

CHILDREN WHO GREW UP IN CHRONICALLY ABUSIVE ENVIRONMENTS, ARE BURDENED WITH:

- preserving some trust in caregivers who are often untrustworthy or unreliable**
- Preserving safety in situations that are unsafe**
- Control in situations that are unpredictable**
- Power in situations of helplessness**


“Forcing the development of extraordinary capacities,” otherwise known as defense mechanisms, in order to survive and thrive, despite unbearable adversity 

Adapted from:

Herman, J. (1992). *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence-From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror.* (p.96). Basic Books.

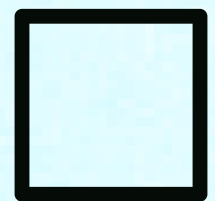
“ Chronic childhood abuse takes place in a familial climate of pervasive terror, in which ordinary caretaking relationships have been profoundly disrupted. ”
(Herman, 1992, p.99)

Survivors describe...

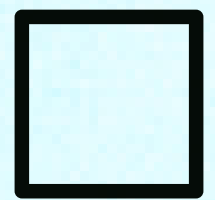
- Pattern of totalitarian control**
 - Enforcement of control by means of violence, threats, isolation, secrecy, betrayal, petty rules, etc**
 - Caregivers who have no emotional or behavioral restraint**
 - Caregivers who do not take into account the child's needs, wishes, opinions, requests**
 - The absence of, inconsistency, unreliability, unpredictability of receiving necessary NURTURING, PROTECTION, GUIDANCE, ATTUNEMENT, VALIDATION, OR ENCOURAGEMENT**
- 

**In order to survive in these environments,
the child has to attach to the caregiver,
sacrificing the following:**

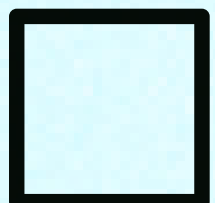
(Herman, 1992, p.99)



**Their happiness, well-being,
wonderment, creativity, expression,
for the sake of SURVIVAL**



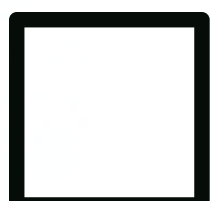
**Their own reality, needing to dismiss,
minimize, repress, dissociate from the
abuse and neglect**



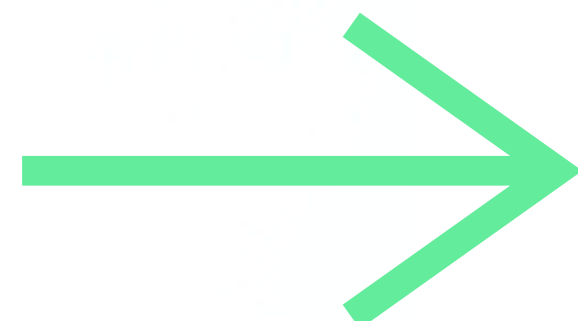
Their childhood, the freedom to be a child



**Their thoughts, feelings, opinions, needs,
wishes, wants, requests**



**Their sense of self, creation of a self, nurturing
of a self**



As an adult now, I invite you to place a hand on your heart when you are disappointed in yourself

Please remember...

- You are re-parenting all of the little YOUS that you've ever been.**
- You are teaching yourself skills that other adults without trauma may have a whole lifetime of practice in.**
- You no longer have to take care of adults who are capable of taking care of themselves. You have all of the children inside of you to take care of.**
- You have the resources now to provide yourself and all of the YOUS that you've ever been, with NURTURING, COMPASSION, KINDNESS, PROTECTION, and GUIDANCE**