

SHARI KARNEY

Help and Hope for Today's Sexual Abuse Survivors

September 2011

Triumph
[tri.umph]
noun.

to obtain victory,
to celebrate
victory, the joy of
success

Trauma
[trau.ma]
noun.

emotional shock;
bodily injury



Triumph Over Trauma Learning to Have a Voice

By Shari Karney

I'm so glad you joined me today. I believe in you and love you. You can Triumph Over Trauma.

Happy October!!! As we fall into fall, and the heat is slowly dissipating, it's time to reflect on where we are and where we would like to be in our life.

What do you want to change in your life to be happier, more productive, and trauma-free?

How do you overcome the trauma so you can live life more fully?

Do you feel like your choices were taken away from you?

I am not a therapist but a foot soldier in the fight, just like you. I'm beginning to understand something I want to share with you.

One way to overcome trauma is to learn how to have a voice, to speak up and stand up, especially for yourself.

How does voice work?
Having a voice means we have choices.

Why don't we want to learn how to have a voice?

Because having a voice could mean having conflict, stepping up, stepping out, can be an uncomfortable situation.

How many of us like conflict? I am an attorney (paid to fight) and yet, in my personal life I hate conflict. I want everything to be nice, comfortable, safe, and smooth. I want to make everyone happy I want to avoid conflict.

It's a constant internal fight. Speak up and risk losing love or lose yourself?

We live through other people's experiences and not our

Triumph Over Trauma

own? We lose our identity lose our opinion? Everything is always fine with us, we aren't important; whatever others want is okay with us. We take public opinion polls instead of speaking up and deciding for ourselves what we would like? We come last? We let people walk all over us. We feel responsible for everyone and everything? We live below the radar, hidden, invisible. Safe.

Having a voice means making decisions. Deciding is a hard thing to do because it means we have to pick a side. Picking a side requires stepping forward. Stepping forward leaves us no place to hide, and thus, vulnerable.

Hiding your voice hides your identity. Hiding identity is a safe place. It's a safe place within yourself. What better place to be safe than in a neutral place? A neutral place is where you don't have an opinion. If you don't have a voice, you never have to reveal yourself. You don't let anyone else in. No one gets to know you.

It is uncomfortable but necessary to step out of this "voiceless comfort zone" into a place where you can learn to speak up. Being in that place of vulnerability, yet learning to be safe.

When we reveal ourselves we learn about ourselves. Remember, that when we are in conflict with another person, both people get to learn their part.

After all if we never went through a bad experience we could never learn from it, you wouldn't be the strong fierce woman you are today. Imagine if we went through a hard day of the soul, how it created our character. What you went through created your character. It made you strong, resilient, and powerful.

Imagine using that power of whatever was done to you and re-directing it to have a voice. Start at one place, one step at a time. Understand what voice exactly means, how it's used. Learn the power that comes from having a voice. Learn to speak up for yourself and it will lead to learning to stand up for yourself which will lead to standing up for others.

Finding your voice is how you begin to triumph over trauma.

You can do it. And if you can do it, so can I, so can all of us. Imagine what life would be like if all survivors had a voice and used it.

Remember, when you change, everyone in your experience changes.

Use your power. Have a voice.
I believe in you. You are my hero.
Much Love!

Shari

"Heroes and cowards feel exactly the same fear.
Heroes just react to it differently."

- Cus D'Amato

From the Publisher:

All articles are copyrighted by their authors. It is unlawful to copy or reprint without their permission. This issue is Copyright © 2011 Triumph Over Trauma, Los Angeles, California. All rights reserved.