

ALIVE AGAIN

A JOURNEY FROM THE STORMS OF LIFE

EVA M. KAKEPETUM

Alive Again
A Journey From the Storms of Life

Eva M. Kakepetum

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We all have it within ourselves
to choose wisely.

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First, I must acknowledge my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for being by my side throughout the storms and triumphs of my life.

Secondly I would like to thank my husband, Abe Kakepetum, for his undying love and support throughout the years. To this day he is still teaching me what matters in life. (I will always love you.)

To my children, grandchildren, and great grand children ...the treasures of my life. You make me proud, you make me laugh, and you lift my spirits in a way you will never know!

I thank my dearly departed mother, who suffered emotional turmoil through most of her life. Thank you for being there and doing what needed to be done to survive the trials of life, and for teaching me right from wrong. May you rest in peace and have joy in eternity.

Also, to the numerous clients I have served throughout my career, you have taught me much about life as well. My hope is that you have reached your dreams and come to that place of peace in your life.

INTRODUCTION

The way to develop confidence is to face the thing you fear the most. Many of our present issues are things from our past that we fear. In order to move forward in life, we need to face those fears and conquer them.

The purpose of this book is to guide you through the process of conquering your fears so that you can live a successful and healthy life.

During my years as a mental health counselor, I have met many individuals whose lives are continually affected by their fears from past abuses and worries of the future. Not many people are living for today and actually benefiting from the here and now.

By purchasing this book, you have made the decision to deal with your problems. I encourage you to read it right through and to work the exercises that are included. It is only through this work that you can walk through

the fire of the past and come out on the other side healed and in *today*.

I am only a guide on your healing journey. Should you decide to follow the guide, it is a guarantee, you will leave this book a more joyful and peaceful person.

Once this book is completed, please carry the tools you were given with you, and continue practicing what you have learned here. Don't fall backwards when you begin to feel better and get into a deeper hole than when you began.

Treasure yourself, and treasure your tools, and continue with your journey to health. Many treasures lie deep inside something like diamonds lie deep inside coal, pearls are deep in the sea hidden inside shells, and gold lies deep within the earth. The treasure that is *you* lies deep within the scars of life and once you shed the layers, you will discover the wonderful and awesome truth about yourself. Self-discovery is the most rewarding and exciting breakthrough anyone can have.

The work you do on yourself today will show how much you love yourself. Good reading and have a great journey. Your future is now!

CHAPTER ONE

MY STORY

I write my story, not for pity or some sense of justification, but to show that you can come from the darkness to the light no matter what storms you encounter on your journey. Here goes then.

Before I was even born, my biological father abandoned my pregnant mother. This would have a profound effect on my life. We lived with my mother's parents for the first five years of my life. It was a peaceful and uncomplicated time.

Then mom and I moved from there when she married a man that I thought was my father. That is when it all began: the drinking, the parties, the domestic violence, and yes...the sexual abuse from many individuals.

I lived with the fear of what would happen when “dad” would come home drunk, as he did daily. Mom began to drink a lot, and it was like neither one of them was there for me. I wasn’t worth their time! The suicidal thoughts came rushing at me when I was 5 years old. My innocence was taken and there was no one to comfort me. These thoughts intruded on a daily basis and the only thing that stopped me was the fact that I was brought up as a Catholic and it was a sin to kill...even yourself. The thought of going to hell kept me alive.

When I was 10, my “father”, in a drunken rage, told me that he was not my dad. This was overwhelming for me. The next day, my Mom, who was also drinking and getting beaten by my ‘dad’, had to explain everything. Now I knew that even my biological father did not want me. He never attempted to meet me or find out anything about my life.

The seeds of who I was began to be planted for me. I was told I would never be loved by anyone and that I should just be a nun. I was told that I

was fat, stupid, lazy and useless. I believed it, and the verbal and sexual abuse continued until I was thirteen.

Then we moved to a city. It was so different. I got dizzy looking up at the tall buildings.

There was no snow the first Christmas in the city. This was always a sad time for me as the drinking and fighting and tears were flowing. Not the happiest of times.

My peers introduced me to cigarettes, drugs, and alcohol. "If you can't beat them...join them" I thought.

I prayed and prayed to have God stop what was happening to our family or to at least get them to divorce. My prayers were never answered. God had now abandoned me as well, and I went over to the dark side. Once this happened, the drinking escalated and so did the abuse from my "father". By the time I was 16, my father's rage had grown. Mother and I were both targets, being called "squaw", stupid, and useless. I didn't know what the word meant at the time

but later found out it was a term for a prostitute. Life, as I knew it, seemed hopeless.

The seeds had been firmly planted into my being that I was worthless, stupid, fat, unlovable, lazy, clumsy, and ugly. I was dark, lonely, and cold inside.

My depression turned to rage, and I became a very angry individual. Because I had no control within my family circle, I developed the need to control everyone else around me. Mom had begun threatening to kill herself and I put my social life on hold to stay home with her and make sure she didn't kill herself. This was another fear I lived with for so many years. This need to control took over. "I knew better than anyone", I could fix the world. Not so.

At the age of 24, I decided to drown myself. It seemed to be the best option. After 19 years of searching for a way out that wasn't messy, finally, the day had come! The day when the tornado of emotions and thoughts of self loathing would subside...along with me.

I was at the edge of a bridge, staring into the water, and ready to jump. Suddenly, at my point of no return, what I believe to be an angel turned me around and pointed me in the direction of a church I used to attend. I walked to the church (which was unlocked...unusual), entered, and began to cry. Tears were shed for all the abuse I had endured. My drinking days were over! The rage I had felt, and the loneliness, seemed to disappear. Or so I thought.

I found a new job working part time in community corrections. This quickly turned to full time and I was given the title of Program coordinator. Working with 14 male offenders gave me the opportunity to use my "control" issues in a good way. I created many programs for those I served to keep them busy and happy. Not long after, I was promoted to Assistant Director. Not bad for someone who was supposedly stupid!

Once I made a decision to do the right thing with my life, many blessings came my way. I was still living at home and I thought the

alcohol issues within the family would not affect me anymore.

One day, while I attended a conference, I saw a man across the room. I told my boss “that’s the man I am going to marry”! Love at first sight is real. I got to know this man and we became friends. For seven years he had the patience to stay friendly and not push me into anything. “Dad” became ill with throat cancer from what I believe was a direct result of his drinking. He suffered, not able to speak or eat for two long years. Mom turned to religion and, through her influence, was able to convert him also.

My parents gave us their blessings to move away and begin life together as a couple. Dad passed away just after we visited him in the hospital.

I didn’t realize at the time that my partner did not have a positive attitude to life, but rather believed that you should not look for goodness to come your way as you would be disappointed.

Seven years after we moved in together, we were married. My husband did not drink when I met him and this is one thing that attracted me to him. Life without alcohol...how wonderful.

Unfortunately, he did begin to drink and became physically and emotionally abusive toward me. I was also "pushing his buttons". Pushing him to drink. This was something I did not realize at the time.

There was the thought, still in the back of my mind, that I did not deserve to have a good man in my life. I would cause problems that triggered his abuse. Of course he would say the same things "dad" had said in my childhood. I was unlovable and no one else would want me. Back at square one!

I attended Al Anon meetings and learned to leave him alone and deal with my own issues and carry on with life. This program put me on the right path. I still loved my husband and chose to stay with him.

One night he was choking me and stated “I want you to feel my pain”! It was then I knew that he had to deal with the effects of residential school. His childhood issues surfaced as well. Those terrible thoughts of suicide and self loathing began to resurface. Once again I was in the deep dark hole I thought was gone forever!

We were re-living our pasts and, as crazy as this seems, we were comfortable doing this. This is what we knew to be our truth and we knew how to survive.

We were both broken spirits when we met. You see... it is like two magnets attracted to one another. Broken people meet broken people and unconsciously add fuel to the flames of their childhood wounds.

Eventually, my husband went through his healing journey and became the man I knew and loved once again. He began being his true self and became a strong individual. He stopped drinking!

I also dealt with my demons from the past and let go of the need to control. I wanted to live each day to its fullest and take control of the only thing I could...my own life.

I came to a place of forgiveness and took responsibility for my life. I did not blame anyone and never lost the love I had for my parents. They too went through something that made them react to life the way they did.

A group I ran for survivors once came up with a saying: "We were abused, we became abusers, we were healed, now we are healers".

My husband and I had become abusers of ourselves and each other. Then we became HEALERS!

CHAPTER TWO

MY RECOVERY

Old Slave's Prayer

*Oh God, I ain't what I ought to be,
And God, I ain't what I want to be,
Dear God, I ain't what I'm gonna be,
But thank you, God---I ain't what
I used to be!*

Anonymous

As mentioned previously, Al Anon put me on track and taught me:

1. To focus on self and not others
2. I can only change myself
3. I was powerless (no control)

4. Humility by knowing there is something bigger than me (Higher Power) which I choose to call God.

It was time for a change. There was no peace or joy in my life at that time. Everything I tried did not work. Feeling that I could “fix” the mess got me into a bigger mess.

There are four parts to a human being: Body, Mind, Spirit, and Emotion. I had abandoned all of these. I abused my body with alcohol, drugs, and food. I was not listening or learning anymore. There was no spirit, no passion within, and I was ruled by emotions from past traumas.

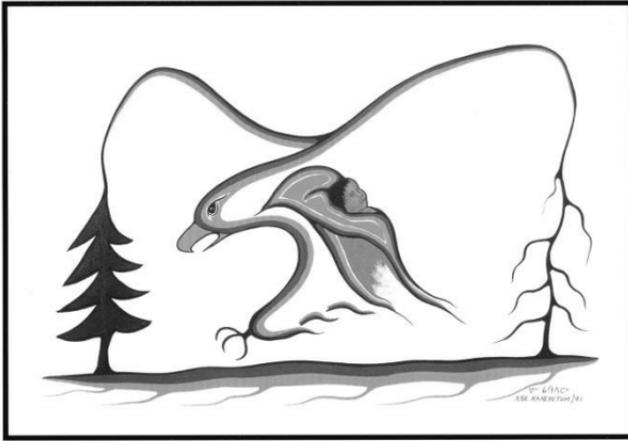
Once I came to that realization, I began my healing journey. I saw a counselor and began to talk about my abuses. It does help to talk about your issues. There is a need to get the negative outside of yourself so it does not grow and overwhelm you. All of my rage and hurt came out during the healing process. It was not a happy time, but I knew I had to go through the fire to get to the other side...and so I did.

I took care of myself and socialized more instead of living in isolation. I became a volunteer member on various boards in town. This was a positive way to deal with control issues and learn more about my community.

I was passionate about the causes I represented and my spirit was coming “Alive Again”.

CHAPTER THREE

ALIVE AGAIN



At times situations seem to be as hopeless as the tree with no leaves. Nothing is hopeless in life. With hard work and nurturing, you can become better than before. Like a little baby, you need nurturing and a connection to our spirit in order to come alive again and be the productive, peaceful, joyful, person you were meant to be.

All my troubles were given to my Higher Power twice daily, and some days more. No one can do it alone. Prayer alone is not enough if you are not working on all four parts of yourself (Body, Mind, Spirit and Emotion). You need to be in balance. You have to help yourself to get out of the deep dark hole. If you do not do this, things may go well for a while, but eventually your problems will come back. The negative effects will be greater than before. Problems cannot be covered with religion, addiction, or just "forgetting about it". You have to walk through the fire to get to the other side. You have to feel the pain in order to heal.

I like to look at it like getting a cut on your arm. You can put a bandaid on it but it will get infected and, left untreated, you may lose your arm. Getting stitched and disinfected will hurt, but you will heal and be good as new. Going through the pain from emotional, physical, spousal abuse, bullying, and sexual abuse is necessary to heal. You will be better than ever. You will experience life as you never did before.

The following chapters in this book will give you an outline and exercises which, if you work through them, will guarantee you find peace and joy in your life no matter what you go through.

You see life still happens, and there are ups and downs, but you can always get through it and come to a place of peace.

There is HOPE and I am living proof of this! The everyday miracles in life are mine. They can be yours as well, no matter how young or old you are.

Today I know love in its purest form and it is indescribable. Life with my husband is full of peace, joy, love, and song. NO MORE TEARS!

End of sample.
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