

The Perversity of Childhood Sexual Abuse: *When Survivors carry the Stigma* Video Course

Jan McGregor Hepburn, Frances Thomson-Salo and Anne Manne

Video Course

CPD/CE credits: 3

Price: £69



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“Today I live with a rage and sadness that rules my life. I feel I shall never be a whole human being. My mum used to say you shouldn’t live in the past. I don’t. The past lives in me.”

Childhood Sexual Abuse (CSA) – the dark but sadly tangible reality that is usually disowned or side-stepped or misunderstood not only by society but even parents and caregivers – adds significantly to the emotional and psychological toll of the abuse that survivors have to contend with.

Survivors are not only stigmatized; **confounded by self-doubt; wracked with guilt & shame**; but they also have to contend with often dismissive attitudes from authorities and **sometimes even forced into silence by their own loved ones**. Multiple complications surround the CSA phenomenon – some perpetrators have themselves suffered abuse, a number of psychological manifestations ranging **from anorexia to self-harm have CSA at their roots** and the burden of blame is often carried by the survivors rather than the perpetrators. When children, whose bodies and minds are not capable of processing the nature of abuse they are being subjected to; realise as adults what happened to them; it is not difficult to understand why they might feel worthless and ashamed of their very existence. Their abuse, in many cases, is a result of betrayal by those they trusted. Very often, the perpetrators are shielded by the family leaving the survivors open to self-blame and lifelong shame.

A significant body of research shows that people who suffered CSA experience a number of mental health problems. These can include **depression, eating disorders, attempted suicide and self-harm, severe substance misuse, post-traumatic stress symptoms (PTS), borderline personality disorder, and they may suffer from anxiety disorders and loss of self-esteem**. Some of these associations are very strong. For instance, a high correlation exists between people diagnosed with borderline personality disorder and childhood sexual abuse.



The speakers at this webinar – an Australian writer, essayist and social philosopher, Jan McGregor Hepburn – a psychoanalytic psychotherapist with two decades of clinical experience and Frances Thomson-Salo – an adult and child psychoanalyst who has taught mental health seminars for 20 years; will come together to discuss the implications of CSA from the perspective of psychologists and counsellors working with adult & child survivors.

The webinar starts with a discussion on the perversity of CSA – why does it happen; how does it happen, what are the consequences and why are abusers often protected by those around them? The speakers **highlight the emotional toll on survivors, the manifestations we are presented with in therapy and the therapeutic approaches we can utilise to enable survivors escape their crippling cycles of self-doubt, shame & guilt.**

Specifically, we discuss:

- Theories of sexual development – how & where does the development get derailed
- **The context of CSA – institutional & familial responses which often intensify the survivors' trauma** and makes them even more reluctant to disclose abuse
- Comprehending the psychological factors that drive perpetrators
- Clinical implications for psychologists and counsellors and suggested therapeutic approaches that can efficaciously help survivors
- Specific approaches that target reduction of shame, guilt and self-blame

Learning Objectives:

- **Discuss the context of CSA – institutional & familial responses which often intensify the survivors' trauma** and makes them even more reluctant to disclose abuse
- Explain the clinical implications for psychologists and counsellors and therapeutic approaches that can efficaciously help survivors
- Describe specific approaches that target reduction of shame, guilt and self-blame

About the speakers

Anne Manne is an Australian writer, essayist and social philosopher. She taught in the Politics Department of Melbourne and La Trobe University before becoming a full-time writer. A former columnist for *The Australian* and *The Age*, she has written many essays about contemporary culture, especially for the *Monthly* magazine. Her books include *Motherhood*, a Quarterly Essay: *Love and Money; The Family and The Free Market*, a memoir, *So This Is Life*, and the bestselling *The Life of I: the new culture of narcissism*, exploring the links between neo liberal free market economics and the rise of a new kind of narcissism. Her new book, *Crimes of the Cross: The Anglican paedophiles of Newcastle - and the man who fought for justice* (BlackInc 2024) explores in depth the coverups and protection racket in the Anglican church over 50 years, which allowed a paedophile network to flourish unimpeded for decades, and tells the extraordinary story of a courageous child sexual abuse survivor's 50-year struggle against the powerful perpetrators of the church.

Jan McGregor Hepburn is a psychoanalytic psychotherapist and works mostly in clinical practice. She is a trainer for the North of England Association for Training in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy and the Northern School for Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy. She is also the External Examiner for the University of Leeds MA Course in Observational Studies. She was the Registrar of the British Psychoanalytic Council from 2005 to 2020, and now chairs the Professional Standards Committee. She is on the reading panel of the British Journal of Psychotherapy and also reviews books for them. She has presented papers at conferences and has given seminars nationally and internationally on various topics, most recently on guilt and shame, narcissism and



echoism, and envy and jealousy. She is the author of a book- *Guilt and Shame- A Clinician's Guide* (2021) [available from nscience publications] and many journal articles.

Frances Thomson-Salo is a training adult and child psychoanalyst, and has worked in private practice, and teaching hospitals in London and Australia as an Infant Mental Health Consultant. As an Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry, University of Melbourne, she taught on the Masters of Mental Health Sciences for 20 years, specialising in infant mental health, and her books include *Engaging infants: Embodied Communication in short-term infant-parent therapy* (2018) and *Infant observation: Creating transformative relationships* (2014). She is an Editorial Board member of *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis*.

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