

Prologue

When people learn about the events of my life, their reaction is always the same—"How did you survive?" "Why aren't you selling yourself on the street corner?" "You must have had years of therapy." Even as a child, I can remember acquaintances who knew our family whispering things like, "There's Millie's daughter, the poor girl. When she grows up she'll hate her mother for the life she's had."

By the time I was 16 years old I'd been to 13 schools and lived in as many homes, including two stays at the Ontario Training School for Girls, and one year at The Inn, a halfway home for girls in Windsor. Even marriage, at seventeen, didn't bring the security and happiness I so badly craved. My husband, insecure himself, physically and mentally abused me. We were two emotionally disturbed people who were not able to give each other the encouragement and caring we both needed.

For most of those years, I couldn't laugh. I can remember sitting in a room watching television with other people and if someone on the television said something funny, everyone would laugh. But I just sat there. I wasn't able to feel anything, except my constant inner pain. I didn't know how to enjoy life or get pleasure out of everyday things like going for a walk or enjoying the company of friends. I had no idea of what it felt like to trust; I was always on guard wondering when I was going to get hurt again.

Books that changed my life. I began reading books on how to change your thinking, and how to change your attitude. I learned I didn't have to be a victim. I learned how to love myself and forgive my mother. I could change my life just by changing the way I thought.

This was my motivation for writing this book. If my book can help one person find their way through the pain, then it was all worth it.

After ten years of marriage, I took my daughter Lisa, left my husband, and began to make a life for myself. I enrolled in college and after 2 years earned my diploma as a Library Technician. Shortly before I was to graduate, I met Ed and my life changed forever. Ed convinced me that I was loveable, worthy, and strong. I began to believe in myself. I went to university and earned my BA in English and began writing my way through the trauma of my childhood.

This is my story.