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The Courage To Heal: A Guide For Women Survivors Of Child Sexual Abuse

20TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

THE COURAGE TO HEAL

*A Guide for Women Survivors
of Child Sexual Abuse*

ELLEN BASS & LAURA DAVIS
Completely Revised and Expanded 4th Edition



Synopsis

First published in 1988, the groundbreaking *The Courage to Heal: A Guide for Women Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse* has been completely revised, updated, and expanded for its 20th Anniversary edition. Considered "a classic" and "the bible of healing from child sexual abuse," this inspiring, comprehensive and compassionate guide provides a map of support of the healing journey and a lifeline for millions. Weaving together personal experience with professional knowledge, the authors provide clear explanations, practical suggestions, strategies, and support throughout the survival healing process -- as well as help, hope and reassurance for families, friends, and caregivers. Readers will feel recognized and encouraged by hundreds of moving first-person accounts drawn from interviews and the author's extensive work with survivors, both nationally and internationally. Available in translations, as well as in an enhanced audio format, its life-saving messages resonate across cultural, linguistic, racial, religious, and geographical boundaries. New elements included in this fourth edition are:

- an emphasis on self-care and pacing during the healing process
- contemporary research on trauma and the brain, memory, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- an increased focus on the body's role in healing
- an overview of powerful new healing tools such as imagery, meditation, spirituality, and body-centered practices
- stories that reflect an even greater diversity of survivors and their experiences
- in-depth guidance to help assess evolving family relationships
- new prose and poetry
- reassuring accounts of survivors who have been healing for more than twenty years
- insights from the authors' decades of experience
- and a comprehensive up-to-date resource guide.

Readers have called *The Courage to Heal* "invaluable," a "beacon of hope," "wise and gentle," and a "lifesaver." Cherished by survivors, and recommended by therapists and institutions everywhere, *The Courage to Heal* has long been considered an empowering recovery tool, as well as an essential resource for victims of child sexual abuse, incest and trauma, as well as for their loved ones.

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Customer Reviews

This book has gone a long way in helping me to begin the long journey to coming to terms with the sexual abuse I suffered as a pre-teen. For most of my adult life, I've been reluctant to attribute any of my problems (such as depression, self hatred, unhealthy sexual relationships with men, a general disgust about myself, etc.) to being molested by my stepfather. Within the past couple of years, however, I've begun to examine my feelings about it more and more. I bought this book rather hesitantly, but ended up reading the first few chapters in tears as I read so many of my own feelings and experiences echoed by the other abuse survivors. I had thought that I was all alone and that there was something intrinsically wrong with me for feeling the way I did about myself, and it was an overwhelming relief to find others who feel the same after having similar childhood experiences. The reviews offered here referring to the "memory" issue misrepresent the focus and intent of the book. These readers seem to want to keep abuse survivors quiet to save the "sanctity" of the family. So many of us have done this for years; sacrificing of our emotional well being. They belittle the profound hurt and damage caused not only by the abuse, but by the silence as well. At the very least, this book has helped me to feel human and has given me hope that I may one day feel whole. I highly recommend this book as an invaluable resource. Addedum: It has been 7 years since I wrote the above review... I had forgotten I had written it until I ran across it in 's profile section. After reading a couple of the negative reviews below, I feel compelled to add something regarding the "repressed memory" issue.

I have just read the 20th anniversary edition of Courage to Heal. As a therapist working the field of mental health for 40 years with a specialty in working with abuse survivors and their PARTNERS, I

was stunned to see that the book, while purporting to be an update of the 1988 edition is essentially the same as what was written in 1988 despite the fact that over the past 25 years we have made enormous gains in understanding and treating abuse/trauma from a research and clinical treatment perspective. The general message of the book is that the healing process will be most likely a long process, and focuses on "healing" processes such as writing in a journal, meditation, accepting the abuse as a reality and a brief mention of the value of medication to assist in managing painful and often, at least temporarily, seemingly uncontrollable painful thoughts and emotions. While posing as new, updated knowledge about the healing process about healing from trauma, I was absolutely stunned to discover that there was not one word about the extraordinary new understandings about the effects of abuse/trauma seen later in adult life and methodologies for treating abuse related symptoms. Each of these new therapeutic methods has been extensively researched and shown to lead to extraordinarily more effective methods for treating the after effects of trauma/abuse, shortening the recovery period and producing enduring positive effects. Everything from PTSD symptoms, negative cognitive processes (negative self-thoughts), the effects of distorted memory, the dissociative states as well as many other issues that profoundly impact upon the survivors themselves and their PARTNERS and are the real targets of the healing process received only the barest of recognition and explanation.

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