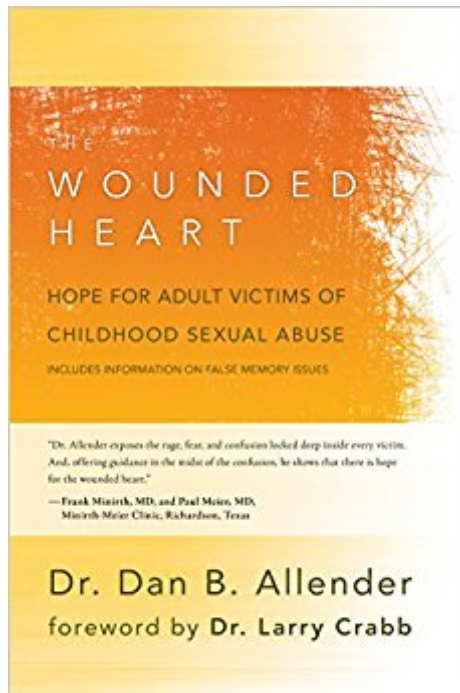


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# The Wounded Heart: Hope For Adult Victims Of Childhood Sexual Abuse



## Synopsis

Sexual abuse knows no religious or social boundaries. The Wounded Heart is an intensely personal and specific look at this form of abuse. Dr. Allender explores the secret lament of the soul damaged by sexual abuse and lays hold of the hope buried there by the One whose unstained image we all bear. Includes information about false memory issues.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

You may think you don't know anyone who has been sexually abused, especially if most of your friends and acquaintances are Christians. But the statistics indicate otherwise. The Wounded Heart is an intensely personal and specific look at this most "soul deadening" form of abuse. Personal because it may be affecting you, your spouse, a close friend or neighbor, or someone you know well at church; and specific because it goes well beyond the general issues and solutions discussed in other books. Dr. Allender's book reaches deep into the wounded heart of someone you know, exploring the secret lament of the soul damaged by sexual abuse and laying hold of the hope buried there by the One whose unstained image we all bear.

Dr. Dan B. Allender received his MDiv from Westminster Theological Seminary and his PhD in Counseling Psychology from Michigan State University. Dan taught in the Biblical Counseling Department of Grace Theological Seminary for seven years (1983-1989). From 1989-1997 Dan worked as professor in the Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling program

at Colorado Christian University, Denver, Colorado. Currently, Dan serves as Professor of Counseling Psychology and President at Mars Hill Graduate School (MHGS.edu) in Seattle, Washington. He travels and speaks extensively to present his unique perspective on sexual abuse recovery, love and forgiveness, worship, and other related topics. He is the author of *The Wounded Heart* (NavPress), and has coauthored four books with Dr. Tremper Longman III, *Intimate Allies* (Tyndale), *The Cry of the Soul* (NavPress), *Bold Love* (NavPress), and *Breaking the Idols of Your Heart* (IVP). Dan and his wife, Rebecca, have three children and live in Seattle, Washington.

*The Wounded Heart* by Dr. Dan B. Allender is, as you might expect, a very heavy book. Dr. Allender's profession and his book are borne out of great pain from his own childhood abuse and his great concern for others. *The Wounded Heart* is a psychological analysis of the trauma of childhood sexual abuse. He addresses many facets of the effect it has on the victim's heart and the difficulties victims face. He discusses the great problem victims have with trust—both with people and with God. "The devilishness of abuse is that it does Satan's work of deceiving children about God's true nature and encouraging them to mistrust Him." He delves into the importance of facing one's horrible memories and working through them. Dr. Allender makes the statement, "The wise course is to focus on who we are now." Dr. Allender emphasizes the value of counseling. Most victims of abuse need help with working through their attitudes and also with their spiritual growth, which go hand-in-hand. I appreciate especially his last section about how to give victims hope. He says, "The most common error in some Christian groups is to ignore the problem or offer true solutions in a trite way." He emphasizes the complexity of each individual's experiences and problems. "Those who desire to honor God and the redemptive work of Christ must embrace both the simplicity and the complexity that exists in the problem and the solution. . . . When we move toward loving God and others, we can be sure that something radical and supernatural has intruded to alter the process of self-centered stagnation and decay. Change is always a process." Allender speaks of faith, decisions, hope, and trusting God. This is a very complete work, by far the heaviest work I've read on the subject of abuse and overcoming. The first three-fourths of *The Wounded Heart* are about the damage and reactions to abuse. This first part is complicated and technical. The last part of the book offers hope and healing. I would recommend *The Wounded Heart* to anyone who counsels, especially people in Christian ministry. We must no longer ignore the signs

of abuse and be ignorant of the questions to ask the people we counsel. We need to know how to walk them through the healing process. I believe this is a helpful and instructive reference book.

I read this book to gain a deeper understanding of this topic and more compassion for those who have endured sexual abuse. I have a dear friend who carries this tragedy heavily. While the author is laboriously Christian in his approach, his depth of knowledge and concern for abuse victims are profound. It makes me really sad to read the statistics about the prevalence of sexual abuse in the world, primarily against children and teens. One cannot help but admire Mr Allender's sincere commitment to helping.

I have a girlfriend-a wonderful person- who suffered severe sexual abuse in her pre-teen years....we've been together on and off, mostly on, for 14 years...I'm 63; she's 42....but I've seen the effects of this past abuse in her life, and have not known how to help her grow out of it. I've seen her make some really bad choices that were motivated by the buried pain from suffering abuse. So I bought this book (as a start), planning to give it to her when she was released from the hospital (she had a long series of hospitalizations from post-chemo opportunistic infections). So when she was released, I took her book-shopping, and she picked out a bunch of human-interest novels (her favorite). When we got home, I slipped this book in among our purchases. Thinking it was one of the novels, she picked it up and began to read.....and was spellbound at Dan's description, of how a person who suffered abuse feels, and how their reaction to the abuse, and attempts to cope with the dull ache inside, skew their life and the choices they make. She didn't want to put it down. Her attention was riveted on what was being said. It had "the ring of truth". I am looking forward to walking with her through the recovery process, and this book will be an appropriate and effective starting place. I encourage any and all of you who are in relationship with someone who suffered abuse, to buy this book and give it to their partner, and to be prepared to walk with them through the difficult process of recovery. This book is a great place to start.

I will read this again with more time to think about what is written. As a survivor who has begun to thrive, this book helps deal with the reality of damage that has occurred.

Its hard to say you love a book on such a hard topic. But then again, I don't know a more accurate and articulate aid for helping someone through sexual abuse. It took me 6 months to read this book, simply because each paragraph landed like a salvo on my heart. Truth is disruptive, I suppose,

before it heals. I do believe you will find freedom as I did in reading this book. But pace yourself. Its a journey, not a book.

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