



Healing The Child Within: Discovery and Recovery for Adult Children of Dysfunctional Families

By Charles L. Whitfield M.D.

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Have you ever heard of your inner child? Well, this is the classic book that started it all.

In 1987, Charlie Whitfield's breakthrough concept of the child within—that part of us which is truly alive, energetic, creative and fulfilled—launched the inner child movement. Healing the Child Within describes how the inner child is lost to trauma and loss, and how by recovering it, we can heal the fear, confusion and unhappiness of adult life.

Eighteen years and more than a million copies sold later, Healing the Child Within is a perennial selling classic in the field of psychology. And it is even more timely today than it was in 1987. Recent brain research, particularly on the effects of trauma on the brain of developing children, has supported Whitfield's intuitive understanding as a psychiatrist.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Cardwell C. Nuckols, Ph.D., is an expert on brain development and recovery who has been described as "one of the most influential clinical trainers in America." His many publications include the national best-seller, *Cocaine: Dependency to Recovery*. His recent DVD, "The Science Based Treatment of Addictive Disorders," provides a scientific basis for many of the ideas first addressed in *Healing the Child Within*.

Charles L. Whitfield, M.D., is a physician, psychotherapist, and internationally recognized expert on mental illness, behavioral problems, and recovery. He has been on the faculty of the Rutgers University Summer Institute of Alcohol and Drug Studies from 1978 to 2003, and in private practice of medicine and psychotherapy since 1976. He has been voted by his peers as one of the Best Doctors in America every year since 1994. He lives in Atlanta, GA.

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Chapter 1

Discovering Our Child Within

The concept of the Child Within has been a part of our world culture for at least two thousand years. Carl Jung called it the 'Divine Child' and Emmet Fox called it the 'Wonder Child.' Psychotherapists Alice Miller and Donald Winnicott refer to it as the 'true self.' Many in the field of alcoholism and other chemical dependence call it the 'inner child.'

The Child Within refers to that part of each of us which is ultimately alive, energetic, creative and fulfilled; it is our Real Self?who we truly are.

With our parents' unknowing help and society's assistance, most of us deny our Inner Child. When this Child Within is not nurtured or allowed freedom of expression, a false or co-dependent self emerges. We begin to live our lives from a victim stance, and experience difficulties in resolving emotional traumas. The gradual accumulation of unfinished mental and emotional business can lead to chronic anxiety, fear, confusion, emptiness and unhappiness.

Denial of the Child Within and the subsequent emergence of a false self or negative ego are particularly common among children and adults who grew up in troubled families, such as those where chronic physical or mental illness, rigidity, coldness or lack of nurturing were common.

Yet, there is a way out. There is a way to discover and to heal our Child Within and to break free of the bondage and suffering from relying on our false self. That is what this book is about.

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