Trauma of Childhood Sexual Abuse: The Journey for Women

*By Karen A. Duncan*

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The traumatic affects of childhood sexual abuse can remain and recur throughout life for women who have not healed emotionally. This book by a family therapist shares stories from 18 women abused as children, explaining that healing can occur at any stage of life, and that healing, itself, occurs in stages. The author offers guidance to recognize the long-lingering potential affects of childhood sexual abuse including depression, anxiety, dissociation, and chronic shock, and she explains steps to take for recovery. Also presented are letters from women who have healed or are in recovery.

Sexual abuse by men, juveniles, and female perpetrators is discussed, as is how children may act out the abusive behavior taught by perpetrators. The incidence of abuse by family members is also addressed. Duncan explains the dual dilemma?moral and legal?that women face in exposing a sexual perpetrator within the family when not protected by the legal system due to statutes of limitations. She also discusses controversial topics including false memory and disclosure of memory to the perpetrator.

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#### Review

"Children should have a safe haven of family love. Sexual abuse makes this impossible. Duncan shares the survival strategies women use to cope with childhood physical and emotional trauma--strategies that include denial, repression, depression, secrecy, and chronic shock that can lead to such lingering problems as mood and eating disorders, substance abuse, dissociation, and self-injury....This book offers theoretical frameworks and practical guidance in the journey toward recovery, everything from understanding the impact of trauma to finding a therapist....Recommended. All collections; all levels."-Choice

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"Karen Duncan has written a gem of a book. She took her 21 years of clinical experience and study and created an effective treatment program for women who were sexually abused as children. The book offers a wealth of information and support--particularly about the issue of disclosing the sexual abuse to family members and others. I highly recommend it to survivors and their advocates. Professionals working with this population will find the book particularly valuable."-Beverly Engel, M.F.T. author of *The Right to Innocence: Healing the Trauma of Childhood Sexual Abuse, and Partners in Recovery*

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## *Innocence: Healing the Trauma of Childhood Sexual Abuse, and Partners in Recovery)*

### About the Author

KAREN A. DUNCAN has 22 years clinical experience working with women, children, and families in their recovery from sexual abuse. She has presented at conferences throughout the United States in the education regarding and prevention of sexual abuse. She is the author of a comprehensive adult education program entitled *The Right to Be Safe: Adult Education to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse* that is offered free of charge on the Web site [www.theright2besafe.org](http://www.theright2besafe.org). Duncan has served as Adjunct Professor teaching General Psychology, Abnormal Psychology, and Introduction to Women Studies. She received the 2005 Social Worker of the Year Award for Region 7 from the National Association of Social Workers, Indiana Chapter. Ms. Duncan can be reached through her Web site at [www.healing4women.com](http://www.healing4women.com).

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