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Healing from Ritual  
Abuse

also known as

Organised Sadistic

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Abuse

**Information  
Package**



**ASCA**

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Advocates for Survivors  
of Child Abuse

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# It's Time For Healing

**Sponsored by The Department of Urban Affairs and Planning  
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## ASCA AIMS

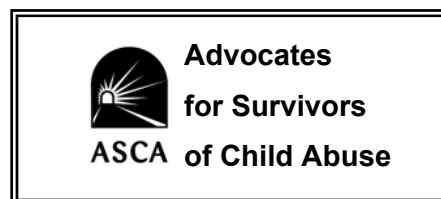
Advocates for Survivors of Child Abuse (ASCA) is a national organisation dedicated to serving the needs of all survivors of child abuse. Those needs are great, and are largely unmet. Many thousands of Australian survivors nurse their pain in silence. Without healing, simply living in society can be a test of endurance. ASCA aims to empower survivors to heal from the effects of their abuse. Society must acknowledge the importance of healing, so that those men and women who are suffering can be supported in their recovery, and helped to find inner peace and happiness.

***ASCA aims to break the silence, so sufferers can be heard, and can be helped to heal.***

### WHAT WE DO...

It is part of ASCA's role as an advocate to **dispel the myths** and misinformation about child abuse, so that only the facts drive public opinion. It is important that everyone from journalists to judges understands the way in which child abuse can erode confidence and self-worth. A **greater understanding** of the psychology of abuse is imperative. Abuse has profound effects on individuals, their families and their ability to contribute at work and within the community. Through **education**, we can give the broader community the understanding to address the problem and foster effective solutions.

ASCA holds regular **support** group meetings around Australia. They are a rare resource for those who must carry this legacy of sexual, physical, psychological and ritual abuse. Our meetings provide support information and empower healing. We also provide a peaceful and **safe healing centre** called Mayumarri, where survivors can appropriately heal and find solutions to very difficult personal issues.



For all those living the legacy, for all those helping them through it and for everyone else who cares...welcome to ASCA

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#### DISCLAIMER

This booklet has been prepared by four members of ASCA as a general guide to help others on their healing journeys. The views expressed in this booklet are the views of the authors only and do not necessarily represent the views of ASCA. Accordingly ASCA takes no responsibility for the content of this booklet.

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## INTRODUCTION

The form of abuse we are discussing in this information package is horrific and shocking. It is also the least talked about, least recognised, least understood and the least acknowledged. This information is a general guide only. For more extensive information, refer to our bibliography.

Cult members want survivors (especially those speaking out) to believe that they are everywhere, they are NOT. We also need to remember that there are more good people in the world than bad.

The term ritual abuse or satanic ritual abuse offends most people's senses.

### But...

- We know sexual abuse exists and we now accept incest has always been a reality.
- We know organised and sadistic perpetrator groups exist.
- We know of child pornography and child prostitution.
- We know about the mafia and drug trafficking, Nazism and CIA brainwashing techniques.

Cult abuse or satanic ritual abuse uses a combination of all of the above with an added emphasis on the fear and secrecy, which is designed to protect the cult's way of life.

Due to the bizarre nature of the abuse, survivors who report this type of abuse more often than not are discredited or re-abused by society and the system that is set up to protect them. This is due to society's denial that cult abuse exists.

We ask you to consider the conclusion at the end of the report of the study of 33 ritually abused children by Monash Sexual Assault Centre, Monash University, Melbourne, Victoria in 1993 which states:

“As we reflect on our work with the ritually abused child, there are still many questions left unanswered. To this day, there is still no concrete evidence to corroborate the bizarre and grotesque allegations made by these many preschoolers. Are we then to believe that the alleged perpetrators are innocent? Another solution to the puzzle is that there is a conspiracy amongst the toddlers. Are we to imagine that they are members of an international ring, unbeknown to their parents? These highly sophisticated three and four year olds have been faxing each other memos; holding meetings and formulating a plan so that each child is well versed in the sexual intricacies of their cult?”

*This information package was compiled by four survivors on The Central Coast of NSW. They offer their personal insight and experience of ritual abuse. Their aim is to offer hope and encouragement in the healing process for survivors and their supporters.*

**IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER: Truth and knowledge dispel the darkness, for evil can only exist in the world if good people choose to do nothing.**



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## DEFINITIONS OF TORTURE

### UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST TORTURE

Torture constitutes an aggravated and deliberate form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

### WORLD MEDICAL ASSOCIATION 1975 TOKYO DECLARATION

Torture is a deliberate, systematic or wanton infliction of physical or mental suffering by one or more persons acting alone or on the orders of any authority to force another person to yield information, to make a confession, or for any other reason.

### BENDELDT - ZACHRISSON F. 1985

It produces pain and mental or psychological stress, and is intended to destroy the victim's will in an attempt to perpetuate a determined order of power relationship.



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## **RITUAL ABUSE (R.A.)**

**ALSO KNOWN AS**

## **ORGANISED SADISTIC ABUSE (O.S.A.)**

A definition according to the 1989 report by the  
Ritual Abuse Task Force of Los Angeles  
County Commission for Women:

“Ritual abuse usually involves repeated abuse over an extended period of time. The physical abuse is severe, sometimes including torture and killing. The sexual abuse is usually painful, sadistic, and humiliating, intended as a means of gaining dominance over the victim. The psychological abuse is devastating and involves the use of ritual indoctrination. It includes mind control techniques which convey to the victim a profound terror of the cult members and of the evil spirits they believe cult members can command. Both during and after the abuse, most victims are in a state of terror, mind control, and dissociation.”



# RITUAL ABUSE ALSO KNOWN AS ORGANISED SADISTIC ABUSE

- ◆ Satanic cults, in which members worship Satan, are only one of the types of cults that torture and abuse children. *Note: Perpetrators are both male and female.*
- ◆ There are other cults, who commit similar crimes, whose practices are not connected to Satanism. These are organised perpetrator groups and pedophile rings etc.
- ◆ Many therapists, law enforcement, judges, and lawyers including some of the general public prefer to believe that these survivors are suffering from hallucinations.
- ◆ Many survivors are born and raised by parents who are in cults (Multi-Generational) and cult abuse can start as early as in the womb.
- ◆ Many survivors cope with the severity of the trauma by developing Dissociative Identity Disorder (D.I.D.) formerly know as Multiple Personality. *Note: this does not apply in every case.*
- ◆ Cult abuse does occur outside the family in school or pre-school settings, including the recruitment of street kids etc.
- ◆ Cult abuse survivors have to deal with brainwashing, severe intimidation, isolation, extreme humiliation, starvation, forced drug experiences, extreme torture, child pornography, prostitution, and forced to witness or participate in ritual murder.
- ◆ Many who escape the cult (many do not) have to deal with hypnotic suggestions which tell them to commit suicide, go crazy, or return to the cult.
- ◆ The level of terror that cult survivors experience is usually greater than that of other abuse survivors. This is the deepest level of abuse of the mind, body and soul.
- ◆ Cult experiences are horrifying and can seem unbelievable. Believing the abuse happened is crucial, as disclosure is extremely difficult for cult survivors.
- ◆ Be aware of what you say to them and try to encourage the person to seek a therapist specialising in Ritual Abuse.
- ◆ Somehow let the person know that you can be trusted. Trust is crucial as cults use fear to debilitate their victims and immobilise them from speaking out.
- ◆ Remember they are incredibly gifted and creative to have survived such horrific acts. Many children die as a result of the extremity of systematic sadistic torture.
- ◆ Acknowledge their courage and will to survive such atrocities and the innate strength of their spirit.

**Remember: Any Form Of Child Abuse Is About Breaking The Spirit**





## COMMON THEMES OF RITUAL ABUSE

- ⇒ Coffins – being buried alive
- ⇒ Witchcraft
- ⇒ Bestiality
- ⇒ Drawings of witches, devils, ghosts, pentagrams, swastikas, knives, axes, guns, spiders, snakes, cockroaches, blood and mutilation themes
- ⇒ Baby breeding
- ⇒ Human and animal sacrifices
- ⇒ Christian themes reversed i.e. inverted crosses, chalices, circles, candles, The Lord's prayer repeated backwards, symbol 666
- ⇒ Good and evil reversed
- ⇒ Drinking blood
- ⇒ Cannibalism
- ⇒ Ceremonial Robes, Black Mass
- ⇒ Marriage to Satan, mock weddings
- ⇒ Cartoon characters used to discredit children if disclosing abuse i.e. Mickey mouse raped me
- ⇒ Defecated / urinated upon or made to ingest faeces or urine
- ⇒ Being locked in cages, dark and confined spaces
- ⇒ Pornography, child prostitution, snuff movies
- ⇒ There are many various cults such as Nazism, White supremacy, Satanic, Pseudo Christianity, Goddess, Pagan, Voodoo etc.
- ⇒ Many cult ceremonies are held on special dates, some examples are: Easter, Christmas, Halloween, Friday 13th, Full Moon, Solstice, Equinox, The victim's birthday etc.

# MIND CONTROL & TORTURE TECHNIQUES



- ➔ Hypnosis
- ➔ Drugging
- ➔ Told bombs / insects planted inside
- ➔ Indoctrination into cult beliefs
- ➔ Magic surgery
- ➔ Starvation
- ➔ Electric shock
- ➔ Children forced to sexually abuse others
- ➔ Distortion of senses
- ➔ Sleep deprivation
- ➔ Needles used to inflict pain
- ➔ Placed inside a dead and gutted horse
- ➔ Hanging upside down
- ➔ Near drowning
- ➔ Repeatedly told you are bad and evil
- ➔ Humiliation and ridicule
- ➔ Good cop - bad cop mind games
- ➔ Knife or cross inserted in vagina or anus
- ➔ Death threats if disclosing abuse
- ➔ False belief that evil is more powerful than good
- ➔ Being programmed to harm yourself, kill yourself and/or family members if you remember

Mind Control is the cornerstone of ritual abuse. The methods above are used to silence survivors by creating amnesia surrounding the events, places, dates and names of perpetrators, in order to protect the cult. These brainwashing techniques are also known as programming.



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# CULTS DO EVERYTHING IN REVERSE

**Good becomes Evil**

**Love becomes Hate**

**Hope becomes Despair**

**Faith becomes Fear**



**Remember:- Love and Truth bring Freedom**



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## FOUR EXPERIENCES OF DISSOCIATION

### **Survival Skills That Occur During Abuse**

- 1.** **Mind To One Side**  
This is where the person is able to see and hear what is happening but they do not feel.
- 2.** **Leaving The Body**  
The person will go to the ceiling and is able to look down and see and hear what is happening but they do not feel.
- 3.** **Black Hole**  
The person goes to a place where they don't see, hear or feel anything. This is total repression.
- 4.** **Dissociative Identity Disorder**  
Also known as multiple personality disorder. Some people split off creating alter personalities. In many instances of ritual abuse these alters are deliberately created by the cult.



# DISSOCIATIVE IDENTITY DISORDER

D.I.D. is a complex process of changes in a person's consciousness, which causes a disturbance or alteration in the normally integrative functions of identity, memory, thoughts, feelings, and experiences.

In many cases ritual abuse victims are deliberately programmed to develop personalities in order for the cult to control them. Often a personality is trained by the cult to respond to a trigger or cue e.g. phone calls, hand signals, certain words or phrases etc. This is so the cult can have access to them often without their conscious awareness.

## WHAT IS D.I.D. (formerly known as Multiple Personality)

- It is not rare.
- It is a complex, in-built defense mechanism caused as a result of severe trauma.
- It is a unique survival skill.
- It is a form of dissociation, which allows the total person to continue functioning.

## DIAGNOSIS OF D.I.D.

- 1) The existence of 2 (or more) distinct personalities, each of which is in control of the body at different times.
- 2) Generally the personality that is dominant determines on-going behaviour.
- 3) Each personality is complex and has it's own unique history, behaviour patterns and social relationships.

*Note: For further information refer to the Diagnostic & Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM IV)*

## EFFECTS OF D.I.D.

- The person has been through extreme childhood trauma, cult abuse, sadistic torture, witnessing a killing, severe sexual abuse.
- A personality is formed to contain the pain and survive the experience – this is a splitting process which can happen once or many times as a creative way of coping and surviving extreme abuse.
- The development of new personalities is also known as alters, which hold and contain the trauma.
- The person may be partially, vaguely or totally unaware of these other parts or alters.
- Survivors with D.I.D. are often high functioning people with many talents.

# DISSOCIATIVE IDENTITY DISORDER



- Different alters can have skills and abilities – one may be an accomplished painter, another a solicitor, another a poet.
- One personality may be suicidal while another maybe angry, another loving and supportive. Different personalities carry different emotions, particularly the negative emotions.
- One may have asthma while another may not. There can be body illness or personality illness.
- Alters can be women or men, children or adults with distinct behaviours for each. One personality may be a vegetarian and another a meat eater.
- Some survivors have been incorrectly diagnosed with Schizophrenia for years if the therapist was not trained or did not recognise the signs, or did not believe D.I.D. existed.
- The difference is that people with D.I.D. hear voices within and people with Schizophrenia hear voices from outside.
- At first you may feel frightened and panic, but take the time to learn about it.
- Give this person credit for the creative capacity to develop new personalities in order to survive such atrocities.
- Honour and respect their resourcefulness and the miracle of the human spirit to survive. It is important to note that not all survivors of severe trauma develop D.I.D.
- Encourage them to find a skilled therapist and tell them that they are not freaks; other men and women have this disorder.
- If someone tells you they have multiple personalities, ask whom you are talking to.
- If you ask a question and don't get an answer just be patient as there could be two or three personalities trying to work out an answer. Listen for any voice changes.

**Remember: They Are Not Separate Beings – They Are All Part Of The Whole**



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# REPRESSION & POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

Post traumatic stress disorder comes from a single event or as the result of prolonged and repetitive trauma in life threatening situations.

Some symptoms may include the following:

- ❖ Panic attacks
- ❖ Uncontrollable crying
- ❖ Uncontrollable rages
- ❖ Eating disorders
- ❖ Suicidal
- ❖ Self mutilation
- ❖ Hyper vigilance
- ❖ Somatic symptoms
- ❖ Intrusive thoughts
- ❖ Terror
- ❖ Flashbacks
- ❖ Addictions: alcohol, drugs, sex
- ❖ Over reaction to minor stress
- ❖ Sleep disorders
- ❖ Sense of defilement or stigma
- ❖ Nightmares
- ❖ Fight or Flight
- ❖ Extreme mood swings
- ❖ High risk behaviours
- ❖ Shame, guilt & blame

*Note: For further information refer to the Diagnostic & Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM IV)*

**Remember:- These are normal reactions to abnormal situations**



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# HEALING

If healing is painful and requires a lot of work  
Why do it?

## Definition of Healing

1. To restore to health
2. To set right, to repair
3. To restore a person to spiritual wholeness

## Crisis

The Chinese word for “Crisis” is a combination of two characters  
One which means “Danger” and the other “Opportunity”

## Recovery

1. To heal is to feel and this requires working through the original pain of fear, terror, shame, guilt and grief.
2. There are many alternative methods for releasing the emotions from childhood.
3. There are many benefits to healing by validation from peer support groups.
4. To unlock and release the beliefs and programming imposed by the cult.





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## THE STAGES OF RECOVERY



Note: Elizabeth Kubler-Ross (Death & Dying 1981) found that the grieving process consisted of these five stages. These have been adapted and renamed by Mic Hunter (Abused Boys, the Neglected Victims of Sexual Abuse 1991) from the Stages of Grief to the Stages of Recovery.

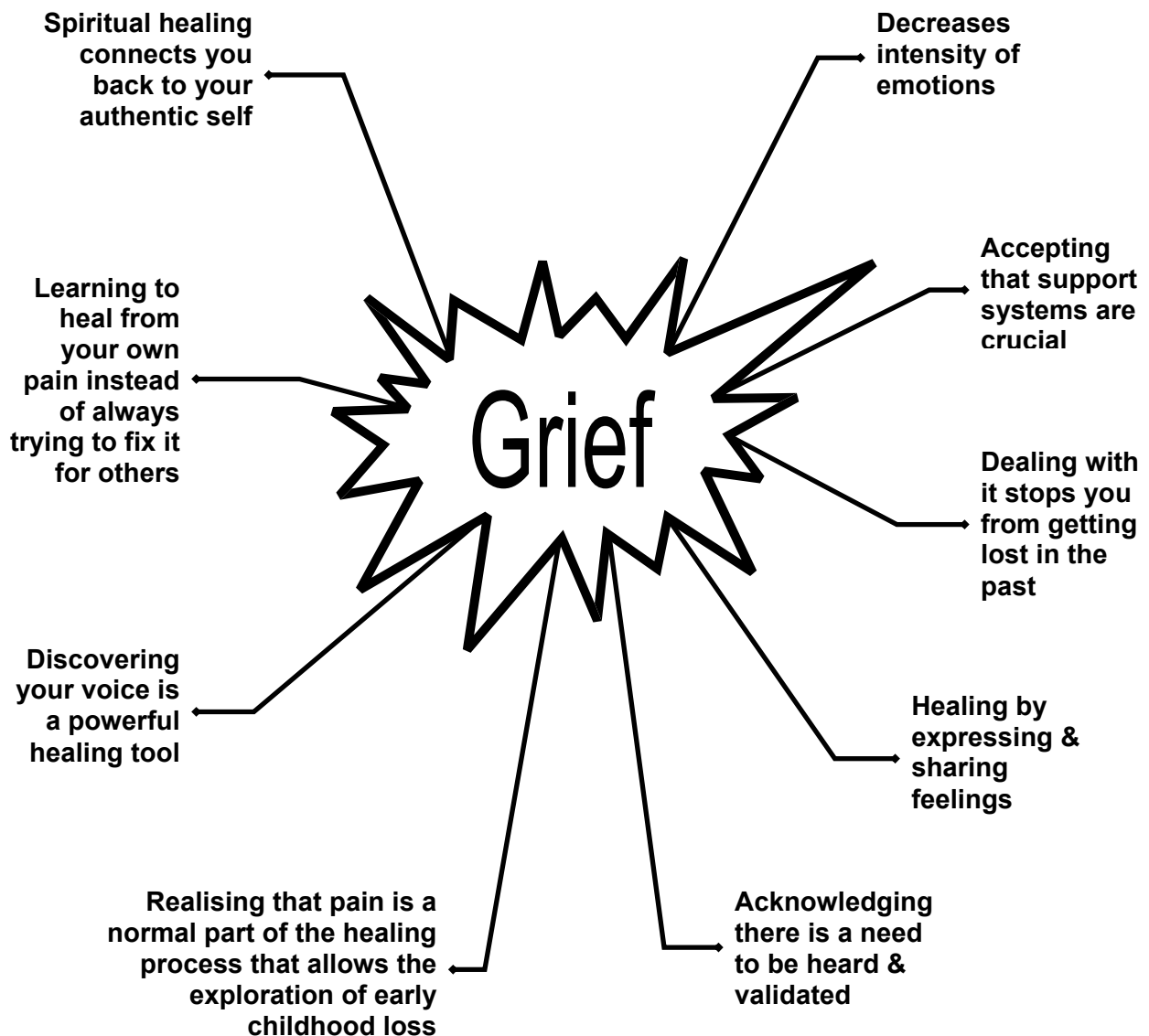
- ◆ Anyone who has suffered major losses in life will often experience these, however, they do not always occur in a set order or a specific time frame.
- ◆ Trauma survivors throughout these stages will usually experience confusion, shock, horror, anxiety, chaos, feeling out of control and fear that they are going crazy.
- ◆ Resistance and absolute terror often go hand in hand with minimisation and repression of the traumatic events.
- ◆ Realising and accepting this is normal helps you persevere and believe that you can and will get through it.

**Recovery is Worth the Rewards**



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# Positive Benefits of Dealing with Grief





## HELP AT CRISIS POINT

Crisis: "A turning point; a critical time or occasion"

*[ We found the following therapies useful in our healing journey. Please consult your health professional ]*

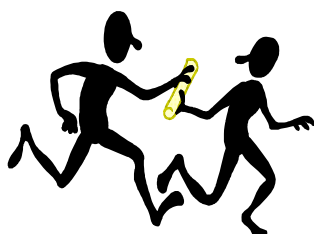
When retrieving memories i.e. flashbacks/body memories the client will regress into the actual memory.

1. It is necessary for helpers to recognise their limitations.
2. Allow the memory to run its course:-  
If unable to cope or you do not know what to do, bring the person back to the here and now by asking the client to:
  - ▶▶ Open your eyes
  - ▶▶ Repeating "you are safe now"
  - ▶▶ Get the client to breathe and take a deep breath with the client
  - ▶▶ Begin to ground the person by asking their name, address, date of birth
  - ▶▶ Get them to squeeze something
  - ▶▶ Remind the client that it is not happening now
3. If the client has D.I.D. ask them beforehand what name do they want you to use in order to bring them back.
4. If the client is in a memory, sometimes it is better **Not To Touch** them (they only had unsafe touch). Ask the client beforehand what is appropriate for them.
5. When the client is through the memory, ask them "what is it you need?" The answer may be nothing (often, most don't know at this point what they need). This may take time, be patient.



## HELP AT CRISIS POINT

6. Over time your client will learn to trust you and learn his/her own needs.
7. Boundaries often are unknown (all boundaries have been crossed). You may need to keep explaining boundaries and their uses often.
8. One of the most important things to share with the client from the very beginning is we all have the knowledge inside ourselves to heal (**nothing is impossible to repair**).
9. Healing from ritual abuse is a long journey. If you cannot commit to it then refer your client to someone who can (RA survivors need that security).
10. Believe your client's history. It is very real and terrifying. Please do not offer your opinion as to what it might be. Due to the shame, the bizarre nature and the programming, the client may not be able to articulate.
11. If your client is having trouble expressing what is happening, encourage them to draw, paint or write about it.










## HELP AT CRISIS POINT

12. Tools that are helpful during crisis:
  - ❖ Writing
  - ❖ Reading
  - ❖ Colouring, drawing, painting
  - ❖ Walking along the beach, collecting shells, building sandcastles
  - ❖ Creating a safe place in the home for example, a child's room with toys, dolls
  - ❖ Creative imagination – learning to imagine being magic and zapping the perpetrator
  - ❖ Playing with children
  - ❖ Friendships
  - ❖ Support group
  - ❖ Spoiling oneself
  
13. Do not be afraid to allow your client to read about healing. It creates understanding of what happened inside a survivor's mind, body and psyche.
  
14. Through abuse the separation of mind, body and psyche can create a chemical imbalance, however, through the healing process it will balance itself out over time.
  
15. Ritual abuse is an abuse on all levels including the spiritual. Healing requires the integration of mind/body/soul to allow the person to become whole.









# HEALING FROM PROGRAMMING OR BRAINWASHING

Remember if mind control was as foolproof as cults wanted us to believe then the threats would not be necessary. Some examples are:

-  Magic surgery; children are told that snakes, cockroaches, spiders, other insects or bombs are planted inside them and will either eat them alive or explode if they tell
-  The place or building that you are in will blow up if you tell
-  You will be killed if you do not return to the cult with your children
-  Non offending family members, friends or pets will be killed if you tell
-  The cult will always know what you are doing and thinking
-  If you remember, no one will believe you and think you are crazy
-  The cult is all powerful and there is no way out

## Important Things To Remember

-  Deprogramming is a matter of healing the trauma and changing your thinking which creates personal empowerment
-  If you can talk about it then you are breaking the programming
-  Cults can only exist in an environment shrouded in fear and secrecy
-  By speaking about and dealing with cult abuse you are breaking the cycle
-  It is extremely dangerous to have ANY contact with cult members
-  Love and truth will always overcome evil. Remember: Love is the greatest healing power in the world

## HEALING TOOLS

*[ We found the following tools useful in our healing journey. Please consult your health professional ]*

Some examples for channelling anger in a healthy way:

- ▶▶ Using a punching bag
- ▶▶ Stamping your feet
- ▶▶ Smashing plates
- ▶▶ Throwing eggs against the back fence
- ▶▶ Hitting the bed with a pillow or towel
- ▶▶ Screaming in the car with windows up
- ▶▶ Releasing anger through writing



### Points To Remember

- ▶▶ Give yourself permission to cry / grieve over the losses you have suffered
- ▶▶ There are just as many schools of thought as there are different types of therapies
- ▶▶ It is up to the individual to choose the most suitable healing modality for them
- ▶▶ The human spirit has the ability to heal and overcome any adversity
- ▶▶ Learn to trust your intuition and inner guidance
- ▶▶ Above all learn to laugh, play and have fun
- ▶▶ People **Can** and **Do** heal from ritual abuse

## HEALING TOOLS

*[ We found the following tools useful in our healing journey. Please consult your health professional ]*

- ☺ Reading / write in journal / poetry
- ☺ Drawing / painting
- ☺ Any form of arts, craft & creativity
- ☺ Listen to music / drumming
- ☺ Long relaxing bath
- ☺ Walking in nature
- ☺ Exercise
- ☺ Meditation / Prayer
- ☺ Talk to someone safe / ask a friend to be with you
- ☺ Massage / nurturing touch
- ☺ Reiki / Sekhem / Kahuna
- ☺ Yoga / Tai Chi / Qigong
- ☺ Australian Bush Flower Essences
- ☺ Deep breathing / relaxation
- ☺ Read inspirational books
- ☺ Join a support group

**Remember:-** With healing all survivors can lead a healthy, well adjusted life. You have already lived through it as a child, you **CAN LIVE** through the memories as an adult and reach total **HEALING**.





## MESSAGES FOR SURVIVORS

*Therapist Holly Hector has developed the following list of messages ritual abuse survivors need to hear as they progress during their recovery.*

### **1. YOU DESERVE COMPLETE FREEDOM AND HEALING**

You were brainwashed to believe you are worthless, incapable, and useless to anyone but the cult. These lies were to shatter any sense of self or break down any independence you might have and ensure your loyalty and eventual return. You are special, gifted, and worthy of health, of love, and of life as *you choose it*. Believe in yourself. Choose freedom. Choose healing.

### **2. YOU ARE NOT CRAZY**

You were programmed to believe that if you told you would be called “crazy” and would be institutionalized forever. You are not crazy—*the world in which you lived was crazy!* You are having a normal reaction to an abnormal situation. Trust your truth.

### **3. YOU WILL NOT DIE FOR REMEMBERING OR TELLING**

You were forced throughout extensive abuse, programming, and ritual work, to believe you would die if you remembered or told. This was to ensure your silence. The present threat may only be perceived—although it would be important to take as many precautions as necessary to safeguard against any harm. You must break the silence to aid in your healing.

### **4. EXPECT STRONG SUICIDAL THOUGHTS OR DESIRES TO SELF-MUTILATE WHEN YOU REMEMBER**

### **5. NOTHING THAT HAPPENED TO YOU OR TO ANYONE ELSE WAS YOUR FAULT**

The torture, the pain, the sex, the killing—*NONE* of it was your fault, or your responsibility. You were told that you wanted it, chose it, and deserved it. This is a lie. You were an innocent victim who was not given any choices.

### **6. YOU ARE NOT A MURDERER**

All children of cults are forced to perpetrate (mentally, physically, sexually), even to murder. This is to ensure your silence and the belief that you are one of them, or “just like them.” This is called “coercion to commit a crime” by law enforcement. You are *NOT* responsible—the real murderers are the cult members.

### **7. EVERY PERSON YOU MEET IS NOT A PERPETRATOR**

You were systematically and calculatedly abused by a variety of people from a variety of professions and authority positions. This was to teach you not to trust anyone, ever. But not everyone is a perpetrator. It will be helpful to start slowly attempting to address the reasons and realities behind these trust issues.

# MESSAGES FOR SURVIVORS



## 8. DENIAL CAN BE EITHER HEALTHY OR UNHEALTHY

A sense of healthy denial can be beneficial to put some distance between you and the horror. But denial can also be a powerful part of the programming to keep you from the truth. Work on not denying your truth—believe yourself.

Remember: “You can’t heal from what you can’t feel.”

## 9. BE PREPARED FOR BODY SENSATIONS (BODY MEMORIES) AND FLASHBACKS

The body will give you pieces of the abuse (body memories) and the mind will also give you pieces of the abuse (flashbacks). You will feel out of control and feel like you are going crazy. You are not. Have a plan (written is best) for this part of the healing process. And try to travel *through* it, not *around*, it, so that you can get to the other side of it and not be stuck running from your healing.

## 10. THE SHAME YOU MAY FEEL IS *NOT* YOURS

The shame instilled in you by the humiliation and degradation is real, but—it is *not* yours. It belongs *only* to the perpetrators. It should *not* be your shame—*give it back to them*.

## 11. YOU SURVIVED WHAT FEW HUMANS COULD HAVE – HONOUR THAT

You employed resources from within that few people could develop or call on. Honour your survival. Honour your creativity. Honour your intelligence to cope and adapt. Take these gifts and redirect them into your healing process. You are more capable than most—believe it.

## 12. IF YOU SURVIVED THE ACTUAL EVENT, YOU CAN SURVIVE THE MEMORIES

Often you will feel as though the reality of this will actually consume and destroy you. But remember you survived the event—employ your strengths to survive the memories and the healing.

## 13. IF (WHEN) YOUR BODY RESPONDED TO SEXUAL STIMULATION – HONOUR THAT

As children we have *natural, normal* physiological responses to sexual stimulation. This does not mean you chose or enjoyed the abuse. Release yourself from that guilt.

## 14. GIVE YOURSELF PERMISSION TO FEEL BAD (TO HURT EMOTIONALLY)

As a child you had to lead a double life. You were expected to behave perfectly in school, in public, while you were being hideously abused in the cult. Allow yourself—NOW—to be okay with hurting emotionally. You deserve to feel bad.

(FROM: BREAKING THE CIRCLE OF SATANIC RITUAL ABUSE;  
RECOGNIZING AND RECOVERING FROM THE HIDDEN TRAUMA BY DANIEL RYDER, 1992)



## SUPPORTING A SURVIVOR OF RITUAL ABUSE

**For therapists and others concerned, Holly Hector has these suggestions:**

### **DOs...**

- ❖ DO validate their pain.
- ❖ DO reinforce that they are not crazy.
- ❖ DO believe them. They don't need skepticism; discrediting them plays right into the cult's programming.
- ❖ DO remind yourself and them that they need to honour and respect their own survival, even if it included dissociation or fragmentation.
- ❖ DO remember healing is a *process*, not an *event*. It will take a lifetime of support and love.
- ❖ DO remember it will take courage, support, and commitment from everyone involved to heal from this level of trauma.
- ❖ DO learn to *listen* – not advise, criticize, or ignore, but *listen*.
- ❖ DO remember survivors learnt to lie and manipulate to *stay alive*.
- ❖ DO remember it's not the falling down that counts, but the getting back up.
- ❖ DO remember survivors were taught "opposite truths." (Bad is good, good is bad; right is wrong, wrong is right; etc).
- ❖ DO find your own support group, therapy, etc. You may need a place to vent your fears, anger, pain, and frustrations.

### **DON'Ts...**

- ❖ DON'T offer pat answers (like pray more, forgiveness etc.)
- ❖ DON'T try to "fix" survivors – instead support, honour, nurture and love.
- ❖ DON'T shove God on them. They have been tortured and brutalized with the concepts of God. They need to be slowly loved into the truth – not battered, or you will reproduce the cult experience.

(FROM: BREAKING THE CIRCLE OF SATANIC RITUAL ABUSE;  
RECOGNIZING AND RECOVERING FROM THE HIDDEN TRAUMA BY DANIEL RYDER, 1992)

## I will Speak my Truth



I sit here and wonder about the human spirit. How much that spirit can take and still seem to behave normally. War veterans have done it for years, lived through the worst that human nature can conceive, survived the atrocities of war, only to come back to a life where people couldn't or wouldn't understand and so had to pretend that life was ok. I always wondered how a soldier could live like that and then just be expected to be normal to slide back into every day living. Now I know they can't.

I sit here and wonder about the war going on in 3 out of 5 homes in every country in the world. Children living through the worst that human nature can conceive, surviving the atrocities of child abuse, only to grow up facing a life where people can't or won't understand and so have to pretend to be normal. I always wondered how a child could suffer so much and then just be expected to be normal, to grow into every day living. Now I know they can't.

I sit here in my suburban home with its ultra suburban façade and wonder how many children are still suffering the atrocities of war in the family home. How many children are emotionally abused, neglected, physically abused, sexually abused (by both male and female perpetrators) and the biggest taboo of all, ritually abused.

The war veteran and the abused child; lives with so many similarities, lives shattered by violence, hate, pain and fear. Lives with one main difference though, the war veteran is at least an adult.

I sit here in my suburban home, an average suburban mother and I wonder how many of my suburban neighbours know that my pets were tortured and slaughtered in front of me, that I lost my virginity to my grandfather at a very young age, that I was tied up and abused, made to eat body parts of my tortured pets, made to perform sexual acts with other children, made to witness the destruction of human life, made to live through unspeakable violence, unbearable pain and indescribable fear. All before I started school.

I sit here and I wonder how the war of child abuse can go on and on. How I can look and act normally in a world that can't or won't understand. I wonder how I can sit in my suburban home, knowing I am only one of many, many others and just have to get on with day to day living ----- in silence. I always wondered how I could do that. Now I know I can't.

I cannot live in a world that refuses to see what is happening in the battlefields that are our homes.  
I will speak my truth.



© Written by a Survivor for Purple Ribbon Month 1999



## A Letter to Society

When things get you down, I understand.  
When there's not enough money and the bills are arriving, I understand.  
When the kids are fighting and you need a break and sometimes there's no-one to help, I understand.  
When Life isn't all that it promised to be and you wonder what happened, I understand.  
When lots of little things build up into one huge mind-blowing set of hopeless-nesses, I understand.  
And in my understanding there is empathy and compassion for what you are going through.  
Now I need to ask you.....

When the nightmares leave me too exhausted to get out of bed, will you understand?  
When making a simple decision, like what to have for lunch, is just an added pressure to an already overloaded mind, will you understand?  
When I yell and scream sometimes because my own inner rage is intolerable, will you understand?  
When I cry for no apparent reason, will you understand?  
When I can't be the perfect housewife, mother or friend, will you understand?  
When I don't have the energy to do anything because everything I have goes into getting through the pain of the past, will you understand?  
When I am trying to piece my life together and need desperately to talk about the horrors that my eyes have seen, but yours haven't, will you understand?

When I fall apart because I've been forced to watch another burn to death, I've been put inside a dead and gutted horse in the name of ceremony, had spiders forced inside my mouth, been sexually abused and forced to abuse, had to eat my puppy's tongue and other tortured animal parts; seen the look of pain and confusion and begging for help in others eyes and knowing only the hopelessness of being too young to help those younger than myself; the pain of body memories from electric shock and being tied up; of learning that no-one could be trusted, but choosing to trust everyone in the feeble hope of survival; of living with the pain of "have I killed another human being as part of their torture and control methods" and living with the terror of "am I capable of killing myself and my family" and living with the suicidal self disgust and self loathing that these thoughts create.

When at times these things get me down and I can't be strong for a while and I need to be nurtured, yet I have nothing in me to return that nurturing, can you understand and will that understanding bring empathy and compassion?



# Contact Telephone Numbers in NSW

## **ASCA Support Line**

**1300 657 380**

## **ASCA Administration**

**(02) 4960 8722**

**Lifeline 131114**

## **CAPS (Child Abuse Prevention Services)**

**1800 688 009**

## **Rape Crisis Line**

**1800 424 017**

## **Dympna House**

**1800 654 119**

## **VOCS (Victims of Crime Service)**

**1800 819 816**

## **Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions**

**1800 814 534**

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This information package has been the culmination of  
the experiences of four ASCA members  
on the Central Coast of NSW.

With a vision of educating and inspiring hope  
for survivors, their supporters and those  
dedicated to helping others  
heal from the legacy  
of ritual abuse.



**What we call evil is the absence of light, of love,  
in all cases.**

**Gary Zukav**