

Counseling Victims of Sexual Abuse

Global statistics suggest that one in three females and one in six males will be victims of sexual violence at some point in their lives. This seminar will focus on how to counsel victims who have endured the trauma of sexual abuse. We will learn about the different types of sexual abuse, the impact of such abuse long term, what kinds of family systems tend to allow for abuse and the spiritual impact of sexual abuse in a life.

***Diane Langberg** is a practicing psychologist whose clinical expertise includes 35 years of working with trauma survivors and clergy. She is director of Diane Langberg, PhD & Associates, a group practice in suburban Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She is a faculty member of Westminster Theological Seminary. She is the author of Counsel for Pastors' Wives (Zondervan), Counseling Survivors of Sexual Abuse (Xulon Press) and On the Threshold of Hope: Opening the Door to Healing for Survivors of Sexual Abuse (Tyndale House). She is Chair of the Executive Board of the American Association of Christian Counselors, serves on the boards of GRACE (Godly Response to Abuse in a Christian Environment) and the Society for Christian Psychology. She is also the founder of The Place of Refuge, an inner city, non-profit trauma and training center.*

I. Introduction

- A. Child sexual abuse
- B. Rape
- C. Sex trafficking

II. Understanding Complex Trauma

- A. Interpersonal context
- B. Affect dysregulation
- C. Alteration in attention
- D. Alteration in self-perception
- E. Alteration in relationships
- F. Somatization
- G. Alteration in systems of meaning

III. Spiritual Impact of Sexual Abuse

- A. Nature of children
- B. Human learning of spiritual concepts
- C. Role of the counselor

IV. Vicarious Traumatization

- A. Impact of trauma work on counselor
- B. Care of the counselor

Suggested Reading:

G.R.A.C.E. Godly Response to Abuse in a Christian Environment, www.netgrace.org

Herman, Judith, Trauma and Recovery, New York: Basic Books, 1992.

Kroeger, Catherine Clark & Beck, James, Women, Abuse and the Bible, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996.

Langberg, Diane Mandt, Counseling Survivors of Sexual Abuse, Xulon Press, 2003.

Langberg, Diane Mandt, On the Threshold of Hope: Opening the Door to Healing for Survivors of Sexual Abuse, Carol Stream: Tyndale House, 1999.

Salter, Anna, Predators, New York: Basic Books, 2004.

Tracey, Steven R., Mending the Soul, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2008.