

You Can Make A Difference, Dealing with Sexual Abuse

Dear Pastor,

If it has been a while since you, in your study, openly wept for the needs of your flock, I recommend Dr. Allender's book "The Wounded Heart."¹ For my own studies and use I have written 5 papers which outline some of the book, and I provide them for your review, expecting they will add weight to this recommendation. In this day and age every pastor needs at least the awareness found in the papers, and more so this book in their study. There is someone within your touch who has been sexually abused, and handling their unique counseling needs will require at least this level of effort. May God bless you as we deal with the needs of a depraved humanity.

Pastor Ed Rice.

Five Introductory Papers

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1 Allender, Dan B., "The Wounded Heart", 1990, Navpress, Colorado, CO.

A Frightening Significance, A Sobering Truth.

The natural, gradual, awakening of the abused mind.

By Pastor Ed Rice

When subjected to sexual abuse a child experiences traumatic forgetting as the young brain tries to protect itself from the intense pain and terror of the assault and abuse. Predators know that little children can often be easily controlled, intimidated, bullied, deceived, terrorized, and manipulated. They know how to exploit this vulnerability in ways that make their heinous crimes difficult, if not impossible, to investigate or discover. The predator uses this traumatic forgetting to cover and conceal the ongoing abuse and reinforces it with programming suggestions and shaming that “You will not remember this.” and “You must never tell about this.” etc. These threatening and shaming tactics are buried deep in the sub conscious mind along with the memory of the abuse. As the child grows, the mind strengthens and matures and may, to some extent, even heal from the assault and abuse. In the maturing brain these memories begin to surface. Remembering the abuse, coupled with releasing of the emotions and pain embedded with the memory are natural healing processes of the mind. The subconscious mind seems to hold traumatic memories below the surface until a person is strong enough to deal with them. As you stabilize and become stronger, memories or flashes of memory of the abuse begin to surface into your awareness. Confidential counseling can help one deal with this flood of traumatic memory, emotion and conflict. “The damage of past abuse sets in motion a complex scheme of self-protective defenses that operate largely outside of our awareness, guiding our interactions with others, determining the spouse we select, the jobs we pursue, the theologies we embrace, and the fabric of our entire lives.” (“The Wounded Heart” pg 20) Good counsel takes a look at the inner workings of these dynamics with a hope that a clearer picture of the damage will enable us to make more conscious, godly, decisions in dealing with others and with ourselves. It may thus be less a 'quest for a cure' and more a 'quest for perspective.' The mind that God designed will go on purging things from its subconscious bank of hurt in order to pursue its own healing. It is a perpetual exercise of the wounded heart to deal with these surfacing traumatic memories. Trying to drown them out with artificial forgiveness, tactics, denial, drugs or booze, will not move one toward a healed and healthy mind. A good counselor who would indwell the soul of the wounded is the most permanent and effectual solution, and that indwelling Good Shepherd is available to a Christian.

Sexual Abuse Clearly Defined

largely extracted from "The Wounded Heart" by Dr. Allender

Many people operate for years on the principle that whatever happened is not abuse, but if it had been a bit more extreme then it would have been abuse. It is imperative to have a clear definition:

"Sexual abuse is any contact or interaction (visual, verbal, or psychological) between a child/adolescent and an adult when the child/adolescent is being used for the sexual stimulation of the perpetrator or any other person."

In such a definition the 'adult' perpetrator may be under 18 if they are significantly older, or in a position of power or control over the victimized child/adolescent.

When the sexual abuse is perpetrated by an adult or older child who is a blood or legal relative, it constitutes incest, also called intrafamilial sexual abuse.

There are two categories of sexual abuse to consider under this definition, sexual contact, and sexual interaction:

Sexual contact involves any type of physical touch that is designed arouse sexual desire (physical or psychological) in the victim or in the perpetrator. Physical touch can include forced or unforced intercourse, oral or anal sex, this is most severe physical sexual abuse; forced or unforced manual stimulation or penetration, breast fondling, or any form of simulated intercourse, this is severe physical sexual abuse; or forced or unforced sexual kissing, touch of clothed breasts, buttocks, thighs, or genitals, this is least severe physical sexual abuse. All these are severe physical sexual abuse, and "all inappropriate sexual contact is damaging and soul distorting to the child/adolescent."

Sexual interactions are harder to acknowledge because they do not involve physical touch and therefore do not seem as severe, although they produce the same soul distorting harm. The abusive interactions can be categorized as visual, verbal, and psychological.

Visual sexual abuse involves interactions where the child is forced, or invited to watch sexually arousing scenes or pictures or is observed by the perpetrator in a state of undress that is arousing to the adult. A parent or adult who finds sexual arousal in watching a naked child or introducing a child to sexual stimuli (through pornography or exhibitionistic sexual exposure) has without a doubt sexually victimized that child.

Sexual verbal interactions, equally abusive, include visually scanning a child's developing body and commenting on sexual development, suggestive or seductive interactions, and more actual seductive verbal interactions easier to discern, especially when sexual cues are emitted or when past abuse has occurred. "Verbal abuse is a powerful and deep wound. *Sexual abusive words produce the same damage as sexual abusive contact.*" While sometimes considered less severe, and sometimes minimized and the damage overlooked, verbal sexual abuse can equally contort the fabric of the victims relationships, and lives.

A final category of interactive abuse is *psychological sexual abuse*. There is an obvious overlap between visual and verbal sexual abuse and psychological abuse. Psychological abuse will occur through verbal or visual means (usually both) but will involve more subtle (non specific, more mood-generating) communication that erodes the appropriate role boundaries between a child and an adult.

The fact that sexual abuse can be subtle ought not cloud our perspective that it is equally abusive and damaging.

Types of Sexual Abuse: Contact and Interaction

From "The Wounded Heart" by Dr. Dan B. Allender © 1990, NAVPRESS, Colorado Springs, CO, pg .50

Contact

Very Severe: Genital intercourse (forcible or nonforcible); oral or anal sex (forcible or nonforcible)

Severe: Unclothed genital contact, including manual touching or penetration (forcible or nonforcible); unclothed breast contact (forcible or nonforcible); simulated intercourse.

Least Severe: Sexual kissing (forcible or nonforcible); sexual touching of buttocks, thighs, legs, or clothed breasts or genitals.

Interactions

Verbal: Direct solicitation for sexual purposes; seductive (subtle) solicitation or innuendo; description of sexual practices; repeated use of sexual language and sexual terms as personal names.

Visual: Exposure to or use for pornography; intentional (repeated) exposure to sexual acts, sexual organs, and/or sexually provocative attire (bra, nighties, slip, underwear); inappropriate attention (scrutiny) directed toward bod (clothed or unclothed) or clothing for purpose of sexual stimulation.

Psychological: Physical/sexual boundary violation: intrusive interest in menstruation, clothing, pubic development; repeated use of enemas; Sexual/relational boundary violation: intrusive interest in child's sexual activity, use of child as a spouse surrogate (confidant, intimate companion, protector, or counselor)

The fact that sexual abuse can be subtle ought not cloud our perspective that it is equally abusive and damaging.

Abuse 102 - Know The Enemy

Life is a war. That is not all life is but life is always that. Daily, physically, emotionally, mentally, spiritually there is a perpetual war going on in every individual. With physical problems being able to identify, name, define, and understand the tumor, inflammation, or wound which induces unbearable pain and wars against our physical well being is essential. Pain killers, which briefly hide the source are not a suitable long term solution. So too in the emotional, mental, and spiritual warfare in which every one of us, some more directly than others, are engaged. It is not an exercise in futility to identify, name, define and understand the enemies of the sexually abused. There are primarily three.

An obvious correlation with the physical examples above shows that “*The enemy is the pain and whatever is responsible for it.*”² Both the pain and the perpetrator are identified herein as the enemies of the soul of the sexually abused. There are tactics to be employed against these enemies. These tactics, which are attempts to diminish the poison of the abuse, are generally to forget, to overcome, to retaliate against or to master the pain and/or the abuser who brought the pain to the soul. Briefly examine these strategies against each enemy.

As an enemy the pain of sexual abuse is emotional, mental, and spiritual. It is lodged very deep, often scarred over, and thus called the enemy of the soul.

-Forget the Pain, and just move on. This is often advised by the ill advised. The pain of the abused is not just the physical pain, but like a physical pain it can be temporarily drowned out, or drugged out, of conscience thought. This is treating a symptom, not a cause, but it is common as an initial attempt to deal with the hurt. Active forgetting involves forever remembering.

- Overcome the Pain. The human body, soul and spirit is built to be an overcomer. To overcome and contain the pain of sexual abuse there is a hardened shell built around it. Consciously and subconsciously the victim reinforces this shell to ensure that nothing like this could ever happen again. It is lonely inside this shell, and the victim will now perceive the desire to be loved, to be intimate, to be in meaningful relationships as the enemy to their safety. “*The enemy, or so it feels, is the passion to be lovingly pursued and nourishingly touched by a person whose heart is utterly disposed to do us good.*”³ The initial steps to overcome the pain end up internalizing it, containing it, and covering it over inside. This affects every fiber of our life, because the heart of meaningful life is always in relationships.

- Retaliate against the Pain. One retaliates against pain by purposely exercising it. Purposely moving a shoulder riddled with bursitis does nothing to heal the bursitis or lessen its pain, but it exercises and flexes the needed muscles, tendons and joints around the inflammation allowing them to stay healthy for future uses. So to consciously and purposely rehearsing the emotional, mental, and spiritual hurts may keep other areas of ones life marginally operating.

- Master the Pain. Mastering the emotional, mental and spiritual pain of sexual abuse involves a conscious mental discipline that calls upon the resources of forgetting, overcoming and retaliating against the pain. Like a holistic approach to physical pain management, this is the holistic approach to management of the hurt and pain related to sexual abuse. Such a discipline can teach one to live a relatively normal life while enduring great pain. It may even alleviate some pain, but it never eliminates the pain.

As an enemy the perpetrator of sexual abuse is physical, real and present. They may be singular or plural. They may currently be seen regularly, seen rarely, or never seen, but they will

2 Allender, Dan B., “The Wounded Heart”, 1990, Navpress, Colorado, CO., pg 55

3 ibid. pg 56

regularly show up in some form. They are the ones who poisoned the soul of the victim. They are, and will perpetually be, the enemy which caused such pain to the soul. The tactics used against this enemy are again fourfold.

- Forget Him. This is endless and futile. The effort itself focuses your attention on the person you long to forget. The events of life, acquaintances of life, and the perpetrator himself in life, will always lurch the 'forgotten' into the brain and the energy expended in forgetting is always draining and dooms the option of forgetting before it starts. He can be temporarily drowned out, or drugged out, of conscience thought. This is treating a symptom, not a cause, but it is common as an initial attempt to deal with the perpetrator. Active forgetting involves forever remembering to forget.

- Overcome Him. To overcome the perpetrator of sexual abuse the mind can build a shell around around them. When the thought, reminder or presence of the perpetrator surfaces there is an ever thickening shell that refuses to regard them, nor dwell on them as a human or as relative. This is an active or passive dismissal of their very existence.

- Retaliate Against Him. Retaliation against the perpetrator of sexual abuse will involve anger. We are regarding here emotional, mental and spiritual retaliations and alienations, not physical. The anger may be only underlying, or it may be seething, or it may be zealous, but it will be man-hating. Although just judicial punishment should be pursued in almost any sexual abuse, when it is motivated by anger and hatred justice will not be of much help to the victim. 'Time heals all wounds' is a cliché which, it seems, is not that applicable to sexual abuse. Underlying, seething or zealous anger ferments into bitterness which leaks into every fiber of life, especially all ongoing relationships.

- Master Him. Mastering the perpetrator as the enemy of the scarred soul of the sexually abused will involve an 'artful' mental management of forgetting, overcoming and retaliating against the vile cause of ones soul deadening pain. The efforts of the mind to master the remembrance, thoughts and anger toward the perpetrator is the closest mere humans can come to what could be called some form of forgiveness. But it is not godly forgiveness. It is mastering the situation and the perpetrator in the mind, so that some semblance of life can be attained.

The pain of abuse is an enemy and a problem. The perpetrator of the abuse is an enemy and a problem. Forgetting, overcoming, retaliating against, and mastering each are tactics that can bring some control of these 2 enemies. There is, however, another enemy, another problem, and it turns out (as good news) that this other is the major one.

“Who, then, or what, is the real foe? Simply put, *the problem is in the victim*, leading to broken relationships, loneliness, depression, eating (drinking) disorders, promiscuity, sexual coldness, and frightening rage. Something is wrong inside. Nothing can quite manage to cover it up: smiles, busy schedules, successful (even Christian) living – nothing soothes the battle raging deep within the soul.

... “Ultimately, the enemy is the prowling beast that attempts to devour and destroy the beauty of God's kingdom. The enemy is *sin*, the fallen, autonomous striving for life that refuses to bow to God. *The enemy is the internal reality that will not cry out to God in humble, broken dependence*. It is the victim's subtle or blatant determination to make life work on his/her own by refusing to acknowledge or let God fulfill his/her deepest longings.

“The enemy is the same for the abused person as it is for those who have not been sexually abused: a determined, reliable inclination to pursue false gods, to find life apart from dynamic, moment-by-moment relationship with the Lord of life. For the abused person, however, the past grievous violation of trust and intimacy even more dramatically inflames his/her determination to live without the pain of unmet longings- and thus without the raging thirst of a soul that pants for God alone.”⁴

4 Ibid. pg 57

For one who has been sexually abused this enemy, i.e. ones own sinfulness, is well barricaded in behind thick icy shells of mistrust and isolation. Shame and contempt intertwine with anger, hurt and disappointment to heighten the resolve to depend on only ones own resolve. This determination to make it against all odds begins a frightening cycle, forbidding the trust in another, even if it is their loving Creator. Shame and self contempt are not well-understood, and their role in the experience of sexual abuse are critical and will take time and effort to comprehend. Thus shame and self contempt harbored within us will need specific examination to understand the cliché 'that we are our own worst enemy.'

Of the three enemies considered here, conquering this last one, brings the others into submission. The conquering of ones own sinful, rebellious, mistrusting nature needs to be the central focus in a quest for healing.

Shame – Meant to Curb our Behavior

by Pastor Ed Rice

In order to understand the statement “I am my own worst enemy” one must look inside themselves and ask “what is going on in here?” It is essential then to understand two types of shame that hide within us, and two types of contempt which spring from fertile shamed ground in our soul. Shame is the most powerful, painful, personality changing emotion that we have never talked about or analyzed. Like a blowfish swells when threatened, shame swells when analyzed. The mere discussion of shame awakens undealt with shame in others. Although shame is a shameful topic, that most would prefer to ignore, it needs examined in this context.

“All of us, not just sexual abuse victims, have lived with the bitter taste of shame. Our memories need only return to grade school or junior high to recall at least a few stories of insufferable shame. I will never forget the boy in eighth grade who was sent to the drugstore to purchase paper napkins for the class float. He returned with a huge box of sanitary napkins. I recall the stunned look of horror on the face of the teacher and the snickering laughter and smirking eyes of the girls. I was as unaware of the ribald humour in the purchase as was the boy who made it. I didn't know what a sanitary napkin was, but I was sure of one thing: I would never volunteer for any service, if the result could be so devastating.

“It was not my shame, but I borrowed it and swore I would never do anything so stupid. I know I was just as dumb in the ways of the world, so I chose to never do anything that required a risk of my exposure.”⁵

Notice in Dr. Allender's illustration that this shaming experience had the power to change ones whole approach to life and ventures and risks. Such a change in the fabric of life is not generally analyzed consciously. It would not be talked about openly but it has the power to set some rules of behaviour and involvement in our lives. This particular very powerful stomach turning emotion is called 'illegitimate shame' because it caused an assault on the boys dignity.

'Legitimate shame' is that which exposes our depravity. Noticing someone staring at you as you pick your nose causes you shame. It is legitimate shame because you were caught in public, on purpose, doing something that was 'wrong.' Note also that if the person staring was completely inconsequential to you, you would feel no shame and finish picking.

Shame, then is the awful experience of being seen as deficient and undesirable by someone whom we expect would otherwise like us. We are ashamed when we trip over our feet and are perceived as clumsy and awkward when our dignity wants us perceived as graceful and debonair. We then compensate, striving to save face, by blaming a pebble in the walkway, or claim to have bad shoes on, we might even show some self contempt and say “I am such a clumsy idiot” expecting onlookers to be thus more understanding. The compensations we make for shame are powerful and rational but covert. The compensations made and anxiety about ever visiting that shame again are more powerful and more covert.

When God created man in the Garden of Eden there was no shame. But when man exerted his independence from God in disobedience and partook of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, with that knowledge came a very strong feeling of ill when evil was pursued or when good (dignity) was diminished. This very powerful emotion is intended to curb the behaviour of fallen man away from evil and away from diminishing of good. This 'curbing' of behaviour becomes concrete barriers set on the road of life to keep us on a straight and narrow path of right. Properly built curbing is good. A rebellious heart that is deceitful and desperately wicked can always jump the curb and go off into destructive areas of life, and we all have such a heart and

5 “The Wounded Heart”, Dr. Dan B. Allender, pg 60

such a capability. It is only curbing after all. Interesting that the word curb has two English sources. It was a curved bit that exerts severe pressure on a horse's jaw, ... it 'curbs' their behaviour; and the curved raised edge or margin to strengthen or confine, ... it 'confines' ones pathway. Adverse circumstances in developmental life can result in these curbs, constructed by shame, to be placed in adverse and down right wrong places. Sexual predators use shame as a concealment and repeatedly put children in an incredibly adverse environment. Victims of sexual abuse have had improperly placed concrete curbing constructed in their lives. Major repair will be needed to move these curbs.

God created man with an inexhaustible desire for intimacy. A need to love and be loved. A desire to trust and be trusted. The ultimate purpose of this Godly desire is that man can re-enter the loving, nurturing, dependent relationship with his Creator, and find the ultimate purpose, joy and peace which that relationship affords. Man's rebellious, selfish heart and propensity for independence keep us from that dependent nurturing environment of God. Those victimized by child sexual abuse, however, have considerably more to deal with. If, in the natural pursuit of this desire, one has experienced repeated insufferable assaults on their dignity, there will be covert compensations and powerful anxieties about ever pursuing those desires with anyone, ever again. Constructed in their soul are curbs which steer them away from any loving trusting nurturing relationships. Shame is still constructing and reinforcing its curbing system. Shame will not let one just move those long standing curbs. To do so one must first have a conscious face off with shame. And so we must. And so we shall.

Contending with Contempt

Contempt is an ugly word which shows up in our lives when our shame has been inflamed and swollen to unnatural levels. Recall that shame, which comes along with a knowledge of good and evil, (which inhabits all mankind) is a very powerful emotion which keeps us from pursuing our evil nature on one hand, and keeps us from degrading our dignity on another. Shame, however, is a very volatile emotion in our up brining and when it is improperly exploited, as is always the case in sexual abuse, one deals with shame by using contempt.

Self contempt is the self bashing dialog that we enter when we embarrassingly loose something or miss an appointment. "How could I have been so stupid?", "I am such an idiot?" The pretense is you will be rebuked and corrected to never end up in this shameful predicament again.

Contempt for others is the despise we feel when someone else points out our flaw. "What do I care what they say?", "They are such incompetent morons anyway?" The pretense here is to deflect the shame and remove the disparaging eyes of others from our plight.

Such simple analysis of self contempt and contempt of others is illustrative but far to simple. Contempt, in either orientation, has many forms, and variations of contempt can range from very severe to least severe, ... all being severe and dysfunctional. Dr. Allender categorizes this dysfunctional contempt as follows:

Very Severe	Moderately Severe	Mildly Severe	Least Severe
Physically Destructive	Personally Destructive	Critically Evaluative	Relationally Uncomfortable

"Very severe contempt is seen in a desire to do physical harm to oneself or another. It is the desire to destroy, or at least damage, through wanton disregard of the physical needs and limits of the human frame. It may be blatant like suicide, or subtle like bingeing on junk food. In either case, *the body is punished for existing and wanting*. In other cases, there is a desire to actively, or passively destroy a person who has provoked the hunger of the soul" ⁶

Reactions of contempt towards someone who genuinely arouses a passion in us is often disconcerting. Most of us feel confused by our own actions and our contemptuous behavior. The sexually abused shows contempt whenever, and to whomsoever arouses those passions. Every previous visit to such passions was painful and shameful and contempt is the tool that will keep us from going there again.

When the essence of our fantasies are degradation and abuse of oneself or others it is moderate severe contempt. The violent thoughts, words, or images provide a "titillation ... which serves as an anesthetic that dulls the ravages of overwhelming loss." There may be elaborate fantasies of revenge, towards someone who exposes or causes your shame.

Mildly severe contempt is seen in the two previous illustrations. Because it is most common it is often not seen as contemptuous at all. "Imagine your response as a teenager to a new crop of skin blemishes, or as an adult to spilling a drink in your lap. The acrimonious inner dialog may be severe, the names used unsightly, but the result often appears to be greater energy to make change."⁷

A least sever contempt may conceal itself as a false humility. Unwillingness to receiving a compliment or a gift or another person's kindness seems like humility. "At times, the discomfort in receiving a compliment is due to a keen sense of unworthiness (self contempt) or doubt about

⁶ Ibid pg 76

⁷ Ibid pg 77

the sincerity of the kind word. (other-centered contempt) The attitude projected in either case is that one will not be touched by another's movement towards them, nor will they allow the other to enjoy the reciprocal interplay of giver and receiver enjoying each others pleasure. For a person who fears that deepening spiral of relational enjoyment, any intimacy must be headed off before it is intensified.

"The sexually abused person often carries contempt as an antidote to the bite of pleasure. The first stirring of aliveness or passion in contact with another feels like a venom that may take both parties into a destructive spiral of lust and revenge. ... Contempt in any form, operates for a purpose: almost always to protect the user from damaging others or replicating the past abuse that wounded their soul."

What does contempt do for us? Why do we use contempt? First contempt diminishes our anxiety. Shame always includes an aspect of anxiety. But more specifically it deadens inner longings. "*For the woman or man who has been abused, one of the greatest enemies of the soul is the longing for intimacy*" ... "To feel good in relationship with another, like no other experience, opens the door to past horror and future terror."

Contempt also provides us with the illusion of control. We have an overwhelming desire to find the 'reason' for suffering and this is particularly the case when the struggle involves deep personal loss. "*As long as I believe there is something I can do about my problem, then I am not constrained to feel hopeless.*" A contemptuous explanation provides a direction to pursue to regain control over my emptiness."⁸

Contempt distorts the real problem, It is complex. It hinders the work of God by distorting the fact that the real problem central to our humanity is our sin problem. It ignores one's own depravity and centers the blame on another persons failure. Contempt is as old as sin. Adam striving to cover up his own shame said "It's that woman you gave me God, she is to blame." But Allender emphasizes once more "The struggle with shame and contempt – a common experience for everyone – is an intensely felt battle for the man or woman who has been sexually abused." Something has been triggered in their soul when their abusers used a deep route to intimacy to ensnare and enslave the young heart of the victim in a polluted and perverse relationship. We must take our understanding of shame and contempt and wrestle now with what happened in that tender soul when the abuse occurred.

The Damage of Abuse and The Prerequisites for Growth

The extensive, explicit, and excellent coverage of Part II and Part III of Dr. Allender's book "The Wounded Heart" deals with 'The Damage of Abuse' and 'The Prerequisites for Growth.' It is only herein outlined. Anyone dealing with sexual abuse personally, in family or in counseling needs to walk through the coverage and analysis that he provides in these sections. These papers are meant only to document some of the necessary tools which I have drawn from his work, and what the appetite of the counseled and the counselor that there is a repair for the wounded and that repair is to be found in the Lord Jesus Christ. Please pursue the counsel found in this book, as it expounds the counsel found in God's 66 books.

- II. The Damage of Abuse
 - A. Powerlessness (Ch 5. pp 105)
 - i. The Cause of Powerlessness
 - ii. The Cost of Powerlessness
 - iii. The Consequence of Being Powerlessness
 - iv. The Core Images Related to Powerlessness
 - B. Betrayal (Ch 6 pp 119)
 - i. The Cause of Betrayal
 - ii. The Cost of Betrayal
 - iii. The Consequence of Betrayal
 - iv. The Core Images Related to Betrayal
 - C. Ambivalence (Ch 7 pp 133) (The uncertain, indecisive, coexistence of opposing attitudes or feelings)
 - i. The Cause of Ambivalence
 - ii. The Cost of Ambivalence
 - iii. The Consequence of Ambivalence
 - iv. The Core Images Related to Ambivalence
 - D. Secondary Symptoms (Ch 8 pp 145)
 - i. The Long Road to Glory
 - ii. Evidence of Internal Damage
 - iii. Depression
 - iv. Sexual Dysfunction and Addiction
 - v. Compulsive Disorders
 - vi. Physical Complaints
 - vii. Self – Esteem
 - viii. Style of Relating
 - E. Style of Relating (Ch 9 pp 157)
- III. Prerequisites For Growth
 - A. The Unlikely Route to Joy (Ch 10 pp 173)
 - i. A Crucial Question
 - ii. The Step Approach to Change
 - iii. The Biblical Route to Change
 - iv. The Rewards of the Biblical Path
 - B. Honesty (Ch 11 pp 183)
 - i. The Internal Damage
 - ii. The External Damage

- iii. The Process of Honesty
- C. Repentance (Ch 12 pp 197)
 - i. What is Repentance?
 - ii. Repentance versus Penance
 - iii. Repentance and the Sexual - Abuse Victim
 - iv. The Internal Shifts of Repentance
 - v. The External Shifts of Repentance
- D. Bold Love (Ch 13 pp 213)
 - i. What Makes Love Possible?
 - ii. What Does it Mean to Love?
 - iii. What, Then, IS Love?
 - iv. What Will it Look Like to Love an Abuser?
 - v. The Battle Continues
- E. Words to the Wise (Ch 14 pp 233)
 - i. Words to the Perpetrator
 - ii. Words to the Non Offending Parent(s)
 - iii. Words to the Abuser-Surrogate
 - iv. Words to a Friend
 - v. Words to a Pastor
 - vi. Words to the Counselor
 - vii. Words to the Abuse Victim

With a gratefulness to Dr. Allender for writing them, I herein recite 3 of his words to the wise.

Words to the Perpetrator:

The grace of god extends to ever sinner, including the one who violates the body and soul of a small child or impressionable adolescent. The path back to a right relationship with God is not easy, however. It is not a matter of saying you're sorry, shedding tears, asking forgiveness, and then getting back to what you feel is normal life. The Lord's stern rebuke ought to ring in your ears: "But if any one causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea" (Matthew 18:6).

Restitution does not heal the wound. Bowing your head in self-pitying contempt only adds more weight to the victim's load. The only route to restoration is through brokenness. Broken repentance will show in your willingness to submit yourself to the process of change through church discipline, counseling, interacting with other abusers, seeking wisdom and insight, and providing for the recuperative process of the victim. That can include offering to pay for counseling, career evaluation, and medical treatment.

Essentially, you must deal with the log in your own eye regarding the past abuse, current relational failures, and the potential issues of past abuse in your own life. Do not allow shame and contempt to circumvent the process of change expecting warmth, closeness, or gratitude. Allow the victim time and space to take the process at his or her own pace.

In time, your joy will deepen as you choose a path of honesty, repentance, and bold love. The deep, deep sorrow of marring the beauty of a human soul will never be eradicated in this life, but the profound relief of brokenness will create a passionate desire for a day when all damage will be washed away. Our work of dealing with the damage is a death blow to our Adversary, the devouring lion.

Words to the Non Offending Parent(s)

Your sin is easiest to hide, behind the fact or the claim of ignorance. In most cases, the nonoffending parent feels either profound guilt (self-contempt) or vindictive anger (other-centered contempt) at the abuser or, even worse, at the victim for not sharing the data in the past or for bringing it out in the present. In either case, you are hindering the process of change for the victim.

If you missed or ignored the evidence in the past then you ought to ask yourself deep questions as to why your child was less important than what you were choosing to protect. I find that nonoffending parents tend to be unwilling to ask hard questions and deal with their failure to intervene. Don't let that happen. Stop protecting the abuser. It is not respecting or loving him to make excuse or to justify unjustifiable sin. It is also crucial to allow the abuse victim to express their anger toward you without fear that you will either crumble or abandon them.

In order to deal with all the issues that may be generated in your, I strongly recommend seeking a support group and personal counseling. Your commitment to change will be a wonderful encouragement to the abuse victim to continue on their own difficult path.

Words to the Abuse Victim

You have been damaged. But you have great hope. The mercy of God does not eradicate the damage, at least not in this life, but it soothes the soul and draws it forward to a hope that purifies and sets free. Allow the pain of the past and the travail of the change process to create fresh new life in you and to serve as a bridge over which another victim may walk from death to life. It is an honor beyond compare to be part of the birthing process of life and hope, and a joy deeper than words to see evil and its damage destroyed. I await that day and joy with you.