

# Multiplicity, Abuse & Healing Network

## Peer Support for Abuse Survivors

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**A Gospel of Shame:  
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**Description:**

This book will serve those who need and want an analysis of the scandal that is currently rocking the Catholic Church.

## Association: The Key To Recovery

source: Sara Lambert

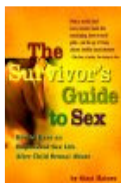
Association seems like such a simple concept. How many times has your therapist urged you to find the connection between an event and your response to it, saying that therein will lie the clue to your healing? That's a pretty straightforward instruction. But how many times have you, faced with such a task, been at a total loss as to what to do?

The difficulty for many dissociative survivors is that they have never learnt the basics of how to connect pieces of things together in appropriate ways. In fact, to the contrary: they have developed a polished expertise at keeping things separate, discrete, dissociated. It's how they survived. Therefore, assuming a dissociative survivor will know how to go about the process of associating event and reaction is like assuming a Siberian peasant will be able to operate a computer.

Association is simple, but only once you have been taught how to do it. The trick is focus. When you are having an obvious reaction to something but you don't know what the something was, there are often dozens of possibilities. Trying to discover the real one can sometimes seem like trying to find a needle in a haystack, especially if you are multiple and so do not only have to consider events that happened in the outside world, but also those that happened internally as well, and that might have sparked off your reaction.

You can achieve focus through the types of questions you ask yourself. "Why do I feel anxious?" is not a good question. It is too unspecific. You are liable to get a very long, rambling, and emotional answer - if you don't indeed get many such

**The Survivor's Guide to Sex: How to Have an Empowered Sex Life After Child Sexual Abuse**



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#### Description:

Interviews with survivors and abusers refute many commonly held myths about female perpetrators.

answers, from different selves, layered on top of each other all at the same time. Or you may get an answer like, "I'm anxious because I'm scared" (which is typical trance logic). Even if you are lucky enough to get a clear answer, such as, "I'm anxious because the neighbor's baby is crying," you still do not have very much information. While you do have the big picture - that a crying baby is a trigger - you still have none of the details that fill it in and help you understand exactly what the reason is for that trigger disturbing you.

On the other hand, merely changing the question to, "What made me feel anxious?" immediately demands concrete specifics. Certainly, it may take you hours or days to come up with an answer, but at least your search has been focussed on something tangible. There are some questions you can ask yourself which are designed to furnish you with as much information as possible, so that you can get a detailed picture, rather than just a vague idea, of what is going on. Asking these questions may seem not quite right to you at first, because they are not interested in discovering your feelings or process - they are information-seekers only. If you find yourself answering any of them with a sentence beginning, "Because..." you know you are doing it wrong!

### 1. What (noun) specifically?

For example, in response to a statement like, "Something about that man scared me," you could ask, "What about him, exactly?" Or if you hear a generalization such as, "Men are dangerous," you could ask, "What men specifically?" If you get the standard fudging response of "All men," you could query this simply by turning it into a question: "All men?"

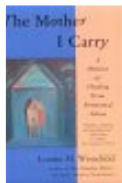
### 2. How (verb) specifically?

For example, if someone tells you, "I felt bad when I heard a baby crying," you could ask them, "how exactly did you feel?" - in other words, requesting detailed information about ask what their body did, what their mind was thinking, what emotions were stirring in their heart. Every piece of information will hold an important clue to why a baby's cry made them feel "bad." Physical reactions may be body memories. Emotions may be flashbacks. Thoughts may be old indoctrinations from childhood. Another example: You are told, "That man scared me." Ask in response, "How did he scare you?" The reply may be that he yelled, said a swear word, or simply had brown hair. You are then able to ask a variation of question one, such as, "What is it about brown hair that scares you?"

### 3. What would happen if you did?

This question is a good response to statements like, "I couldn't do that." Answers will reveal hidden messages

### The Mother I Carry: A Memoir of Healing from Emotional Abuse



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#### Description:

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### Growing Beyond Survival: A Self-Help Toolkit for Managing Traumatic Stress



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**ISBN-1886968098**

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**Description:**

This book helps trauma survivors to learn coping skills and to develop trust.

and subtle education implanted during childhood, as well as leading back to memories about specific things that may have happened in the past. For example, if someone says, "I mustn't leave any food on my plate," ask them what would happen if they did, and you may get an interesting answer like, "I'll get hit."

It is entirely possible that, when you ask these questions, they might get too close too quickly to the frightening truth, and so result in a defensive response. Thus you may be struck with a sudden barrage of emotion (anger, crying), acting out (overeating, self-harm) or there may be prevarication, confusion, lying, or withdrawal.

Do not be discouraged if this happens. All of it is important material which can inform you not only that you have struck a nerve, but also what defenses are in place to protect that nerve. The willingness of others to answer your questions will depend on their levels of safety and trust in you. But you must also look at your willingness to hear what they have to say. All the answers in the world will do no good if you don't believe them, or "forget" them hours after they were told to you. If you are still protecting yourself too much to receive informative answers, you can either write down what you are told then put it aside for later, or you can avoid asking questions until you know you are really ready to hear what the answers will be.

Thanks to John Binstead for providing the information on which this article is based. The techniques described here are an element of the NLP counseling method.

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