

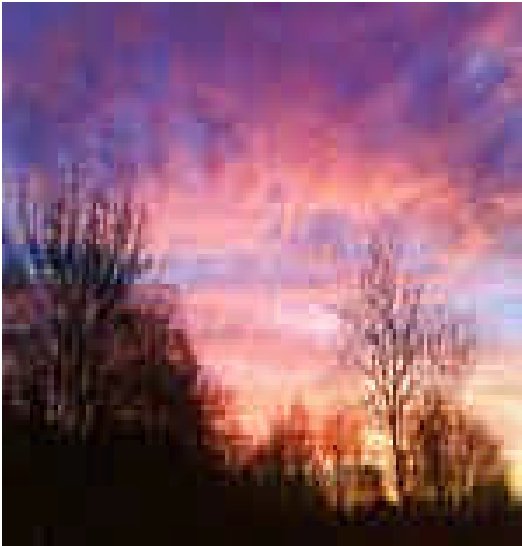
Learning to See the Beauty:

One person's perspective on recovery from childhood trauma.



Every human being is a beautiful, unique part of this world. Trauma can cause us to hate ourselves, in an unconscious kind of embracing of the abuser's belief system. Repudiating those beliefs can be extremely difficult, but do it anyway. Repudiate, repudiate and repudiate again. Eventually, we can and will win over those negative beliefs.

My recovery from trauma has been like a spiral, not at all linear. In that sense, we are always recovering.



For many years, I saw the world in black and white. There was no joy, no excitement, and no beauty anywhere. Now, I am greedy for beauty, anywhere, anyhow.

Recovering from trauma means acquainting or reacquainting oneself with oneself. I have had to meet and embrace my inner child or children, showering myself with love in my own Buddhist spiritual practice. Loving me was so alien to me, that initially, it caused great distress and upset. I had to tolerate the distress, and continue the practice anyway. Now I am seeing the benefits from my “work.” I say work because recovering from trauma IS such hard work.

Emotions we can expect to feel in the course of recovery:

Grief
Rage
Fear
Sadness

Horror
Shame
Guilt

Emotions we can expect to feel after some of the junk has been cleaned out:

Hope
Happiness
Excitement
Joy
Self-respect
Self-love

In the course of my recovery, I have felt emotional pain that is almost beyond belief. I use the word pain to mean grief, rage, sadness and fear. I never knew there was so much pain until I started meeting myself.

Each time, I told myself, "This is good, this is healing." That helped me to accept the emotion. I learned in Dialectical Behavioral Therapy that resisting the emotion is much worse than feeling it. Start small, if possible.

What I have found is that it takes memories to bring the emotions that need to be felt in order to heal. While I "made the decision" that as few memories as possible was advisable, I knew I had to do some kind of "memory work." So when they came, I tried to accept them. I had to stop working in order to recover from the abuse. I am back to work now. Before I allowed myself to remember, things internally were a mess. Afterwards, things were "shared" and not as separate anymore. I'm sure everyone's process is different, and yet similar. Keep the faith that you can do it, and stay HOPEFUL!!