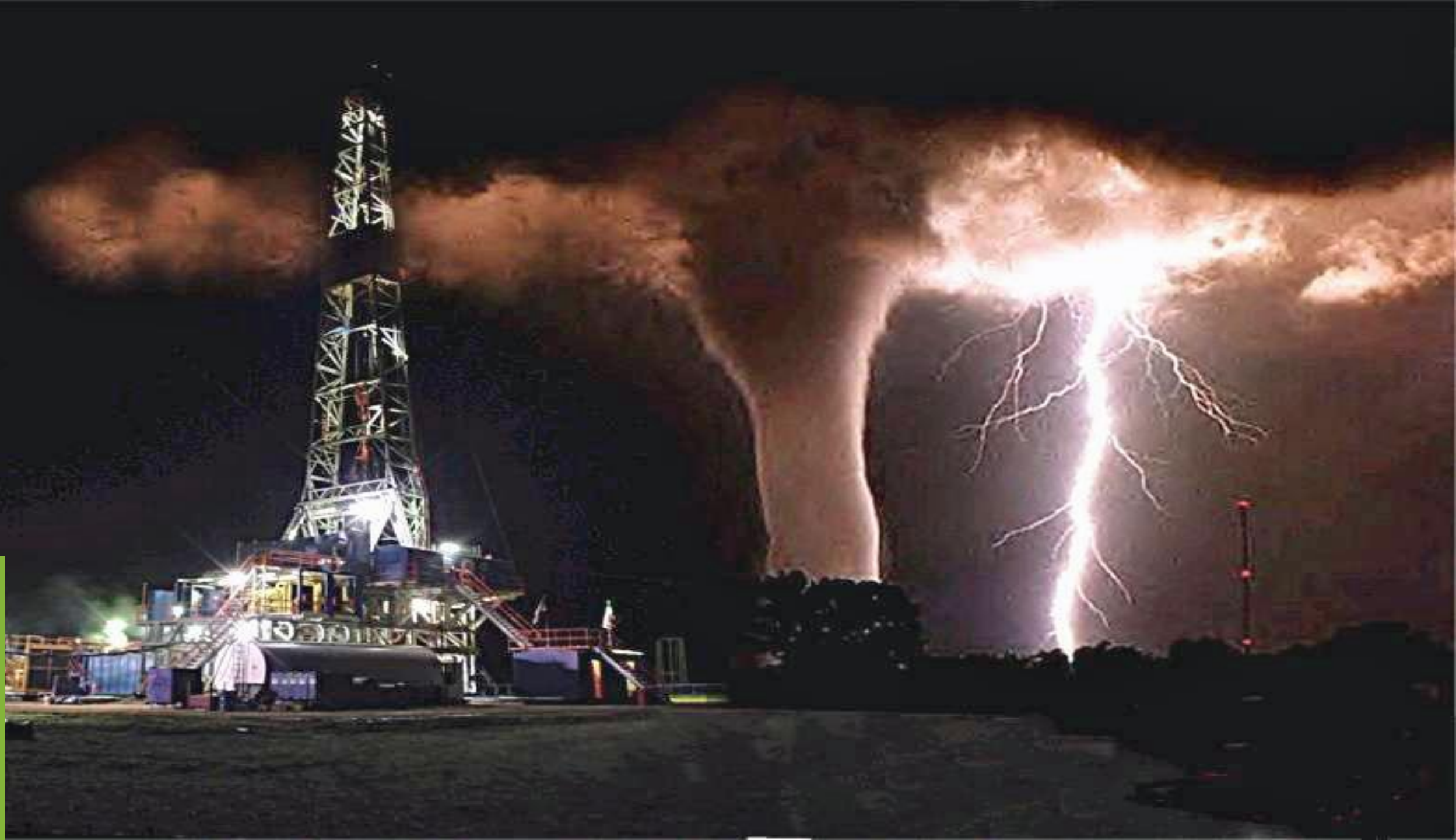


CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE AND ITS EFFECTS INTO ADULTHOOD



Session 1: Understanding Child Sexual Abuse



THE EFFECTS OF CHILDHOOD ABUSE

“Whether adult children of toxic parents were beaten when little or left alone too much, sexually abused or treated like fools, overprotected or overburdened by guilt, they almost all suffer surprisingly similar symptoms:

damaged self-esteem, leading to self-destructive behaviour.

In one way or another, they almost all feel worthless, unlovable, and inadequate.”

Susan Forward, “Toxic Parents”



Childhood Sexual Abuse

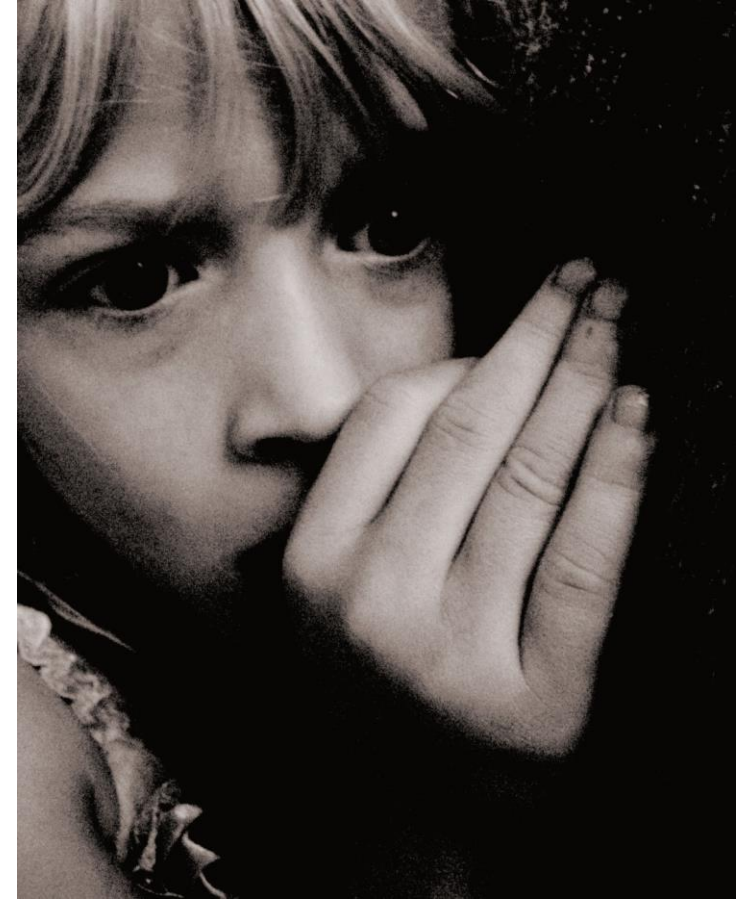
- It is a violation of a child's utter vulnerability and trust
- Molestation – 'games' – full penetration
- One-off or chronic
- Organised or individual paedophilia
- *I'm doing this because you're special*
- *I'm doing this because I love you*
- Secrets, lies, threats...



What Do Abused Children Feel?

Ellen Lacter PhD

1. Severe physical pain
2. Fear of dying (difficulty breathing)
3. Terror in threats to self, loved one, pets, to ensure compliance and/or to prevent disclosure
4. Helplessness – pleas to stop ignored
5. Betrayal and hurt in cases of abuse by loved ones
6. Betrayal and hurt that, in many cases, other family members are allowing the abuse to continue



What Do Abused Children Feel?

Ellen Lacter PhD

7. Guilt and shame for not escaping physically fighting off the abuser
8. Feeling like an "accomplice" based in receiving gifts and special privileges from the abuser
9. Some have portrayed these "gifts" as "benefits" that the child derives from sexual abuse. This equates child victims with prostitutes who trade money for sex. But children cannot enter "contracts" to be sexually exploited.
10. Anxiety-producing sexual arousal during the abuse
11. Rage at the abuser for inflicting the above



Incest

“Parents are their children’s first libidinal objects. What is traumatic and confusing about sexual abuse is that the adult world, rather than containing and holding the child’s desire, reciprocates. The fruit of the tree of knowledge is eaten before the child can digest it – with resultant shame and loss of innocence, and premature expulsion from the world of play and plenitude.”

The Search for the Secure Base
Jeremy Holmes 2002



Trauma Bonds



- Helplessness and terror cause the child (and later the adult) to reach out to the only available hand for relief: the perpetrator
- The perpetrator also becomes the rescuer when they stop the abuse
- This creates a psychological ambivalence that causes dissociation and profound confusion in a young child
- In the case of incest, Attachment issues become particularly complex and disorganised.

I mustn't say bad things about my Daddy. My Daddy loves me.



Sexual Abuse: The Problem of 'Ownership'

When a violater takes and uses a child's body for their own pleasure, complex trauma bonds develop, resulting in highly confusing messages in the child's mind.

MY BODY
IS NOT
MY OWN

I BELONG TO
SOMEONE
ELSE

RESISTANCE
IS FUTILE

THIS IS JUST
HOW IT IS



Passivity... Helplessness... Continued abuse...

COMPLEX PTSD

MINDJOURNAL

Complex PTSD Symptoms

Feeling like you don't fit in, or nobody understands you.

Dissociation, derealisation and depersonalization.

Difficulty controlling emotions

Negative perception of the world

Feeling worthless

Difficulty with relationships, often avoiding friends and family.

Unexplained pain, headache, migraine and dizziness.

Feelings of emptiness or hopelessness.

Self-harm and substance abuse.

Suicidal thoughts



@chronicallymeh

| TheMindsJournal



Sean's Story

Please stop your
video to improve film
quality. Thank you.

Ideas for Buddy Group discussions

- As much as feels safe, and keeping client confidentiality, share your own experiences, personally and professionally
- How did you react to Sean's testimony?

Send your comments and questions to Morag when you return to the main group.

15 minutes



Take a Break



See you in 5 minutes

Session 2:

Definitions and Statistics



What is child sexual abuse?

“...forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse, including via the internet.

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.”

CONTACT VS NON-CONTACT CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) separates child sexual abuse into “contact” or “non-contact”.

Contact sexual abuse includes sexual assault by rape or penetration, including attempts, and other behaviours such as being touched sexually (for example, groping, touching of breasts or bottom, and kissing) or being forced into touching someone else’s body for sexual purposes.

Non-contact sexual abuse includes where someone made the individual watch or listen to sexual acts or look at sexual images; made or shared sexual images of them; deliberately exposed themselves to them; or sent them sexual images or videos of themselves or others.

A child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. This is consistent with the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#). Article 1 states that everyone under the age of 18 years has all the rights in the Convention.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/childsexualabuseinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2019#what-is-child-sexual-abuse>

CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE

**1 in 3 children sexually abused by an adult
did not tell anyone**



Many children do not tell anyone about the abuse at the time because they didn't understand what had happened, are scared of the consequences, or because they are unsure who to tell or how to tell someone.

90%

**of children were abused by
someone they knew**

Most Children Don't Tell...

- Average first-time violation is 5-6 years old (which means some younger)
- Those who told a parent before age 18 encountered the following reactions (some multiple):
 - Anger with the child (42%)
 - Blaming the child (49%)
 - Ignoring the disclosure (50%)
 - Becoming hysterical (30%)
- The average child never tells
 - *She would kill me if she knew*
 - *They would call me a liar*
 - *She wouldn't do anything – wouldn't rock the boat*
 - *He'll say it was my fault*



HOW COMMON IS CHILDHOOD TRAUMA IN THE UK?

**The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) 2019
estimated that 1 in 5 adults aged 18-24 had
experienced at least one form of child abuse, whether
emotional, physical or sexual abuse, or witnessing
domestic violence or abuse, before the age of 16**

= 8.5 million people

= roughly the population of London in 2019

MORE STATISTICS...

- Most often, sexual abusers know the child they abuse but are not relatives
- About 60% of perpetrators are non-relative acquaintances, such as a friend of the family, babysitter, or neighbour
- About 30% of those who sexually abuse children are relatives of the child, such as fathers, uncles, or cousins
- Strangers are perpetrators in about 10% of child sexual abuse cases
- Men are found to be perpetrators in most cases, regardless of whether the victim is a boy or a girl
- However, women are found to be perpetrators in about 14% of cases reported against boys and about 6% of cases reported against girls
- Child pornographers and other perpetrators who are strangers now also make contact with children using the Internet
- Between 30% and 40% of people who are abused as children go on to become abusers themselves

<https://www.cafyonline.org/get-help/survivor-resources/survivor-resources-parents-victims/perpetrators-child-sexual-abuse/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2013/sep/17/breaking-the-cycle-of-abuse>

Session 3:

Abusers and Bystanders



ABUSERS AND BYSTANDERS



The biggest myth about child abuse is that the dangers to children come from strangers. In most cases, the perpetrator is someone the parent or child knows, and is often trusted by, the child and the family.

ABUSERS AND BYSTANDERS : *did my mother know?*



ABUSERS AND BYSTANDERS: *was my mother the abuser?*

The general population underestimates the involvement of biological mothers in child sexual abuse... Female perpetrators account for a rather small but substantial proportion of the perpetration of child sexual abuse... either as perpetrators or as bystanders. It is therefore necessary to sensitise professionals and the public to the topic of female perpetrators and especially to the role of mothers in child sexual abuse.



› [Child Abuse Negl.](#) 2021 Jul;117:105068. doi: 10.1016/j.chiabu.2021.105068. Epub 2021 Apr 17

Mothers as perpetrators and bystanders of child sexual abuse

[Jelena Gerke](#)  [Kathrin Lipke](#)  [Jörg M Fegert](#)  [Miriam Rassenhofer](#) 

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33878645/>

DID MY MOTHER KNOW?



<https://youtu.be/LuqiIDILIN4>

Please stop your
video to improve film
quality. Thank you.

Session 4:

Child Sexual Abuse and the Impact on Sexual Experience



Sexual Dysfunction

Sex may be something you want to avoid at all costs and you may end up with feelings of fear or even revulsion...



**Sex can be a source of comfort...
A way of running away from difficulties...
A source of temporary pain relief – perhaps by having frequent partners, or by using the internet to access pornography which can become highly addictive...**

Both of these behaviour cycles are the result of deep hurt and unhappiness.

Sexual Dysfunction

with grateful reference to Rebecca Mitchell

***“Whether you are having sex
or not, your sexuality
is still a fundamental part of
you – it is who you
are at the core of your being.
This is why, because
it is so delicate and
important, the effects of it
being violated are so
devastating.”***



Sexual Dysfunction

- When physical contact becomes intimate and sexual feelings start to stir, during lovemaking perhaps, or a passionate kiss, **dissociation** can kick in as this has been a learnt response to coping in the past
- A sensitive partner may sense this and it can lead to feelings of rejection or confusion for him or her.

“So much of the joy and freedom of life and relationships is destroyed as a result of sexual abuse. Survivors appreciate mates who will take the time to understand their reality in a loving and patient way...”
(Rosenau, “Celebration of Sex”, 1994)



A circular inset image showing a close-up of an elderly woman with long, straight blonde hair and bangs. She is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression.

Jacinta's Story

Please stop your
video to improve film
quality. Thank you.

Erotic Transference

- Friendships with men and women can often become distorted
- All meaningful relationships can potentially become sexualised, either in reality or in fantasy
- Being loved and cared for can be mistaken for, or confused with, sexual attraction

Some survivors may withdraw from potentially healthy relationships as they feel alarmed at the sexual feelings that the intimacy is bringing



Erotic Transference

- Clients can become bewildered about and frightened of their feelings towards their therapist who is drawing close to them
- Sexual feelings are extremely likely
 - If a therapist suspects that sexual feelings are creeping in for the client, it is important to support the client by talking through these feelings in a non-judgmental way
 - Good supervision is important



Ideas for Buddy Group discussions

- Have you had any experience of working with 'bystanders'?
- What were your feelings as you watched Kat and Charlie's interactions?
- How did you react to Jacinta's testimony?
- *Send your comments and questions to Morag when you return to the main group*

15 minutes



Take a Break



See you in 5 minutes



Session 5:

How an adult survivor of Child Sexual Abuse may present in the counselling room



Bobby Baker
Mental Illness & Me

Why Adults Don't Tell...

"It's time to move on... Let the past go..."

"Just forgive them and the pain will go away..."

"Don't think about it... You are all right now, aren't you?"

"Yeah, my dad was difficult too..."

"It wasn't much compared with what some people have been through..."

"Are you sure it really happened like that? Maybe you misunderstood?"



THE CLIENT IN THE COUNSELLING ROOM

TRUST



- What will you do with what I tell you?
- Will you believe what I hardly believe myself?
- Will you stay with me while I work this through?

SHAME



- Will you see me differently?
- Will you be disgusted?
- Will I be too much for you?
- Will you think I'm making a fuss over nothing?

FEAR



- What will I discover?
- What if I can't handle it?
- What if you can't handle it?
- Will you abuse me too?

1



2



3



4



5



6



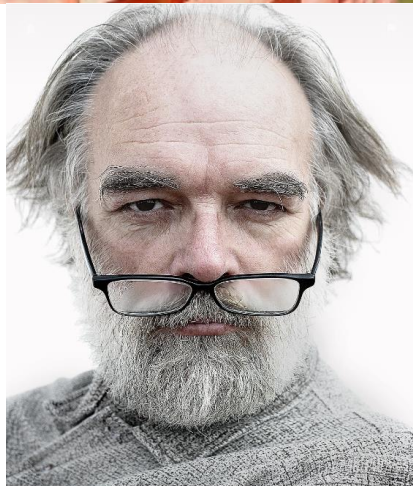
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9



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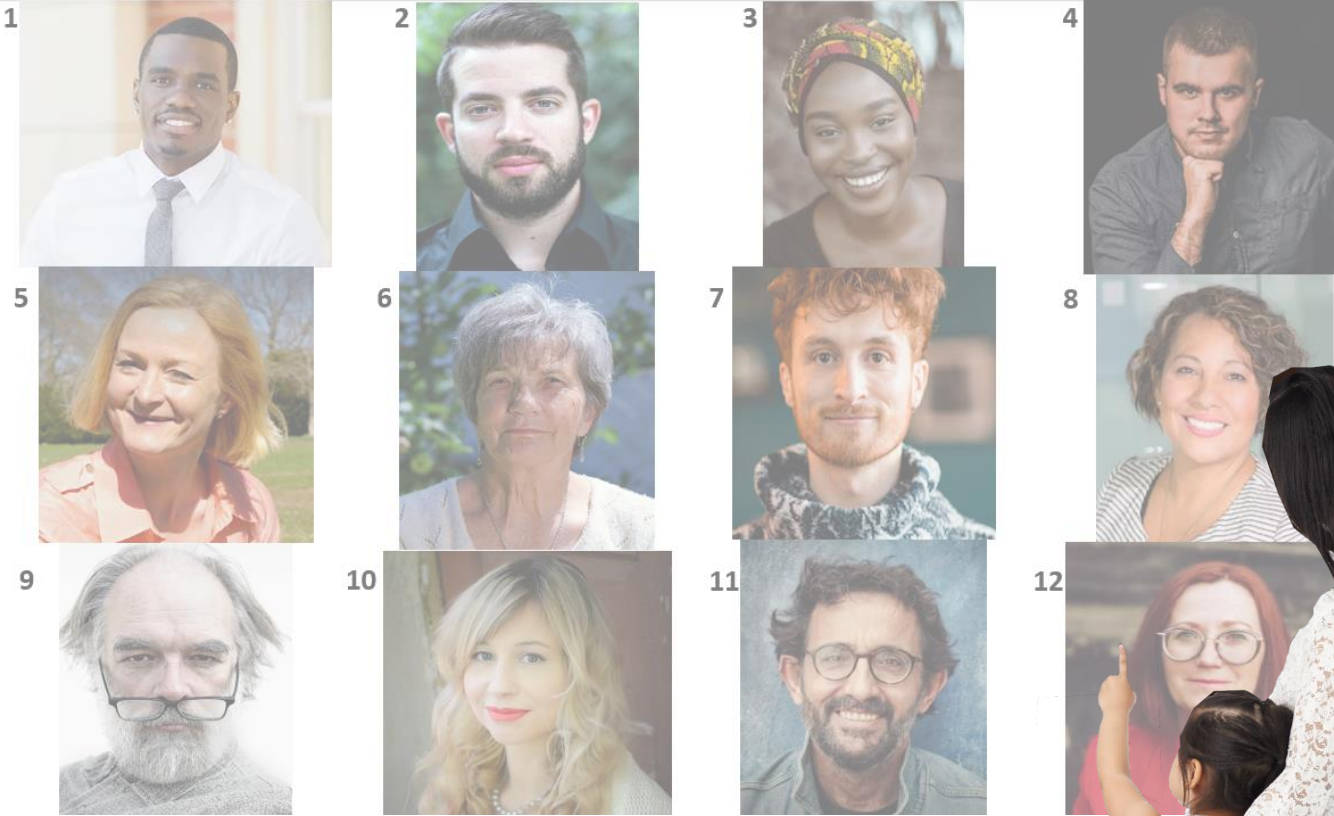


11



12





- Reactions from your adult self
- Reactions from your teenage self
- Reactions from your child self
- +++



This is a nice quiet space where you can find some peace and share when you're ready.

Just what do you think you're doing?

Be funny to distract her!

Tell her you've had a complete lightbulb moment and don't need to come back!

Don't tell!

Don't trust her... I don't like her!

Something bad's gonna happen!

Be really nice then she won't send us away

THE CLIENT IN THE COUNSELLING ROOM



Survival tactics of Inner Child parts

- Avoidance
- Distraction
- People-pleasing
- Fear



- Everyone has the 'best' solution
- Everyone is exhausted
- The resulting conflict leads to headaches

**Think
Attachment!**

Session 6:

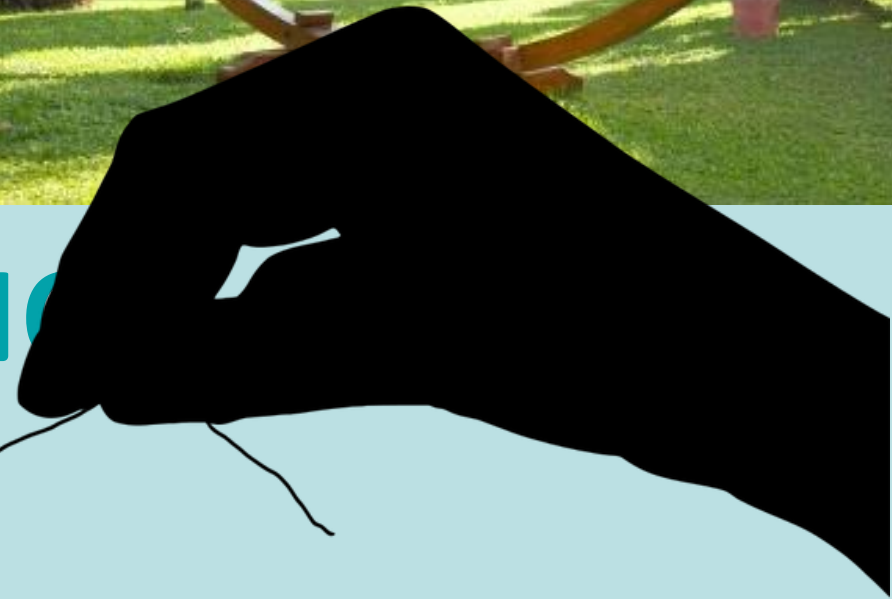
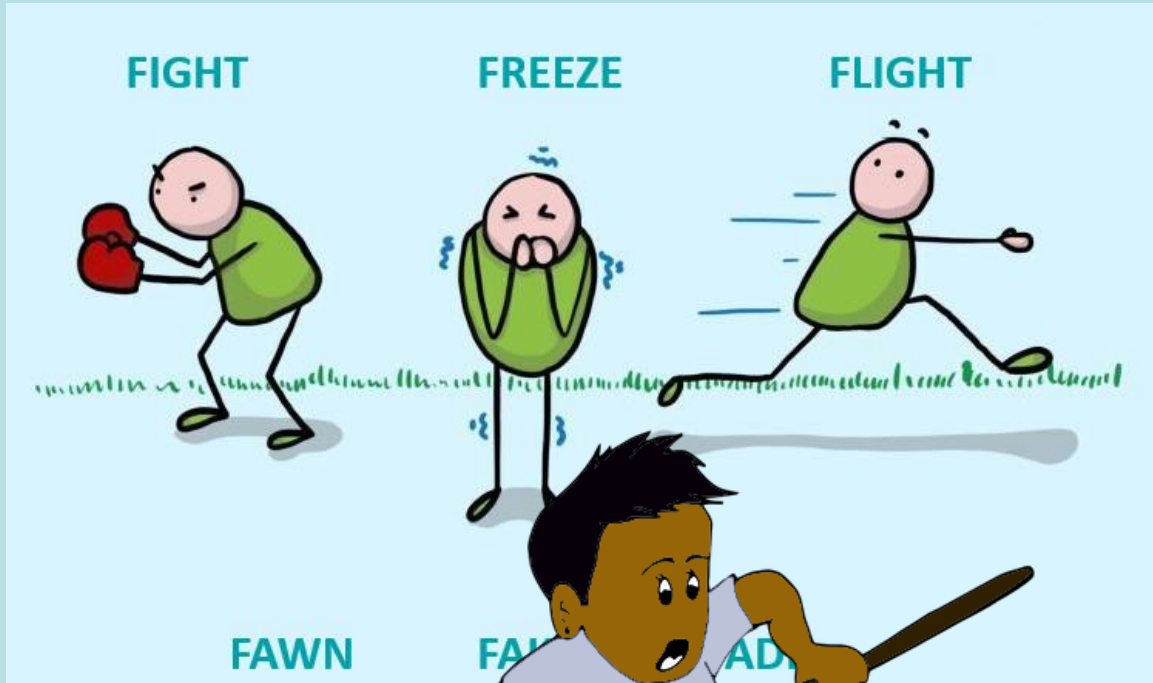
The Body's Response



THE BODY'S RESPONSE TO THREAT

Sympathetic System

Parasympathetic System



HYPERAROUSAL

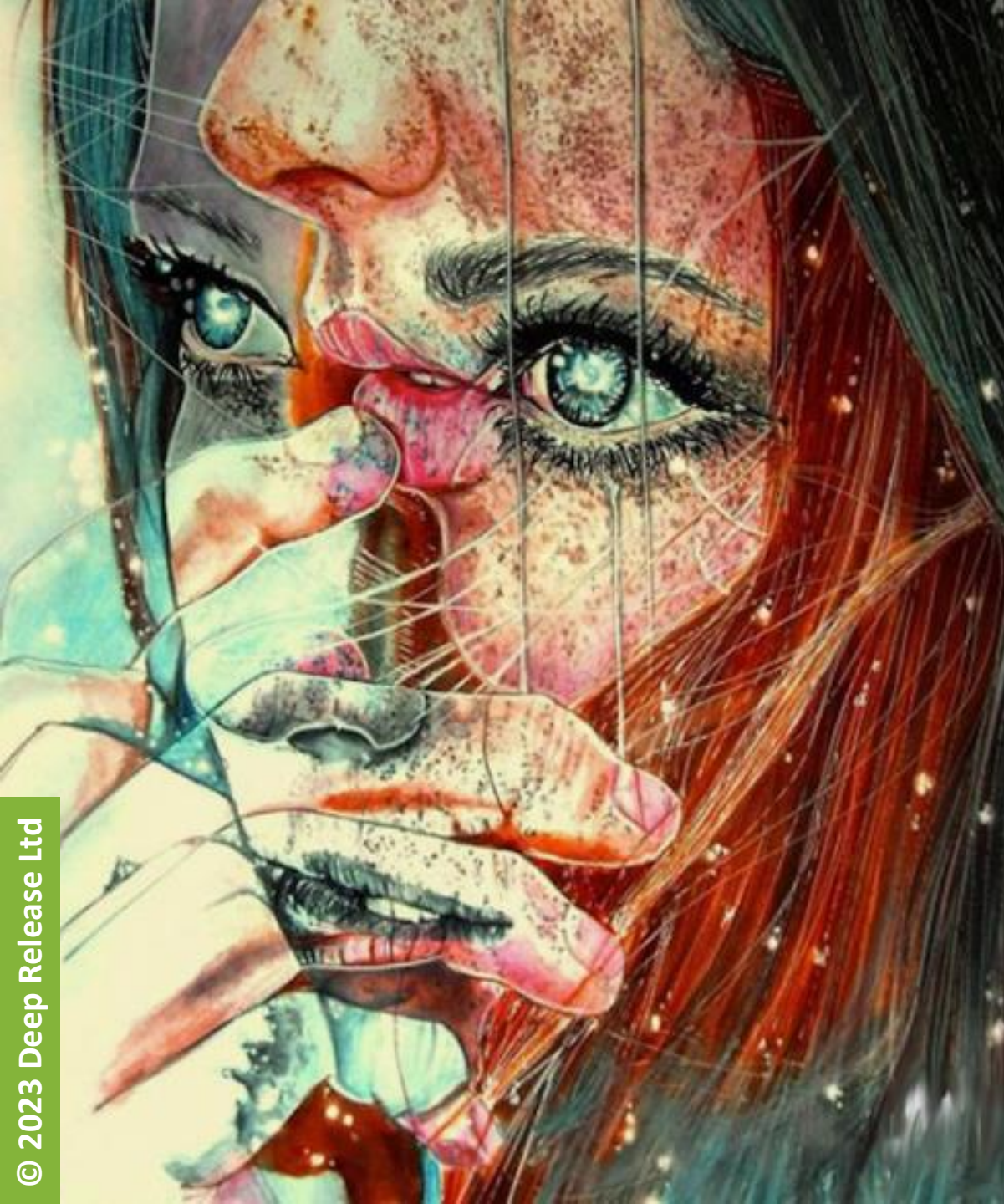
- Hypervigilant
- Defended
- Obsessive thinking
- Intrusive images
- Panicky feelings
- Flashbacks
- Nightmares





Physical symptoms may include...

- Stomach problems
- IBS
- Headaches
- Gynaecological issues
- Pelvic pain
- Dyspareunia (painful intercourse)
- Vaginismus
- Serious health issues



Emotional symptoms may include...

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Anger outbursts
- Self-Harm behaviours
- Eating Disorders
- Sleep Disorders
- Panic Attacks
- Dissociative Disorders
- Relationship Difficulties
- Addictions
- The desire to die

Take a Break



See you in 5 minutes

Session 7:

The Process of Therapy and Post Traumatic Growth

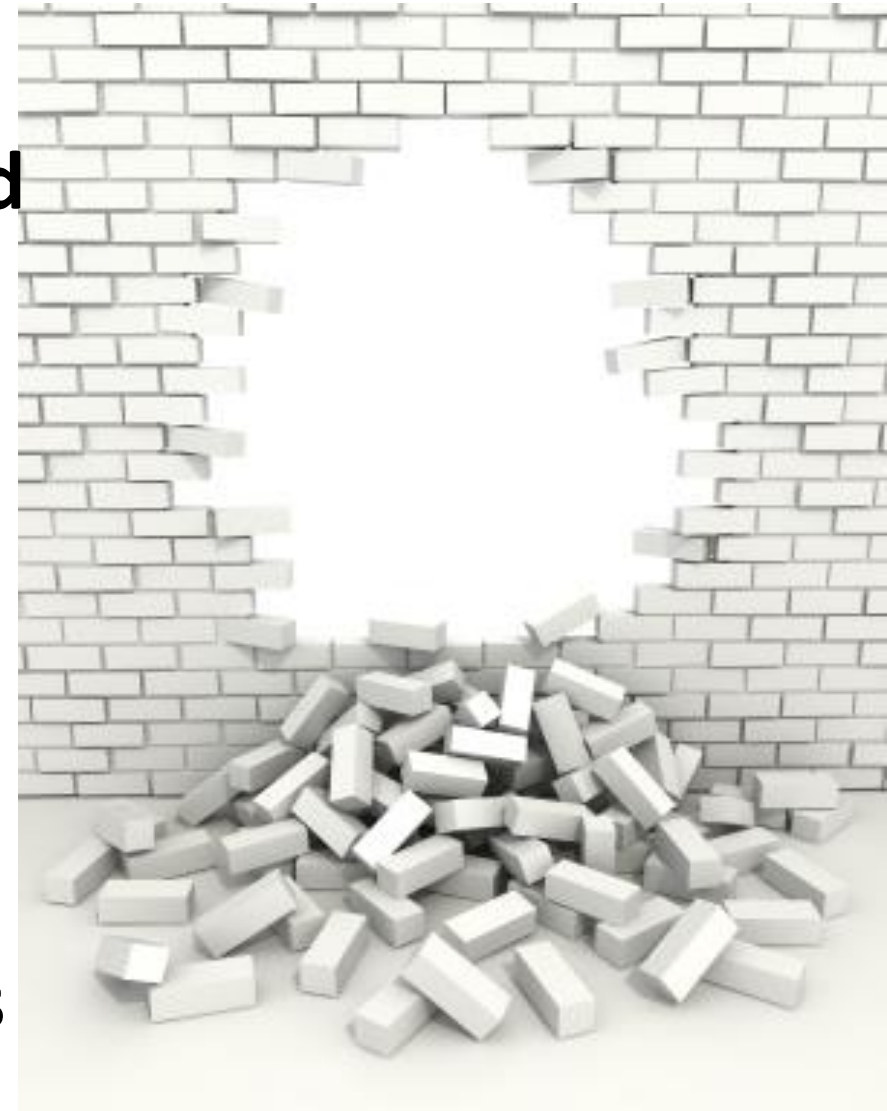


Bren's Story

Please stop your
video to improve film
quality. Thank you.

Rebuilding Work

- Building the therapeutic relationship
- Building the secure base
- Building the story – repeated – it isn't told until it's told – more each time
- Building energy – we hold the strength/anger until the client can
- Building creativity – working with art / creative tools
- Building containment skills / affect regulation
- Building new neural networks / pathways
- Building fun into therapy



POST TRAUMATIC GROWTH

As far back as the mid-1990s, Dr Richard Tedeschi and Dr Lawrence Calhoun developed the ‘Post Traumatic Growth Inventory’

It looks for positive responses in 5 areas:

- A greater appreciation of life
- Relationships with others are deepened
- New possibilities
- Personal strength and greater self-belief/self-worth
- Spiritual change – “designing a life worth continuing to live”



THE CIRCLE OF CAPACITY : Cathy Malchiodi

“While I have applied Siegel’s [Window of Tolerance] framework to my clinical thinking, I have rarely explained it to individuals using the word “tolerate.”

When it comes to the terror and atrocities of traumatic experiences, trauma survivors have tolerated too much for far too long:

...abuse, neglect, and assault...

...multiple traumatic events since childhood...

...disrupted attachment...

...repetitive interpersonal violence...

...constant feelings of shame and guilt...



THE CIRCLE OF CAPACITY : Cathy Malchiodi

*“The experience of psychological trauma is generally connected to the presence of distress
BUT*

*...it is also the absence of **joy, play, curiosity, laughter, and self-compassion**...*

*As well as coping with distress, repair of trauma is also about expanding **the capacity for positive and pleasurable experiences in mind and body***

... It is time that survivors hear that recovery extends beyond simply expanding abilities to cope with distress.

*It is about instilling experiences of **resilience, joy, and pleasure** that ultimately replace suffering and pain with wholeness and well-being.”*



Ideas for Buddy Group discussions

- How much have you been aware of younger parts in your clients responding with differing reactions to therapy?
- How have you responded when clients have presented with physical symptoms of trauma?
- What did you think about the 'Circle of Capacity'?

Send your comments and questions to Morag when you return to the main group.

15 minutes



Take a Break



See you in 5 minutes



Maya Angelou: a testimony



A message of hope

Please stop your
video to improve film
quality. Thank you.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=stAOpg71vK4>

“The most **beautiful** people
we have known are those who have
known defeat, known suffering,
known struggle, known loss,
and have found their way out of the depths.
These persons have an appreciation,
a sensitivity, and an understanding of life
that fills them with compassion, gentleness,
and a deep loving concern.
Beautiful people do not just happen.”

- Elisabeth Kübler-Ross

LINKS AND RECOMMENDED READING

Kat and Charlie (Eastenders)

<https://youtu.be/LuqiIDILIN4>

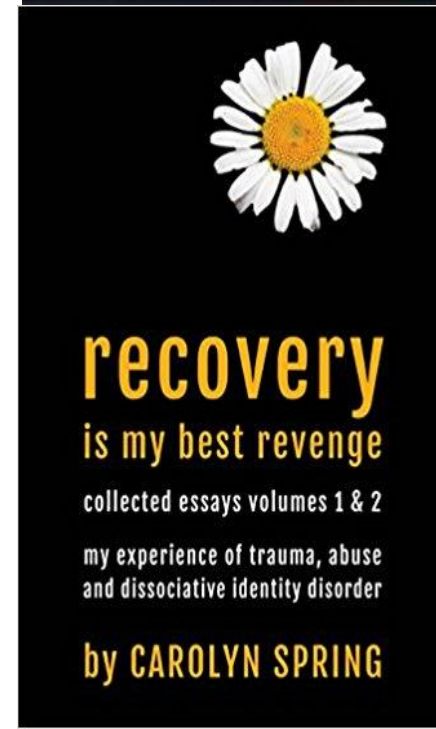
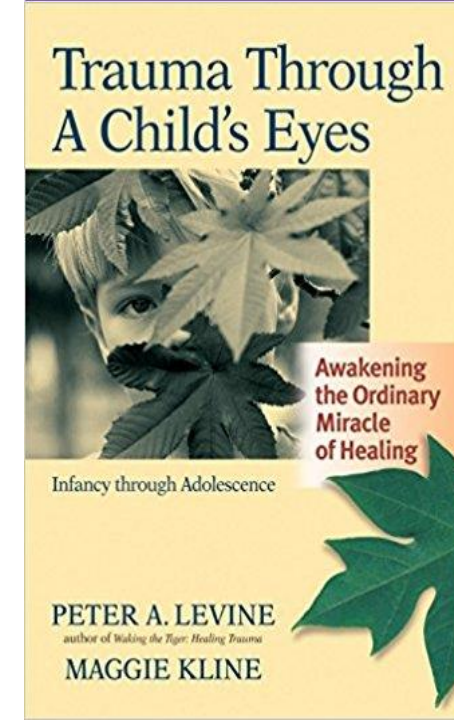
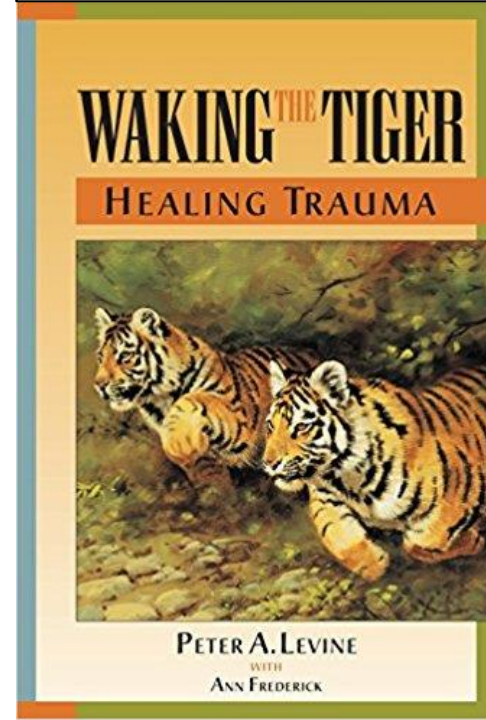
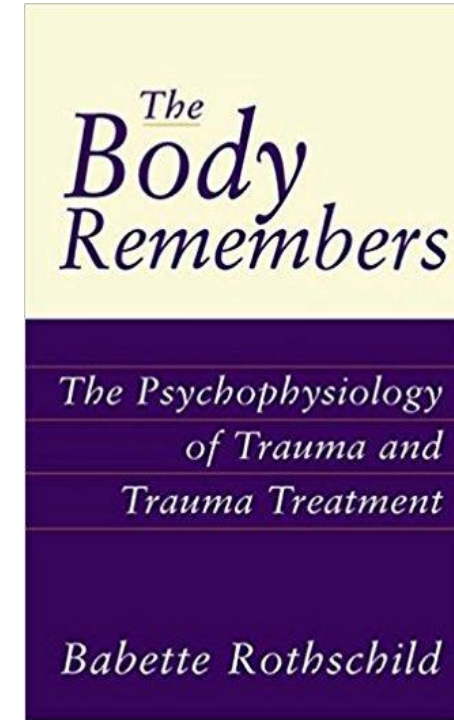
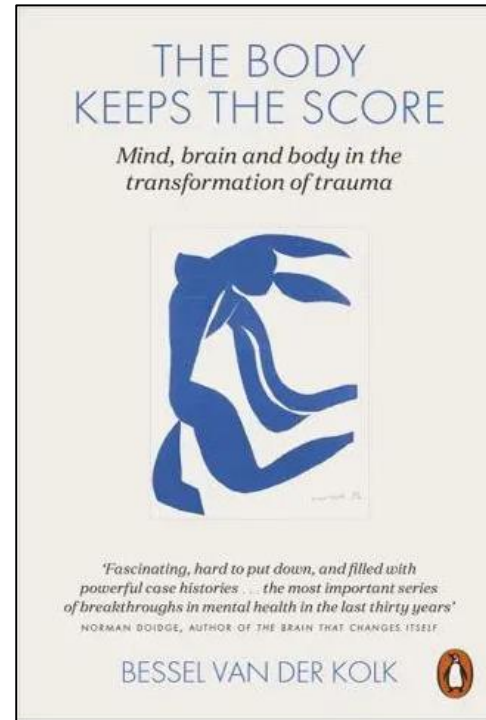
May Angelou Testimony

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=stAOpg71vK4>

Recommended viewing

Babette Rothschild

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LhuzpUlaX_k





Resources

[PACT-RESOURCES.CO.UK](https://pact-resources.co.uk)

ORIGINAL & CREATIVE
COUNSELLING RESOURCES

Cards

e-Resources



Erikson's Life Stages



Wheel of Life



Working with Animal
Figures Online Pack

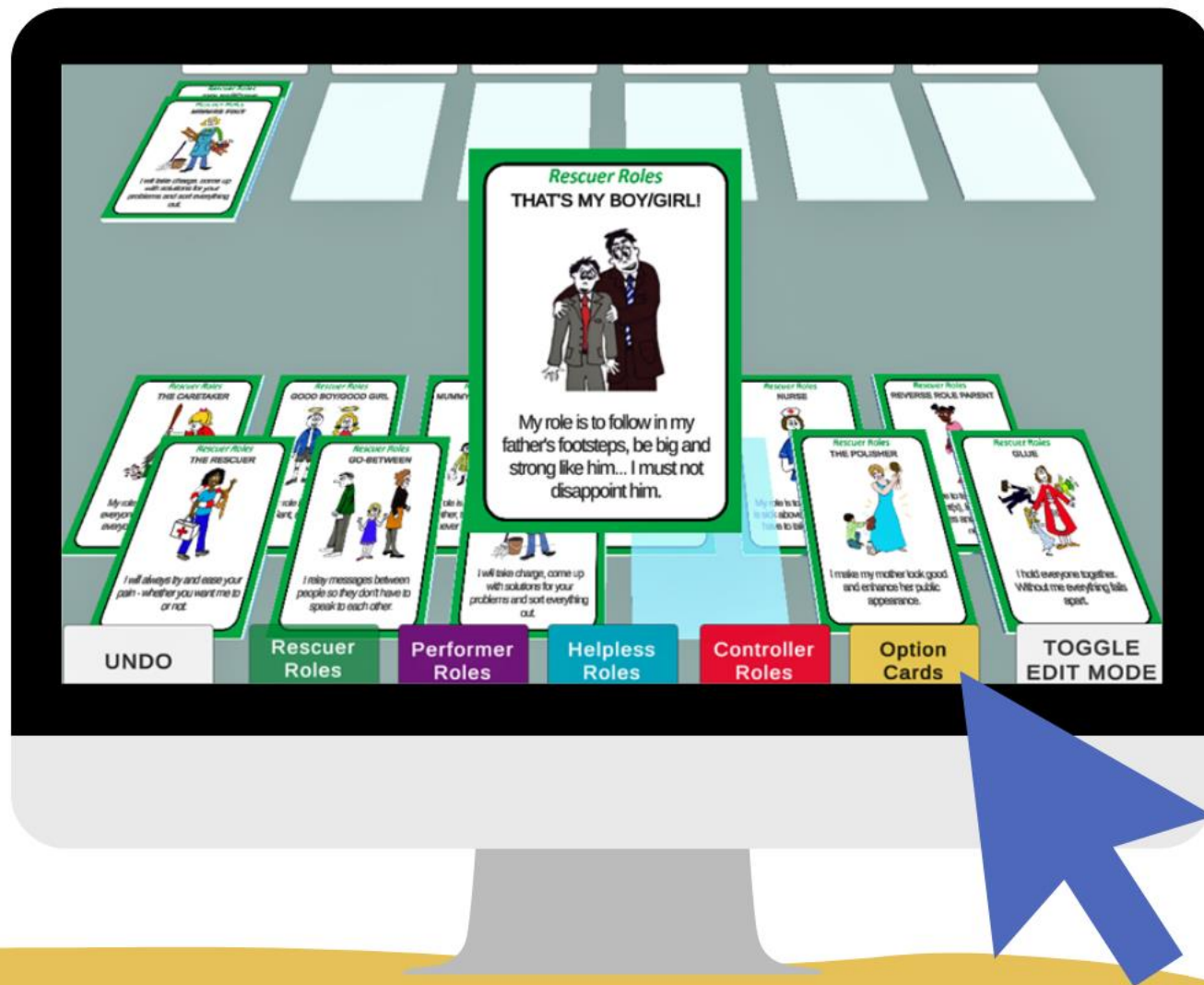


Therapeutic Sandscapes™
Online Pack

pact-resources.co.uk

Coming
soon...

Use the Roles
Played in Families
& other cards
online!



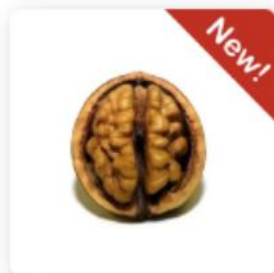
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3 for 2 on all videos

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Neuroscience in a Nutshell
£30.00



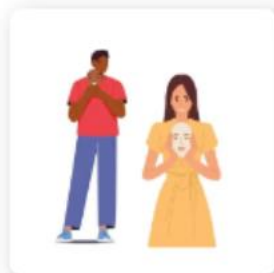
Using Erikson's Life Stages
in Counselling
£30.00



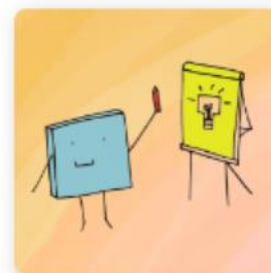
6 Ways of Working with
the Inner Child - Training
Video
£30.00



Building Boundaries
Breaking Barriers -
Training Video
£30.00



Imposter Syndrome -
Training Video
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Psycho-integration for
Counsellors - Training
Video
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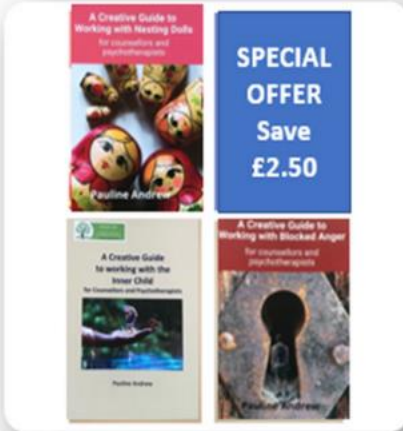
Trust and Betrayal -
Training Video
£30.00



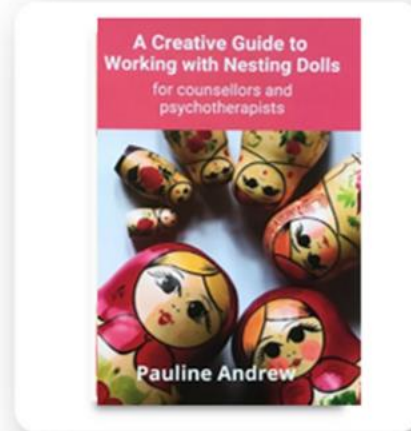
Attachment and Shame -
Training Video
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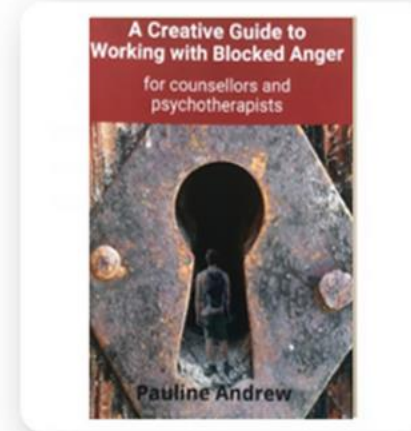
Books



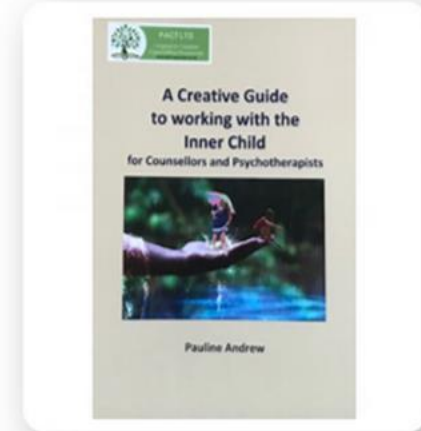
Special offer – save
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all 3 books
£32.00



A Creative Guide to
Working with Nesting
Dolls
£11.50



A Creative Guide to
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Blocked Anger
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A Creative Guide to
Working with the
Inner Child
£11.50

Also available on Kindle

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