

## Interview for “Gifts From the Child Within” by Barbara Sinor, Ph.D.

Today, Tyler R. Tichelaar of Reader Views is pleased to be joined by Dr. Barbara Sinor who is here to talk about her book “Gifts From the Child Within.”

*Dr. Sinor has maintained a private counseling practice for over twenty-five years. She counsels individuals exploring the healing and recovery of Addictions, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, childhood abuse/incest, adult children of alcoholics, and codependent/self-esteem issues. Dr. Sinor’s first book, coauthored with her sister Paula Slater is “Beyond Words: A Lexicon of Metaphysical Thought” which was written right after they received their Master of Arts degrees together. Sinor’s second book is “Gifts From the Child Within” which is a recovery workbook written for both survivors of childhood abuse or trauma of any kind and the counselors who work with this population. This is the book we will be exploring today.*

*In 2003, Dr. Sinor wrote a follow-up book titled “An Inspirational Guide for the Recovering Soul.” This inspirational book is a companion guidebook for further growth and understanding of the personal healing and recovery process that can be used by anyone dealing with past or present trauma. More recently in 2007, Dr. Sinor completed a manuscript coauthored with Deborah McCloskey entitled “What’s Really Going On? Questioning Our View of Addiction.” Currently, she is working on her fifth book “Tales of Addiction” which documents personal stories from those who have been or are addicted to drugs and/or alcohol, or those whose life has been affected by addiction through friends and family.*

*Dr. Sinor received her Doctorate in Psychology at the Southern California University for Professional Studies in 1997. She received her Master of Arts degree in John F. Kennedy University’s Graduate School for the Study of Human Consciousness majoring in Transpersonal Counseling Psychology. She graduated with honors from Pitzer College receiving her Bachelor of Arts degree with a double major in Sociology and Women’s Studies and she has been a clinical hypnotherapist since 1987.*

Tyler: Welcome, Barbara. I’m honored to have you join me today. Will you begin by telling me why you chose to write “Gifts From the Child Within?”

Barbara: After several years of counseling individuals in my practice, I noticed a common theme in a large percentage of my clients. The issue of childhood trauma kept showing itself as the underlying concern and ultimately became the focus of treatment. When I began introducing a healing hypnosis technique I called Re-Creation Therapy to my counseling methodology, my clients responded with a positive recovery. I then decided to capture many of these healing stories and introduce my efforts and my clients’ experiences in a book.

Tyler: Barbara, your book is really about inner child therapy. Will you explain to our readers a little bit about what inner child therapy is and how it can be effective?

Barbara: The concept of the inner child is not new by any means. Both Carl Jung and Eric Berne, two noted therapists, cited in their work this motif of the inner child. In the 1980s, Charles Whitfield and many others drew much acclaim by “introducing” the child within personality in us all. Basically, inner child therapy addresses the issues surrounding negative childhood trauma.

Because of my own personal background of dealing with childhood trauma, I experimented with several types of inner child therapy but found most left me feeling empty. When working with your child within there is a necessary step of releasing anger, sometimes repressed anger, and negative feelings associated with traumatic events. What the techniques of Re-Creation Therapy provide is a way of re-framing or re-creating the trauma so the emptiness becomes a pathway to healing and recovery.

Tyler: Barbara, would you tell us a little bit about the method you use to release anger and how it may differ from other types of inner child therapy?

Barbara: Anger can be one of our personal life saboteurs, even if we are unaware that we are holding on to angry emotions such as in repressed anger. Sometimes anger can give us a sense of false power by thinking we are controlling another or a situation, however, just the opposite is true. When we cling to angry feelings toward someone that person is the one in control of our emotions. In order to come to a place of peace with a past negative experience or person, it becomes necessary to release feelings of anger. To do this therapists have creatively devised many techniques to help guide their clients. To me using only “talk therapy” to this purpose is not enough. I have utilized many methods including hypnosis, creative art projects, journaling, physical exercise, meditation, rituals, spiritual practices, reading and writing assignments, and referrals to professionals for various holistic treatments.

Tyler: Barbara, I know you are also concerned with codependent and self-esteem issues. Will you explain a little bit about what codependency is—I understand it is often developed in childhood but can result in sabotaging adult relationships?

Barbara: In the Chapter of the book, “Codependency—Take Two” I tell of my experience of trying to tell my codependent mother what the term means. I tried using phrases such as, “too dependent on her husband” and “not caring enough about herself.” Finally, I looked at her and said softly, “Mom, it just means that you cared so much for Daddy that somewhere along the way you lost yourself.” Yes, most likely a tendency toward codependent behavior begins in childhood; I know mine did! I still struggle with issues of “always putting others before myself”—which is a good working definition of the word.

Tyler: What are some of the methods or activities you would suggest to help a person overcome codependency?

Barbara: I like author and counselor Robert Subby’s view of codependence: “Codependency is... the force that holds us back from self-actualization, keeps us living out someone else’s life script.” This definition says it all. Sometimes we cannot put into words exactly why we feel so dependent upon others; it is like a force. This force keeps us from living our own dreams, our own path. We literally allow ourselves to be a player in someone or anyone’s life script while negating our own play. To guide clients with codependent tendencies, I help them begin to feel more in control of their decisions, starting with small ones and moving on to more important choices for themselves. I

direct them to love themselves, to treat themselves as if they were the people from whom they desired love and attention. Self-nurturing and self-love are the beginning steps toward releasing codependent behavior. When we learn to love ourselves, we can learn how to ask for what we need from others.

Tyler: “Gifts From the Child Within” is a workbook. Why is a workbook helpful as a supplement to therapy or a twelve-step meeting?

Barbara: I wrote this book in a “workbook” format because while working with clients I used many techniques and methods that require notepaper and pads, crayons and pens, journals, craft and art supplies, CDs and cassette tapes, and other items used for self-awareness and rituals. Within the book the reader can find Exercises, Affirmations, Visualizations, Child Within Autohypnoses, suggested reading, writing, and audio practices. I wanted the reader of this book to experience as much as possible the types of healing methods my private clients were exposed to.

Tyler: Can people then benefit from using the workbook by itself, or do you recommend they use it in conjunction with some form of personal counseling?

Barbara: “Gifts From the Child Within” can be used independently as a workbook for healing and recovery from any traumatic event whether in childhood or the recent past such as in post traumatic stress issues. I do believe having a counselor to help guide one through any trauma to be of value; this book can easily be used as a tool in combination with professional direction.

Tyler: In “Gifts from the Child Within,” you outline seven key steps in the process of inner child therapy. Will you tell us a little more about that process and why it is important?

Barbara: Re-Creation therapy contains these healing steps:

- Acknowledgment of a situation, event, or emotion which may stem from childhood
- Self-awareness in relation to your past childhood trauma
- Meeting your child within—perhaps for the first time—the inner spiritual or true Self
- Emotional release exercises relating to the childhood trauma
- The Re-Creation Process of re-creating or re-framing the traumatic event(s)
- Allowing a sense of forgiveness to enter where possible
- Letting go of the past—giving the emotion of past experiences over to a Higher Power

Tyler: Barbara, I mentioned you are a certified clinical hypnotherapist. Do you use hypnotism to help people remember past childhood experiences?

Barbara: I feel it important to note that hypnosis is just one of the many techniques I have utilized in my counseling practice. “Gifts From the Child Within” is certainly based on the use of autohypnosis or self-hypnosis and works successfully in obtaining a more clear remembrance of any past experience. All of my clients have had some memory of their negative trauma, whether through a visual or auditory recollection. Hypnosis cannot make a person remember an event that has not occurred.

Tyler: Barbara, there are lots of helpful books out there for people recovering from childhood trauma or addiction. What sets “Gifts From the Child Within” apart from all the other self-help books available?

Barbara: I believe the fact that this book can be used alone or in conjunction with therapy is a big plus. I have had many professional counselors ask for details on how they might use this workbook for their clients. My use of real personal stories from my clients' experiences is also an added factor in helping readers identify their circumstances and/or woundedness with those found in the book. It is a book that introduces a transpersonal aspect or spiritual element to the recovery arena that is not found in most self-help books. In my Afterword, I discuss my research doctoral thesis surrounding the use of transpersonal or psychospiritual methodologies when used in women who have experienced childhood abuse/incest. The type of counseling techniques used in this book were found "to be advantageous to the survivor's recovery process." In this light, "Gifts From the Child Within" brings a unique sense of support and healing to its reader while at the same time instructs taking the challenge to begin the recovery journey.

Tyler: Barbara, will you tell us a little more about what you mean when you talk about transpersonal or psychospiritual methodologies?

Barbara: I use these terms interchangeably. In my book "Beyond Words: A Lexicon of Metaphysical Thought" I define transpersonal as having "... two parts, trans meaning across, beyond, or to change completely; and personal, pertaining to the personal or personality. Transpersonal is thus defined as beyond the person, or to change and reach across the personal awareness and individual ego. This interpretation fosters the ability to grasp the total personhood (mind, body, and spiritual nature) to reach beyond our familiar level of ego awareness to a critical examination of behaviors, thoughts, and emotions which spur conscious transformation."

Therefore, the methods used with this type of therapy (Transpersonal Counseling Psychology) are formed around the entire person, including the attempt to capture the ever-changing aspects of human growth patterns. The ultimate goal of transpersonal counseling is to guide one through the act of conscious self-transformation to a state of trust, faith, acceptance of self and others, and to generate self-esteem and self-love.

Tyler: Barbara, you've also used some of your own personal experiences as examples in the book. What made you decide to take this courageous step and reveal so much of yourself?

Barbara: Well, I remember talking to many people during my early counseling days who wanted to tell someone about their horrible childhood experiences and how they felt it had affected their life but felt they could not trust a therapist because "they would not understand" what they had gone through. Because I do understand, I found it an honor to share my own childhood trauma with those who had the courage to begin sharing their stories with me.

Tyler: Barbara, I understand this release of the book is actually its second edition. Are there any differences to the book from the first edition? Would readers of the first edition benefit from reading the second edition?

Barbara: Yes, this is the second edition—the book was initially published in 1993, during the wave of inner child therapies, lectures, and books by Charles Whitfield, John Bradshaw, and many others. This new edition has been updated in its text, a new Afterword has been added which underscores my doctoral research, and an index which helps the reader find specific topics more easily.

Tyler: Barbara, what sort of response have you gotten to the book so far, either in the first or this second Edition, from counselors or readers in general?

Barbara: A very positive Review was received by my publisher from Paige Lovitt of the “Reader Views” last month. It can be found on my website at this time. I have received hundreds of emails and letters over the years from readers expressing their appreciation of this book. I am amazed at just how much my work in the childhood abuse and incest area has touched so many and I am honored that my book has been a positive piece in their healing and recovery puzzle.

Tyler: Thank you, Barbara, for joining me today. Before we go, will you give our readers your website address and let them know what further information can be found there about “Gifts From the Child Within”?

Barbara: Of course, my web site is: [DrSinor.com](http://DrSinor.com). On my web site is a new posting for a “Call for Stories” for the research I am currently conducting for my book “Tales of Addiction.” Also, you can read the latest book reviews for all my books, book chapter excerpts, and a special page just for those on their journey to recovery.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my publisher, Victor at Loving Healing Press, for making sure this valuable book made it into this new Second Edition.

Tyler: Thank you, Barbara. I hope “Gifts from the Child Within” helps many people.