



## **Healing Childhood Emotional Abuse with Mindfulness Meditation**

By Mary Sovran

Are you an adult survivor of childhood emotional abuse? If so, then you're not alone. Many people have been deeply wounded and scarred as children by their tormentors. They grew up with little or no self-esteem because of being abused. This problem can trouble you for years and cause you a great deal of pain. Believe me, I understand the problem from personal experience.

### **Abusers Can Be Anyone**

The source of childhood emotional abuse can be from parents, siblings, other relatives and even neighbors, or you may have suffered at the hands of more than one abuser at a time. Emotional abuse can also take many forms. You may have simply been ignored and made to feel invisible. Did you wonder if they remembered that you lived in that household, that you were alive, that you had feelings and desires just as the rest of the family members did?

### **Love Can't Be Earned**

As a child, I was laughed at and embarrassed in front of others. I felt that every idea I ever had was worthless. I was constantly shamed, which made me feel stupid, and shattered whatever feelings of self-esteem I may have had. I was made to feel that everything that went wrong was my fault, and that I had caused the problem. Even though I tried to earn my parents love, I never felt that I was good enough to be loved by anyone.

### **Seeking Approval**

If you've been waiting to hear an apology or a plea of forgiveness from your abuser, it's very doubtful that will ever happen. Stop looking for approval from others and give it to yourself. Don't try to make people love you, especially people who are incapable of loving anyone but themselves. You must begin loving yourself.

You can go back and comfort that hurt child within you. It is possible. First, you must understand that it wasn't your fault. Believe me, it wasn't. You must forgive yourself for the abuse, because as a child you thought it was your entire fault, that it had to have been something you did.

**[www.MindfulnessMeditationInstitute.org](http://www.MindfulnessMeditationInstitute.org)**

## **Begin Your Healing**

You can overcome childhood emotional abuse with mindfulness meditation. It won't happen overnight and it won't be easy, but it is possible to make steady progress with daily meditation. If you confront these old memories and make a commitment, you can rid yourself of these painful feelings once and for all, and they will no longer be there to hurt you. You will never forget these memories, but with meditation you can overcome a lot of the pain and much of the resentment that you feel towards your abuser(s).

Start your meditation session with a few minutes of deep breathing, concentrating on your breath alone. Then begin to go back in your mind to the time when you were abused, try to put yourself inside the abuser's mind and situation during this period. Try to see the world from his perspective at that moment in time. Was he in pain emotionally? What was going on in his world that made him feel he had to lash out at you to relieve himself of his own pain?

With deep meditation, you can place yourself in his position at the time, and hopefully gain a little compassion and understanding for his suffering. That is the beginning of forgiveness—the key to overcoming the hurt and resentment.

I would also recommend practicing writing meditation. This is a variation of the loving-kindness meditation practiced in most Eastern spiritual traditions. However, instead of reciting or listening to the affirmations, you write them out by hand. This practice enabled me to forgive my abusers, and develop compassion for their suffering. What was so amazing was that it happened so quickly, and without any conscious effort.

As you heal, keep in mind that you don't have to re-establish a relationship with your abuser, if you don't want to. The important thing is to forgive him, and let go of the bad feelings you hold in your heart by understanding him better.

## **A Happier Future**

With mindfulness meditation, you can begin to love and value yourself. You are truly worthy of love just the way you are. You can learn to respect yourself and never again allow anyone to treat you with anything less than respect. You can develop your own standards of how you should be treated, and not allow anyone to take advantage of you. With more respect for yourself, you'll be a much happier and more confident person, and better able to pursue your dreams and life goals.