

Abuse Survivor makes her Secret Dream a Reality

By Anita Jackson

Everyone wants to achieve something in their life. Since I was a teenager I wanted to write a book but never told a soul. Why? Because I was not considered academic and I believed this. As a result, I thought I couldn't write a book. After all, it took me three attempts to get my English O'level. I only passed my Maths with a grade 1 because my first secondary school Maths teacher saw something in me that I didn't see in myself. I had so many questions and he was prepared to answer them until I understood what I was doing. That wasn't so with my English teacher. Ironically, he was sacked two years later when my sister was in his class.

So the fact that I wanted to write a book remained a secret along with an unconscious secret that I had kept since I was ten. I left school at 17 wanting to work but I didn't know what I wanted to do. So I learnt secretarial skills at the local college. I then fell into the trap of becoming a secretary. But working my way up and changing jobs a couple of times I eventually became a very well-paid and top PA.

I fell in love at 20, was married at 21, had my son at 31 and my daughter at 33. When my daughter was two I taught hearing people how to communicate with deaf people for a year. When she was three, my marriage ended. I took employment as a school administrator, which enabled me to have the school holidays with my children.

At 40 I remembered the unconscious secret. I had been sexually abused between the ages of two and nine. Forty was a turning point. Not only was I trying to deal with the memories of my childhood and marriage but I decided to change my past beliefs of not being academic. I was still holding the secret of wanting to write a book.

“Dream lofty dreams, and as you dream, so shall you become.”

By James Allen

I trained to become a teacher of secretarial skills at 40 and taught one or two evenings a week at the local college. I took my A'level English a year later and went on to become a Teacher of English as a Foreign Language at 42.

Then all of a sudden and despite the wonderful times we'd had, both at home and travelling, my children decided to live with their father when they were 12 and 14 because they couldn't bear my angry over-reactions to them being naughty and they refused to see me for a couple of years.

This was the last straw for me and I became suicidal. After a near death experience...coming face to face with a tree...I saw a counsellor...another turning point in my life. Counselling helped me to understand my rage, pain, hurt and sadness and make sense of what had happened. I began to see how I had allowed those feelings and my past to leak out and affect my marriage. What I found the most difficult to come to terms with was how I had affected my children.

I know that my ex-husband had his role to play in the break-up of our marriage with his infidelity and it is difficult to know what came first...chicken or the egg. It actually doesn't matter, I just needed to know my role and what I could have done differently so that I could move on and let go of the past.

I wanted to give back and became a Counsellor/Psychotherapist and graduated with a Post Graduate Diploma. Over the years, I have learned more and more about relationships and feel privileged to have been able to help many clients both in their relationships with themselves and their loved ones.

Now the secret is out! At 58 I have written my book ...”Rekindle The Magic In Your Relationship! Making Love Work”...not a title I would have thought of as a teenager!

I am so grateful for my life, children, family and friends as well as life’s challenges and wonderful experiences. I would not be who I am today; I would not have been able to help so many people and I would not have been able to write this book without them all.

Just as I have written in my book, I took responsibility, found my self-worth, stayed true to myself, became more aware, learnt to feel grateful for everything, started communicating effectively without “He said/She said...” and stayed with my vision of writing a book.

I would urge anyone who has a secret longing inside them, to hold that vision and take the first step towards achieving it. Don’t wait 40 years like I did!