

Complex Trauma: Understanding and Treatment

Historically, when someone has experienced trauma that has a lasting impact, they have been diagnosed with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). In recent years those who work with trauma victims have advocated for an additional category: Complex Trauma. Therapeutic work with those who have experienced either multiple traumas or repetitive and chronic trauma from a caregiver manifest differently than PTSD and seem to demand a different diagnosis.

Diane Langberg is a practicing psychologist whose clinical expertise includes 40 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 clinical faculty member of Biblical Theological Seminary where she co-leads the Global Trauma Recovery Institute. 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) with an accompanying workbook (Xulon Press), as well as *In Our Lives First: Meditations for Counselors* (Kindle; Amazon) and the forthcoming *Suffering and the Heart of God: How Trauma Destroys and Christ Restores* (September 2015, New Growth Press). She serves on the board of the American Association of Christian Counselors and GRACE (Godly Response to Abuse in a Christian Environment). Her books and many other resources can be found at www.dianelangberg.com

I. Introduction

II. Trauma and Child Development

III. Interpersonal Trauma

A. Relational

B. Betrayal

C. Shame

IV. 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 Perceptions of the Perpetrator

H. Alterations in Systems of Meaning