

Chapter II

An Ugly Visible And Invisible Scar

Child Sexual Abuse is an ugly visible and invisible scar. It is seen through visible physical evidence on the body such as bruises, scratches, and bodily fluids of blood and sperm from penetration. Other visible signs are through the victim's demeanor, attitude, and actions. Child Sexual Abuse is also unseen through invisible evidence such as the victim's mental, spiritual, and psychological makeup. The invisible scar lies dormant in the victim's soul.

Child sexual abuse is a terrible crime that leaves deep scars. The impact of the abuse goes far beyond the immediate act and affects every part of a survivor's life. The trauma leaves the victim trying to unpack why it happened, what caused it to happen and how it could have been prevented.

When perpetrators sexually abuse their victims, they are destroying their victims physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. The perpetrator causes permanent damage to their victims. The victims live with the trauma of sexual abuse for years. According to De Sousa, Shrivastava and Sonavane in the article titled, "Child Sexual Abuse and the Development of Psychiatric Disorders: A Neurobiological Trajectory of Pathogenesis," Child Sexual Abuse can result in various physical health issues. Victims may experience sleep disturbances, headaches, gastrointestinal problems, and chronic pain. Some victims may exhibit harmful behaviors such as cutting or substance abuse to numb emotional pain.

Emotional and psychological effects leave victims with feelings of shame, guilt, anger, and betrayal. De Sousa, Shrivastava and Sonavane also reveal that victims may struggle with low self-esteem, depression, anxiety disorders, and post-traumatic stress disorder. (PTSD) Trust issues and difficulty forming healthy relationships. Cognitive symptoms can impact the victim's ability to concentrate, remember details, and make decisions.

They may experience flashbacks or intrusive thoughts related to the abuse. Victims might also have difficulty regulating their emotions, leading to frequent mood swings or emotional outbursts.

Younger victims may experience stomachaches, eating disorders, bedwetting, sleep disturbances, nightmares, psychosomatic complaints, and headaches. They may also experiment with substance abuse or engage in other harmful behaviors to cope. Some victims exhibit sexualized behavior, inappropriate sexual knowledge or engage in sexual activities that are developmentally inappropriate. They may struggle with intimacy or establishing and maintaining healthy relationships. (De Sousa, et. al, 2017)

Although, it is known that Child Sexual Abuse is unfair to the victim, at some point the victim must turn from victim to victor and turn the pain into purpose. When sorting through the trauma, it is best to seek your creator, God. Go back to God to discover what He initially intended for your life before the sexual abuse happened. You need to get clarity on who you are, who you belong to and the purpose God has for your life. When you find answers to these questions you will no longer be confused about your purpose here on earth. It is ok to seek outside help from a counselor, therapist, or psychiatrist to sort through the trauma.

Men continue to cause more scars to women when they mistreat, lead astray, say horrible things about them, or use profanity words to label them. Some use labels such as damaged goods or jump offs. Some men treat women like door mats or intentionally play mind games with them. They cause women to lose everything physically, mentally, and emotionally to deplete them as humans. When men gaslight, control, lie and manipulate women they open past scars, hurts, abuse, and pain. The same can be applied to women, but unfortunately according to history and statistics, the majority who do this are men.

Sexual abuse and rape bring a feeling of shame, depression, and despair on the victims. They feel this way because the hurt inflicted on them was not their fault, but they are left to deal with the affects of sexual abuse.

This is seen in the story of Tamar found in 2 Samuel Chapter 13. She was raped by her half-brother, Amnon. Tamar was a virgin. She was also an innocent victim trying to help her brother who lied about being ill. While Tamar was helping Amnon, she was forced to have sex with him. She begged her brother not to do this horrible thing. She warned him about the consequences of his actions, but he refused to listen. After he raped Tamar, he immediately felt disdain for her and sent her away. Tamar tore her clothes and went into hiding to live with her other brother, Absalom. He later avenged his sister's honor. Absalom gave an order for Amnon to be killed for the heinous deed he inflicted on Tamar.

Trauma doesn't only come from the incident that happened. It also comes from disappointment, hurt and feeling that the perpetrator got away with the wicked deed. There was no accountability or consequences for what was done. This makes victims feel that anyone can do anything to them without consequences.

Therefore, the trauma lies dormant in the soul. When someone triggers the trauma that happened to you it is like someone taking the scab off a sore. It is exposed again which hasn't fully healed yet. A scab needs to grow again to cover the sore. The scab protects the sore from further infections. It won't heal if the scab is continuing to be broken or taken off. The scab can be taken off by you, others, or circumstances intentionally or unintentionally. We must do our due diligence to protect the sore until it heals. Getting the necessary tools to heal the sore include antiseptic, alcohol, peroxide, camphor phenique, and band-aids to cover the sore. The band-aids keep the sore from being exposed to germs and other elements until it heals underneath the scab.