***The Child Survivor: Healing Developmental Trauma and Dissociation*, by J. L. Silberg**

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Despite the number of quality books available on treatment of traumatized children, there has been a dearth of in-depth guidance on the treatment of dissociation in children. If I were to have nominated an author for such a book, I would have chosen Dr. Joyanna Silberg, a leading expert in child trauma and dissociation, who also maintains an active clinical practice. *The Child Survivor* is an authoritative clinical guide for providing psychotherapy to severely trauma-exposed children, many of whom suffer from complex PTSD and dissociation.

The book starts out with a thorough-yet-concise review of relevant research on the impact of abuse and neglect on children, integrating findings from research on neurobiology, psychopathology, and developmental psychology. An integrative model of dissociation is presented, highlighting the unique features of childhood dissociation that, if untreated, may become Dissociative Identity Disorder over time. Diagnostic considerations are explained.

Silberg then presents a comprehensive treatment framework. This framework is specific to treating dissociative children, while covering the same basic ground as other trauma treatment phase models, including psycho-education, self-management skills, and trauma resolution. The remainder of

the book guides the reader, step by step, in implementing this treatment approach. Many of the interventions taught are unique to working with dissociative children, for example, helping children to retain or recall coherent memories of life events, avoid going into a dissociative state, or remain connected to their attachment (parent) figures at moments of distress.

This book has several important strengths. It is well written and readable. It is thoroughly grounded in research as well as deep clinical experience. Numerous case examples are provided, which adds interest while effectively illustrating the various points. Finally, it provides extensive scripts – verbatim examples of what therapists can actually ask or say in various situations – as needed to actually implement the interventions.

Treating severely traumatized dissociative children is challenging and requires advanced clinical skills. *The Child Survivor* provides essential information and tools in meeting this challenge, with a focus on interventions specific to dissociative children. For therapists who already have basic competence in child trauma treatment, I highly recommend this book for guidance in treating the most difficult cases; and I will use it myself.

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