

RECOMMENDED READING

By Pete Walker (925)283-4575 www.pete-walker.com

Bibliotherapy is a term that describes the very real process of being positively and therapeutically influenced by what one reads. Bibliotherapy can play an enormous role in enhancing recovery from Complex PTSD. I usually find that my clients who make the most progress are those who augment their therapy sessions with reading homework [recommended by me or self-prescribed]. This is especially true of those who further augment their reading with journaling about their cognitive and emotional responses to it. These processes help build the new physiological and neuronal brain circuitry that accompanies the growth of self-compassion and self-championing. [For more on Journaltherapy, read the section on verbal ventilating in Chapter 5 of my book].

Bibliotherapy is especially helpful for individuals like me who grew up in dangerous social environments replete with adults who offered little but criticism, intimidation and disgust, and devoid of adults who could be looked to for safe support and guidance. It was not until later in life, when I had actually had quite a few years of group and individual therapy, that I realized that my actual recovery process began a full decade before formal therapy and was comprised of therapeutic reading and writing I had naturally gravitated to. Before the end of this decade of bibliotherapy and journaltherapy, I was too much in denial to know that I'd been grievously injured in my family, and I was way beyond even considering the idea of going into formal therapy and exposing my vulnerabilities to another human being. Instead I sought the help of others in the many spiritual and psychological self-help books I was somewhat unconsciously drawn to. Without really understanding it, I not only gained valuable insights about how to improve the way I treated myself and others, but equally importantly, I gleaned that there were numerous good, safe, wise and helpful adults out there who could be trusted and who had a great deal of wise and kind guidance to offer. Over time the authors of these books seemed like a small tribe of elders who I began to imagine as people who would have empathy for me had I occasion to meet them. Eventually when I achieved something of a critical mass of this awareness, I managed to take what seemed at the time a blind, frightening leap into the water of therapy, and lucked out – a “luck” informed by all I had read – and got a good enough therapist to help me take steps in my healing that I could not manage on my own [Please also see “Finding a Therapist” on this website.]

So here are some authors [and their works] who have been helpful to me on my journey – who were the wise aunts and uncles I never biologically had.

Alice Miller	<i>The Drama of The Gifted Child</i> {Codependence}
John Bradshaw	<i>Healing The Shame That Binds</i>
Judith Herman	<i>Trauma and Recovery</i>
Gravitz&Bowden	<i>Guide to Recovery</i> {Great short, powerful overview}
Susan Anderson	<i>The Journey from Abandonment to Healing</i>
Jane Middleton-Moz	<i>Children of Trauma</i>
Susan Forward	<i>Betrayal of Innocence</i>
Robin Norwood	<i>Women Who Love Too Much</i> {Codependence}
Pat Love	<i>The Emotional Incest Syndrome</i> {Codependence}
Laura Davis and Ellen Bass	<i>The Courage to Heal</i> {Sexual Abuse}
Theodore Rubin	<i>Compassion and Self-hate</i>
Susan Vaughan	<i>The Talking Cure</i> {How Therapy Works}
Jack Kornfield	<i>A Path with Heart</i> {Meditation as a tool of self-compassion}
Gay Hendricks	<i>Learning to Love Yourself</i>
Byron Brown	<i>Soul Without Shame</i> {Inner critic work}
Lewis & Amini	<i>A General Theory Of Love</i> {The Neuroscience of trauma recovery}
Lucia Capacchione	<i>Recovery of your Inner Child</i> {Journal therapy}
Cheri Huber	<i>There is Nothing Wrong with You</i>
Manuel Smith	<i>When I Say No, I Feel Guilty</i> {A Classic on Assertiveness Training}