

The National Association for  
People Abused in Childhood

Registered charity no. 1069802

## Summer 2009

### A Message from the Founder

I feel a bit of a fraud saying "welcome" to this edition of the newsletter because it implies we have been sending them out on a regular basis and as I am sure you know it is more than two years since we last produced one. The reasons are short and simple. Time, money, human resources! I was going to add 'laziness' but that's definitely not something any of us at NAPAC suffer from!!!

Another reason for delaying doing this is that many of our supporters have said they are happy to follow NAPAC's progress via the internet. And, of course, we are all supposed to be moving towards a paperless environment (which is good for the rain forests!).

But, for those of you who do not have access to the internet and are wondering what has been happening, here is a brief update of news and views and a little about what has been going on lately. Probably best to start by saying that generally things at NAPAC have been good and we are moving forward with our plans to expand. We continue to receive 1000 calls to our Support Line each week on average and we continue to pull our hair out over how we might be able to answer more than the 10% that we currently manage. Our volunteer numbers have increased and we could not do what we do without them. In fact, we desperately need more of them! But if we get more volunteers we need more space and that means money. So, the first little bit of good news is that we are shortly to receive a visit from the Big Lottery Fund. We applied and were turned down two years ago. We applied again this year and they are coming to visit soon. That must be a good sign (fingers crossed!). The second bit of good news is that the Body Shop Foundation has kindly agreed to donate £20,000! The Body Shop people have been very good to NAPAC and we are most grateful. We are also in the process of applying to a number of other funders and will keep you updated via my blog (online journal) on the internet ([www.petethebigchief.blogspot.com](http://www.petethebigchief.blogspot.com)). There are some "highlights" from my blog at the end of this newsletter.

We have been thinking long and hard about how we can reach out to more survivors of abuse and have come to the conclusion that there is no real network of support groups around the UK (there are SOME, and they tend to be very good). Therefore, we are discussing the possibility of setting up such a network ourselves. Can we do it? You bet we can! Will it take time? Definitely! Can you help? You simply must!!! Quite how you can help I am not entirely sure at the moment but if you could keep a careful eye on our progress you might just be in the right place at the right time - even if it's supporting us financially, as some of you do already, by sending NAPAC a regular donation. I think you know by now that any money you donate will be used very wisely. Please think about it. And also, as always, think about popping in to say hi if you are in our part of town. You are always welcome.

Pete

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# Survivors' Voices

## Art, Poetry, Articles and Stories

### Awkward truth

(Poem by Anne-Marie)

Many kinds of truth;  
Certain varieties rejected,  
Others spurned outright.

Truth folded in with happiness-  
Most popular flavour.  
Blends well;  
Brings sweet happiness after 30 minutes  
Bake in a warm oven.  
Loose ends nicely tied  
Satisfactorily.

Enjoyed by all.

Then truth with edge:  
Harder to blend; electric equipment necessary.  
Warning on packet: hazards present.  
Less welcomed; duly noted.  
To be discussed and considered  
But, enough for now;  
Onto brighter things.  
Mustn't dwell on this

Then, there's plain awkward truth.  
No packet or instructions.  
Openly unwelcome; Naked, alone, spurned.  
Stripped of rhyme and reason;  
No back-up.  
Painful to swallow;  
Scratches the throat and upsets the stomach.  
No medicine to cure.

Happy flavour preferred.  
Duly noted.

Yet naked truth;  
Vulnerability birthed.  
Like a butterfly crushed in action;  
Rare and delicate.  
When handled with care;  
Becomes a true delicacy.

Priceless,  
In fact.

### Untitled.

(Poem by a Survivor)

Hidden secrets  
No one knows,  
Dirty lies  
And violent blows.

My cries of pain  
My silent screams,  
And your cruel actions  
Haunt my dreams.

For you to stop  
I begged and pleaded,  
But my cries of pain  
You never heeded.

You hurt me more  
You held me still,  
You did sick things  
Against my will.

As a child  
I was bruised and broken  
Of what you did  
I'd never spoken.

Years have passed  
From those days.  
Yet bruised and broken  
I remain.

Not alive  
Not yet dead,  
What you did  
Left scars in my head.

In my mind  
And in my soul,  
What you did  
Left a big, black hole.

And all the hurt  
That you caused me  
Made demons in my mind  
To taunt and torment me.

You took my innocence  
You hurt me so,  
I trusted you  
And you left me hollow.

In my mind  
And in my heart  
Your sick actions  
Tore me apart.

I was a child  
So trusting and so meek,  
And you kept me  
So afraid and so weak.

But now, daddy,  
I know you were wrong  
And though the pain won't leave  
I'll fight and be strong.

Because what you did  
Will not keep me broken,  
I will stand tall  
From my nightmares awoken.

I will grow  
And I will try  
To overcome the pain  
My spirit will not die.

Though what you did  
Hurts me still  
I won't give up  
Or surrender my will.

For I know it now  
I am a fighter.  
For I know it now  
I'm a survivor.

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# Survivors' Voices

## Art, Poetry, Articles and Stories

### Don't Lose Hope

(A Survivor's Story - Anonymous)

My stepdad married my mum when I was 11. Up until this point, he was a lovely, kind, funny person, and I loved him being around. Things started to change when they got married, and over the next few years I got more and more aware of him touching me in ways I wasn't completely comfortable with. Odd things he would say to me would make me stop and think: "I'm sorry, it's because you're so beautiful", "I love you like I love your mum" and the such. Hugs when I went to school would turn into minutes of touching and kissing, I think mum noticed, but because it had come on so gradually no one really made anything of it.

Things escalated, he would come into my room late at night and lie in my bed, touching me, making me touch him. He made me pose for photos naked, humiliated me. But all the time I believed that it was because I'd done something wrong. Been too quiet at dinner, been too loud. I always deserved it. And then, the afternoon of my school prom when I was 16, he raped me. I had to go to the hospital the next day to fix what he had done to me.

And it continued. My grades at school dropped (I've always been a high achiever), I became bulimic, I started cutting. I escaped to my dad's house, where it was much less frequent. The one time I said no, my mum ended up in hospital. So I've never done that again. On my 18th birthday, my "special treat", he took me to our holiday cottage, where 4 other men were waiting. They all had their way with me, I have never felt so dirty and worthless in my whole life.

And though it well and truly messed with my head and caused me so much pain and guilt, it also made me more determined than ever to succeed in getting into university, escaping my past.

Now I'm 19, just finishing my first year at university studying medicine. I've stopped cutting, though I still have issues with my eating. I still have flashbacks, things aren't easy for me. My mum is still with my stepdad, and this makes things really difficult when I want to see her. He has come to uni twice to see me, the second time I said no, and he hasn't been back since, though he has phoned.

I know I'm still a way away from sorting things out for myself, but for the first time in a long time I feel like there is a light at the end of the tunnel, even if it is more of a flickering candle at some points. I've recently got a boyfriend, and though I haven't told him anything yet, and he hasn't seen my scars, I hope that it is going to be the beginning of something good for me. University has been a huge help in my road to recovery, and I hope through my chosen career I'll be able to care for others who have gone through similar terrible experiences.

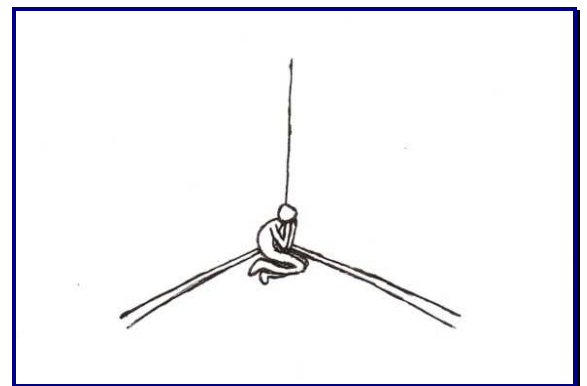
Don't lose hope. Take from the past what will help you in the future, the rest is a waste of energy.

### The Child & The Full Room

(Survivor Art – John Harrison)

John is 38 years old and has spent the last five years trying to come to terms with the fact that he was abused as a child. He expresses how he feels best through writing, pictures, music and other creative mediums.

His advice to other survivors is to "do what you do for you. Don't let anyone put you down. **It** is important because **you** are. Take care of yourself."



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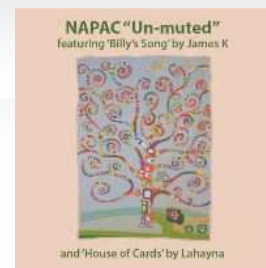
# Pete the Big Chief

## Highlights from Pete's Online Journal and NAPAC's News Feed

### Journal entry extract: 11<sup>th</sup> February

"I mentioned a CD a couple of blogs back that you really should get hold of. It's called NAPAC Un-muted and it is very special - especially as it makes money for NAPAC. We have a stack of them in the office so get your pen out, write a cheque for £12 to 'NAPAC' and pop in post to me here at the office. The CD will reach you by return and you will be very happy with it. And we will be very happy with your £12. That's a lot of money to us as we are a very lean, keen and efficient organisation, unlike the banks!"

*NAPAC Un-muted is a CD with a mixture of music on it – some of the music is written by survivors and some is more well known stuff...it's all good!*



### Journal entry extract: 30<sup>th</sup> April

"As you know we lost Julie, our Training and Development Manager. But since losing her we have found a few others. We now have Dawn, our Volunteer Coordinator and Tamsin, our volunteer Admin person. What's more this past fortnight we've seen 5 new volunteers join our Support Team (the ones who staff the free phone) so you see it's been a time of miracles!"

### Journal entry extract: 27<sup>th</sup> May

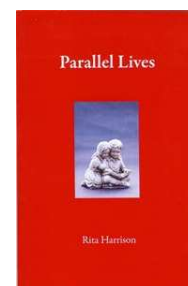
"Someone suggested that abusers don't realise the harm they are doing when they seek "the comfort of children". I hope you are proud of my response. I didn't swear out loud but I had to point out that when an abuser is raping or bugging a child I think there is a pretty good chance that they know exactly how evil and depraved their actions are. I pointed out that the abuse of a child can never ever constitute an act of love. It is an act of hatred. It is the ultimate misuse of power and control. It is a direct attack not just on the mind and body of the child but on their very soul. And when this has been perpetrated by a clergyman.....well I hope you can understand why I was speechless."

### Journal entry extract: 11<sup>th</sup> June

"Tomorrow I am addressing an esteemed audience of health care professionals at the Royal College of Physicians. My presentation title is 'Survivors of abuse - how can health professionals help?' I've waited a long time to be asked that question by such an austere body as the Royal College.....I hope I manage to tell them. You know, I think I am more nervous about tomorrows talk than I was about visiting the dentist this morning!"

### Journal entry extract: 12<sup>th</sup> June

"Send us a cheque for £6 (or more if you are feeling generous) made out to 'NAPAC' and we will send you a copy of Parallel Lives, a brilliant book of poetry that contrasts the lives of two girls.....one who is abused and one who isn't. It's a clever little book that explores the emotional wreckage that perpetrators leave in their wake. It won't take you long to read but it WILL move you. Cheques please to NAPAC, 42 Curtain Road. London EC2A 3NH."



### Journal entry extract: 12<sup>th</sup> June

"The talk at the Royal College of Physicians went down a treat. Talking of treats, the lunch was fabulous. Pity I was so nervous that I couldn't eat my customary 2nd and 3rd helping. Never mind, I need to loose weight. Helps going up those hills on the bike. The 140 doctors were a lovely bunch and extremely receptive to what I had to say about supporting survivors of abuse. Many didn't have a clue so it was great to be there and to have such an impressive platform. And I gave them all leaflets so here's hoping we get one or two donations. More importantly...and this was the message I gave.....I hope they listen and hear what survivors tell them and think twice before reaching for that prescription pad."

### Journal entry extract: 18<sup>th</sup> June

"Get a load of this.....<http://www.justgiving.com/kennewellinca>"

*Pete and 3 others are raising funds for NAPAC by walking the Inca Trail in July! There will be pictures!!*

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