

## *In the Truth Itself, There Is Healing*

~Ellen Bass

If you endured sexual abuse as a child it may be difficult to believe Bass' quote. As a child, to speak the truth of your abuse you may have felt it equaled fear, guilt, shame, embarrassment, and humiliation. You may have worried that no one would believe you or, even worse, that possibly you would be blamed. The fear of the potential consequences in speaking the truth helped to seal many false messages:

It is my fault, I am guilty, I asked for the violation on my body, I am dirty, I do not matter. All of these negative assumptions may have become your inner belief about yourself; they may have become your false truth.

The damaging messages a child receives and believes the moment the violating touch is felt are sealed into their heart and the burden begins to be carried. Over time, this burden becomes heavier and heavier and the pervasive shame-based messages may leave the now-adult survivor feeling isolated, alone, and frightened. The scars carried by the soul can lead to several

problems such as: depression, anxiety, anger, eating disorders, substance abuse, suicidal thoughts, difficulty in relationships, and intimacy.

The prevalence of child sexual abuse in our nation is alarming. Nationwide statistics show that 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will be sexually abused before the age of 18. It is believed that because of the pervasive shameful feelings associated with being violated, the prevalence is under-reported and, therefore, the true statistics are even higher.

Child sexual abuse has been a problem for generations, it is nothing new. What is new is that survivors are finding their voices and taking their power back. Secrecy and silence are no longer acceptable.

There comes a time when the adult survivor wants to say "ENOUGH," to release the shame, shed their soul of the shame-based feelings, reclaim their innocence and pureness. How is this done? How does one shed the shame? How does one find freedom from the sorrow in the surviving heart? Speaking the truth, the one action the survivor feared as a child, is the key to unlocking the door

of inner freedom. To do this may feel scary, difficult, almost impossible. It takes courage to speak the truth; the same courage one used to endure the abuse is the very courage the survivor needs to find healing.

At Turning Point Women's Counseling and Advocacy Center you are not alone. Our trained staff will walk along with you on your healing journey. There is healing in sharing your story and connecting with other survivors. We offer individual therapy, group therapy, art therapy, group art therapy and sand tray therapy. These different modalities are available to help you heal and discover your voice.

If you are reading this and you are a survivor of childhood sexual abuse, please know your story matters and that you matter. At Turning Point we want to help you find your voice and we want to hear your story. Turning Point: a place for hope, a place of safety, a place to release the burden of shame. It is a place that will help you on your journey towards wholeness, towards reclaiming your innocence, a place to help you heal for good. You are not alone anymore. We welcome you.



I am the founder of Turning Point Women's Counseling and Advocacy Center and I am a survivor of childhood sexual abuse. I know what it feels like to feel dirty, ashamed and guilt ridden; what it feels like to believe my abuse was all my fault. I worked very hard to reframe my mindset of being a victim to being a survivor. My dream of creating a safe, therapeutic environment dedicated to women survivors of childhood sexual abuse, a healing center where a woman can share her story, shed her shame and begin her healing journey has come to fruition. I would be honored to help you begin taking the steps towards healing. I invite you to visit the center and allow me to give you a personal tour.

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