

**Dotsie Bregel,  
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(NABBW)**



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***Presents***

**Sexual Assault: A Silent Epidemic with Tragic  
Consequences**

**By: Lynn C. Tolson**

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**Sexual Assault: A Silent Epidemic with Tragic Consequences**  
**Given by: Lynn C. Tolson**

**Dotsie:** For those of you who don't know me I am Dotsie Bregel and I am the founder of the National Association of Baby Boomer Women which can be found at [www.nabbw.com](http://www.nabbw.com) and [www.boomerwomenspeak.com](http://www.boomerwomenspeak.com) and they both share the number one spot on major search engines for baby boomer women. I'm passionate about educating and empowering my generation of women. Our sites are proudly sponsored by [www.dolans.com](http://www.dolans.com), so if you are interested in excellent financial information that will encourage you to live a more financially responsible midlife we recommend that you visit [www.dolans.com](http://www.dolans.com). And we are also sponsored by Elations which is a daily drink supplement that offers relief from joint aches and pains. It is an alternative to taking the big pill and you can find them at [www.elations.com](http://www.elations.com). And we would like to mention them because their sponsorships really help us continue to do the type of educational opportunities that we are doing this evening. Since launching Boomer Women Speak over five years ago, I have been connecting, encouraging and supporting boomer women on a daily basis. I feel like I have my finger on the pulse of this spirited generation and I dedicate a great portion of my time to creating opportunities that inspire women to explore their passions and live their lives to the fullest. I have become the go to person for journalists who are interested in learning more about boomer women. So my prayer is to embrace all women and provide them with the means to soar. I think you'll agree that this topic this evening is something that will certainly be beneficial to many of us on the call and actually many who are not on the call. We encourage you that if you enjoy and can really take something away from this teleseminar this evening that you would offer the information to friends that may be in need of hearing it. We will have this teleseminar posted at [www.boomerwomenspeak.com](http://www.boomerwomenspeak.com) and [www.nabbw.com](http://www.nabbw.com) for free and I believe Lynn is also going to post it on her site.

**Lynn:** Yes, I will.

**Dotsie:** Good, if you are not a member of the NABBW the fee to join for the month of April; and this offer is almost up—is only \$50. It's typically \$75 but I'm celebrating the big 50-birthday bash and decided to offer membership for \$50. So if you are interested you can email me at [dots@nabbw.com](mailto:dots@nabbw.com) or you can go to [www.nabbw.com](http://www.nabbw.com) and just pay right through the link that is in the important announcement section at the top of the home page. Okay this call is one of our free and open to the public educational teleseminars and we are just really happy to do it because we really take pride in helping women at every stage of life and in every aspect of midlife. This evening we are interviewing Lynn Tolson, hello Lynn.

**Lynn:** Hello Dotsie.

**Dotsie:** And when we begin talking if you could speak up just a little bit so we can get a really clear voice for the recording it helps. Lynn is the author of ***Beyond the Tears, A True Survivor's Story***. This is her memoir about suicide attempts in the aftermath of sexual abuse. She is the founder of the project for Tears, telling everyone about rape and suicide. Using her personal experience and professional knowledge Ms. Tolson presents on these topics. She offers a message of hope and healing as well as an understanding of silent issues that cause individual suffering and plague our society. We mentioned earlier, maybe before you were on the call that her website is [www.beyondthetears.com](http://www.beyondthetears.com). So if you are in front of a computer and you want to pull that site up you can do that. You can also look at [www.boomerwomenspeak.com](http://www.boomerwomenspeak.com) or [www.nabw.com](http://www.nabw.com) while you are on the call and we also would suggest that you might have a piece of paper and pen just in case anything she says really strikes a chord and you want to jot that down. If you entered the call late and you have not pressed the 6 button to mute all background noises, I would appreciate if you would do that. I hear a little fuzzy something in the background, so I'm not sure which phone that's coming from but if you haven't pushed 6 and you could do so, that would be great. Okay Lynn, how are you this evening?

**Lynn:** Hi Dotsie, I'm fine thank you. And I really appreciate this teleseminar so that we can bring awareness to a topic that affects a lot of women.

**Dotsie:** Absolutely we're happy to do so. So before we get started with some of the questions that people know you're going to be answering this evening, I just wanted to ask if you'd be kind enough to tell us a little bit about your story and why you wrote the book. And I know some people on the call have read it and some have not, so if you want to tell us a little bit about your story and then why you wrote the book that would be great.

**Lynn:** Okay, well, I did not intend to write a book about sexual assault. I started to write a book about overcoming drugs and alcohol and about overcoming the acting out that I did that I did as a teenager. So I started writing this book in my forties and I discovered as I was writing that there was a common theme and that was about addiction and suicide. So I went back into therapy in my forties to find out why I was so suicidal and discovered that in the course of therapy that indeed I had been sexually assaulted, molested, and that includes incest as a child and as my story evolves into a memoir I made the correlation between the sexual assault and my suicide attempt.

I wrote the book because I had discovered that these are social problems that carry stigmas and that there seems to be, or there is a code of silence. I learned that when we're not speaking about the crime of sexual assault, it becomes more of a silent epidemic and nothing really gets solved in silence so that sexual assault, incest, and rape perpetuates for generations. I wrote the book because I realized that by bringing my dark secrets to light I could help others who had similar events and they could learn that they were not alone. My hope is that

readers whether or not they have experienced any kind of sexual assault themselves that they can explore their own emotions to open up lines of communication and with that eliminate shame and even experience healing. As my book evolves towards the end of my story the readers will see that there is hope and healing from the issues that cause individual suffering and indeed plague our whole society. I think I answered two questions.

**Dotsie:** Yeah, that's great. Actually I know I have to say that this is one thing that is really good about the Internet and that is the anonymity that goes with it. We have a Forum community at [www.boomerwomenspeak.com](http://www.boomerwomenspeak.com) and women are welcome to go in there and post about this topic, because Lynn is also in that Forum community. The other thing that's really good about the Internet and these types of teleseminars is that people can call in and no one has to know. You can also email Lynn and she can correspond with you too. So if there is someone that is suffering in silence that's on the line, please know that there is help and it can be done with some anonymity also. Let's start by asking you what are the myths about rape?

**Lynn:** Okay, rape, myths, and rape facts. We are living in a victim blaming society and that is one of the myths that the victim is to blame in some way for the assault. I'm going to be using the feminine pronoun because women are more likely to experience assault than men, but I do want to make it clear that there are plenty of men in our society who have been sexually assaulted as well and remain in the silence. The first myth is that victims are to blame in some way for the assault. Or, another myth is that rape is an expression of sexual desire. People think rape won't happen to me. People say that men can't stop themselves when they are sexually aroused. Another myth is that rape is usually committed by strangers. Another is that it's no big deal if a woman is forced to have sex with someone she knows.

For example, a friend, or while on a date, or with a boyfriend, or with a spouse and the myth is that it isn't really rape. That men are never victims of sexual assault. That is a myth as I mentioned earlier. That sexual violence does not occur between lesbians or between gay men and the ninth rape myth that I've written is that if the victim was drunk or drugged, he or she was asking for it. So those are nine rape myths that I've come across.

**Dotsie:** Wow, they are all pretty powerful. Okay; well what about the facts about rape? Can you share the facts with us?

**Lynn:** Yes, the victim is not to blame. The rapist is always responsible for having committed the rape regardless of the victim's appearance, her behavior, her judgment, or previous actions. The victim is not responsible for the rape. Rapists are responsible for the rape.

**Dotsie:** Okay, and that's a good point because I'm sure a lot of people in

reflection may think oh I shouldn't have worn that, I shouldn't have danced like that, I shouldn't have done this maybe it's my fault. But what you're saying is no that's not the case; you were still raped.

**Lynn:** That's right, that's not the case, and also it's not just the internal it has to do with the victim blaming society who says oh, she shouldn't have worn that short skirt. Or it's her fault for drinking all that beer. Or did you see how drunk she was? So both the person saying I shouldn't have done that and then the rest of society saying she or he should not have behaved in that way. Another rape fact is that it is actually an expression of power and control. It is a hostile act and it uses sex as a vehicle of aggression. It's really not about sex; it's about hostility and aggression. Rape is a violent abuse of power in which one person acts without regard for the pain and trauma inflicted on another. Shall I go on?

**Dotsie:** Sure go ahead.

**Lynn:** I have six more. One study found that one in four college women have been victims of rape or sexual assault, and about ten percent of sexual assault victims are men. Men are capable of and responsible for controlling both their minds and bodies just as women are and that sexual assault is a choice. So that pertains to the myth that men are not in control of their bodies, when in fact we all are. Another fact is that college women are in far greater danger of being raped by a friend or a fellow student than by a stranger. Almost ninety percent of college women who were raped new their assailant. Another fact is that sexual intercourse forced by an acquaintance is rape. In some ways it is more traumatic than stranger rape because the victims trust in others and in her own judgment can be seriously damaged. Another fact is that both men and women may be perpetrators or victims of sexual assault. Unfortunately male victims rarely seek help due to embarrassment and the fear that they will not be taken seriously.

**Dotsie:** But I think that's probably true of some women to.

**Lynn:** Oh, absolutely. I mean that's why it has perpetuated. Fear of retaliation is a huge part of why we don't tell. Or that when women do tell they are not believed or in some way like I said earlier are blamed for it. I have two more facts. Sexual violence does occur in same sex relationships. The last fact that I've written down is that the inability to give consent is not asking for it. In other words if someone has had too much to drink and does not have the whereabouts to say no, that doesn't mean she or he was asking for it.

**Dotsie:** And it doesn't mean that they weren't raped.

**Lynn:** That's right.

**Dotsie:** Okay well those are some empowering facts I think and I think that they will really help people who have been in this situation feel better about speaking

out. That's the reason we are doing the call. Let's move on then to the question about power and control. What do power and control have to do with sex abuse?

**Lynn:** Well, as I said earlier rape is not so much, sex is used as the vehicle in any sexual assault, but it is more about power and control. I am going to be using a form that was developed by the domestic abuse intervention project. It's called the power and control wheel and there are several categories that pertain to power and control. When someone uses intimidation to manipulate another that person is trying to have power and control over the other. That intimidation can be in the form of displaying weapons or destroying her property. Using intimidation also means making her or him afraid by using looks or actions or gestures. And intimidation can also take the form of abusing sex. I do tell a story in my book where a pet was used as a matter of using intimidation and thereby exhibiting power and control over a situation. Another category is using emotional abuse. Power and control take the form of humiliation. When one person is putting another person down, or calling the other person a name or playing mind games that is a part of power and control. When someone can use emotional abuse towards another, that person can also escalate to other forms of abuse including sexual assault.

**Dotsie:** Okay and Lynn, I wanted to tell you as we are going through some of these if you have some examples from your book, personal examples that you would like to share, I think it would be helpful to kind of drive the point home. So go ahead.

**Lynn:** Isolation is another form of power and control. Isolation means again I'm using the pronoun she; he is controlling what she does, what she reads, where she goes, who she sees and talks to. But as I said earlier that can apply to men as well. I tell in my story how isolation was used in my case when I was a victim of domestic violence and I literally lived on two and a half acres of desert and had not car during the day and that was a way by which the man I was married to could control me, to keep me home all day and therefore I could not tell what was going on with me and also, I was so isolated that I didn't even realize that the verbal abuse, the emotional abuse that I was enduring at the time was wrong. Another part of power and control is when the perpetrator minimizes, denies, or blames the victim. Generally they will make light of the abuse. In the case of domestic violence for instance where he hits her and she gets a bruise, he will say oh you bruise too easy, oh you're just too sensitive, oh you must be sick maybe you have anemia, you ought to get that checked. But then if she does go to get it checked he won't allow it to happen because maybe the truth would be told. Minimizing includes saying that she caused the upset, that she provoked the incident. He'll use jealousy to justify his actions, like if he grabs her arm too hard at a party, if she's talking to somebody he doesn't want her to she thinks because he's acting that way, oh he loves me and that's why he's tugging at me to stop talking to this other person.

**Dotsie:** It sounds like they are always pointing the finger which is something else that I think that is probably very true of this, is that right?

**Lynn:** Yes, that is definitely the case. The case where the perpetrator is in some ways not emotionally capable of taking responsibility, although the responsibility always belongs to the perpetrator.

**Dotsie:** Right and just the fear I think of reporting and that type of thing.

**Lynn:** Children are often used in the case of power and control and children are often used as pawns. Some cases would be where, say the father has visitation rights and he uses those visitation rights to inquire about the mother or to bash the mother, it can be vice versa, where the mother bashes the father. Or using the children to relay messages, go tell your mother that I'm not going to see you next week because she hasn't done such and such. Or that he threatens to take the children away calling her an unfit mother. Another example of power and control is using male privilege and that is when someone acts as if they are the master of the domain and treats her like a servant and again this can apply to all relationships, not necessarily heterosexual. Or using male privilege, using this one to define the role of men and women. I do this, I go out and earn the money so you need to stay home and make the dinner; which was my personal example in the story that I tell about domestic violence. Economic abuse is a part of power and control, where perhaps he is the breadwinner and he gives her a certain allowance and tells her what she can and can't spend the money on. Preventing her from getting or keeping a job. I remember a line that the man I was married to gave to me, he had met me when I was a waitress in a restaurant, then I did indeed marry him. I was too intimidated not to and I wanted to go back to work and earn my own money and he said to me, no wife of mine is going to go slinging hash in some dive restaurant. So I was prohibited from getting a job until of course I got the wherewithal to leave.

**Dotsie:** Right, but it takes a lot of guts.

**Lynn:** It took a lot yes. And then a really important part of this power and control is using coercion and threats. I mentioned the marriage I was in and I married this man because he stood there and said if you don't marry me I will kill myself. I was 19 years old at the time and my father had committed suicide the year before. So suicide was on my mind and I believed this man. And I didn't want to feel responsible for his suicide. Now the reason these categories of power and control come into play with sexual assault is because as I said earlier sexual assault is about power and control, it's not about sex. Sex is the vehicle.

**Dotsie:** Okay, is that everything for power and control?

**Lynn:** Yes.



**Dotsie:** Okay, good why don't we move on to the signs, like what signs do the sexually abused typically exhibit?

**Lynn:** Okay and this can carry through to any age group. Behavior changes would include excessive crying or extreme mood swings. Fearfulness or bravado, withdrawal or rebellion. A fear of certain places, people, or activity. This can apply to many different meanings. Anything could create these behavior changes but these are some of the signs, they are not all inclusive and they don't explain everything. Now in my case, in terms of being sexually abused as a child I had my last straw when I was 12 years old. By the time I was 13 I was either up or off the wall or I was down and in the dumps. So that would be a case of extreme mood swings. I would be either very withdrawn and stay in my room for days being fearful of even going to school or I would go to school and may smoke pot. So that's an example of withdrawal and rebellion.

**Dotsie:** Okay, and now can you talk a little bit about how women are sexually abused as children and how it affects their future relationships? And maybe share a little bit about your abuse as a child which is in your book and then how you kind of fell into this relationship when you were 19.

**Lynn:** Well, I would have denied it at the time but I was told that the man I was married to was a father figure to me. He was eighteen years older than me. The way he treated me was exactly the way my father had treated me. My father was a verbally abusive man and he was violent. What I am saying is that I married a man when I was 19 who treated me exactly the way my father had treated me because that's all I knew. And the similarities in retrospect are uncanny. Including the man that I was married to would wave around a gun and threaten to kill himself the same way my father had, but I knew no difference. And so as a woman who was barely 20, I married a man who was exactly like my father. So it was a pattern of some familiarities that I had not yet had the wherewithal to break.

**Dotsie:** Or even that aware of at that age.

**Lynn:** No, I even denied it. When someone would say he's like a father figure to you, I'd say oh no he's not; he loves me. My father would say that he loved me and at the same time do something to hurt me and so I thought that's what love was.

**Dotsie:** I know often times depression is quite a big piece of this so do you want to tell us what the symptoms of depression are?

**Lynn:** Yeah, the symptoms of depression, people may be familiar with feeling blue, but if someone is feeling blue for a very long period of time and then cannot be treated for that depression and can not really engage in their hobbies, or anything that interested them before chances are they would need treatment for

depression. Not all depressed people move to suicidal thinking. But suicidal thinking can be a part of depression. Now the reason that I talk about suicide is that victims of sexual assault and when I say sexual assault I also include incest. Victims of sexual assault are more likely to attempt suicide than those who have not been victimized. And the percentage is like nineteen percent. So I'm saying that those who have been victimized are nineteen percent more likely to attempt suicide than a group that has not been victimized. So that's what Tears is about, that is what I talk about. Telling everyone about rape and suicide is because there is a correlation. I did not even know that that was a correlation until I was 43 and ready to face my childhood.

**Dotsie:** Now this is an interesting piece of the depression and I'm just going to ask you a question, I'm not sure what the answer is, but there are people who bury this whole incest thing and they become depressed. Is it often during that depression and the time that they get help for that depression, that they discover that they have been raped by a family member or something.

**Lynn:** Well, I've never really studied exactly what you are asking, but I can talk about my personal experience. When I wanted to leave that man that I was married to, I was about 24 years old, and I literally ran for my life. And I ended up with a counselor named Karen, and her goal at that time was literally to teach me how to live without suicidal thinking and without harming myself. However, in my twenties, I did not reveal to her that I had been a victim of child sexual abuse including incest.

**Dotsie:** Okay, and you knew that, but you – I mean you were totally aware of that, but you just chose not to present it at the time.

**Lynn:** Yes, because it was ingrained in me, I was nearly hypnotized not to tell. The phrase that was used by my father was, "you will remember nothing." I was also victimized by my brother and he used the same phrase. So I trained myself as a teenager that was my homework—to train myself not to remember.

**Dotsie:** It's amazing what the mind can do.

**Lynn:** It is amazing. To protect itself.

**Dotsie:** Why don't we talk a little bit about the risk factors for suicide?

**Lynn:** In the case of suicide risk factors, I talk about this, if somebody feels this way or if somebody sees these factors in somebody else; or these behaviors. And it does include depression and I said earlier that depression may increase the potentials of suicidal thinking. Another high predictor of suicide attempt is if that person has had a previous attempt. And a previous attempt can be really masked. When I was about 12 years old, I took a bottle of Excedrin and I wasn't really thinking if I take this bottle of Excedrin I'm going to die. I was thinking

maybe this bottle of Excedrin will save me somehow, but in retrospect and in counseling, it was a masked way of attempting to ease the pain, and it could have killed me. So a previous attempt is a high predictor of a subsequent attempt. A suicide risk factor if somebody is abusing drugs and/or alcohol which can be depressants, they might be more likely to be depressed and attempt suicide while in that state. The person has lost rational thinking, they are unrealistic, and they feel very isolated from others, so a person without social support is more likely to attempt suicide, if all these other conditions pertain. Not everybody who is isolated is going to attempt suicide, so I hope that listeners are understanding the train of thought that this is just one portion of suicide risk factors.

**Dotsie:** And do people who have been abused often cut themselves off from society because of the shame?

**Lynn:** Well, again that isn't something that I studied that I would know exactly, the statistics on; but that is most likely. I know I became very isolated. The shame was placed on me, and I want to make this clear that the shame does not belong to the victim. The shame belongs to the perpetrator. But when that happens, the victim often takes on the shame. And yes, they feel so shamed and so humiliated and so embarrassed and so betrayed that they become isolated. And in that isolation depression can be fostered and suicidal thinking can be nurtured. Nurtured is not the right word – escalated.

**Dotsie:** Escalated, right. Well, can you tell us why are these silent social problems? I mean especially because – and maybe talk a little bit about the boomers and how surprising it really is that more boomers haven't shared their stories because I think we have talked before about the difference between the kids now. The younger generation more people are speaking out. I think because some of the pioneers from our generation but there weren't a great many of women from our generation that did speak out.

**Lynn:** Nobody spoke about it. It took me thirty-seven years to find out that a family member of mine had been sexually assaulted by other family members. We're talking within my own family; I found out that other family members had experienced incest.

**Dotsie:** Okay, was that after you wrote your book?

**Lynn:** Yes it was after I wrote my book, but before they knew about the book.

**Dotsie:** But before they knew about the book.

**Lynn:** So it wasn't like the book was the catalyst. That is how shrouded in silence it is. But I have seen maybe because of the availability of the Internet, it seems to me that there are more twenty-something's who are saying, I was a

victim of incest and/or I was sexually assaulted, and now I am a cutter, I cut myself and I want help, it seems like there are more younger people speaking out and asking for help than in our generation, one generation before. And I think it's because there is a greater availability of talk on the Internet like I said, and we have the talk shows that often bring up the subject.

**Dotsie:** That's so true, but you know the thing with the Internet is these kids, you know if they are aware enough of their issue, they can go online and Google anything and information is literally at their fingertips, which is wonderful. And I think the fact that they can find so much on the Internet, makes them realize that they are not alone. Whereas before the Internet, there weren't many books about this. And unless you went through a phone book and happened to find the one number to call that was in all of the phone books, the help really wasn't there for you.

**Lynn:** Well, how about this, when I was ten, I looked in the dictionary to see what the word incest meant. That was my reference. I probably had heard the word incest, and I probably had some kind of connection, but that was my source, was the dictionary.

**Dotsie:** And that's it. If you were to go to Google today and search incest, you could find help. And I think that's one of the things that's really good about the Internet for this younger generation, as long as they aren't only sharing this information online. It's really helpful for the people who are offering help online to encourage the kids to speak to someone, too. But I'm sure there are kids who are using just the Internet because they don't want to go to a person. But at least there is some help.

**Lynn:** Right and the shame factor is a big part of it, and also that sexual assault and its ramifications, such as addiction, and for suicide attempts, or alcoholism, or cutting, those are unsolved social problems and they carry stigmas. And then there is also the silence. The perpetrator will tell the child if you tell your mother will die.

**Dotsie:** Oh, sure.

**Lynn:** Your father will die. If you tell you will be taken away from your parents. Now what if it's the parents who are committing the sexual assault? You know if the child tells, then they're in a huge conundrum because if the child tells, then they are telling on the very person that they rely on for safety and security theoretically.

**Dotsie:** It's so sad, it's just pathetic. I want to get through two more questions before we open the lines up for questions and answers. If someone were to come to me let's say and kind of share their secret, how can I support them?

**Lynn:** Well, that's a good question. The first thing is to believe. Whether a child or an adult, when somebody tells you that, they are telling the truth. It's very; very unlikely that someone would make that up. The first thing would be to believe. Another thing to do would be to help that person find safety. What if they are still in that situation where they are being harmed in some way? You would want to support and to help them find safety.

**Dotsie:** And what does that safety look like? Just getting them out of the home and in someone else's home, or into a shelter?

**Lynn:** That's a really good question because it depends on what your community has to offer.

**Dotsie:** But you would also have to convince them that whatever the perpetrator has said to them isn't going to happen, and can you be certain of that? You know like if they are telling them if you leave me, I'm going to kill whomever, kill you or the child, or whatever. How can we assure them that that is not true?

**Lynn:** And you can't. It could be true.

**Dotsie:** That's the kind of freaky part. If you are the person trying to help, I think that you probably have to get help in helping them.

**Lynn:** Yes, and it's very complex and most communities have some type of help available. And when I mean help, there are crisis centers, there are shelters, there is counseling available. You as a friend can't do it alone.

**Dotsie:** Right. Well, then let's talk – the last question then is really what resources are available and this is where I would refer people to your site, because you can tell us all the names of the books, and all the other websites, or associations, or whatever, but you really have a very impressive website with so much information for someone who is looking for this type of information. Lots of great articles and resources. So why don't you tell us a little bit about the resources.

**Lynn:** Okay, well like you said, the resources right now are very numerous, and I have a list of books on my site and it's not like reading is going to solve a problem, but there is a term called Bibliotherapy. That is a form of self-help where somebody can read and learn that they are not alone. The first book that helped me and I was in my forties, was *The Courage to Heal*. It was very strange because those phrases kept coming to me. I was 43 years old, and I kept hearing the phrase, 'the courage to heal', 'the courage to heal', and I really didn't know what that meant. And I hadn't yet fully faced, I'm going to answer your question in a minute, fully faced what I had to face, which was the truth that was within me was that I had been a victim of incest and other child abuse. So the courage to heal kept coming to me and at the time Google was not a big deal. I would not

have thought to Google “the courage to heal.” My way of protecting myself when I wanted to withdraw in a safe manner compared to a destructive manner, a safe manner for me was go to a library. So I went to a library and at the time there were still those catalogue cards and this was just like ten years ago, instead of using a computer, I found the book *The Courage to Heal* and the sub title is, *Help for Survivors of Incest*. And I thought oh, that’s not me; *The Courage to Heal* must mean something else. So it took me almost two years to pick up that book and call a counselor, and ask for help, and say, I think this is me.

**Dotsie:** I’m so glad you are sharing that because there might be other people on the call who have waited longer or maybe who have only waited a month or two, but it’s time to pick up something, and begin to heal. So go ahead and answer the question about resources.

**Lynn:** Okay well back to Bibliotherapy; there are a lot of books on my site that I mention that I found personally helpful and not too triggering. In other words somebody might – triggering means somebody might be reading a paragraph and it puts them back in the position as if they are experiencing the abuse again. So most of the books that are listed on my site, I did not feel were too triggering, or triggering in any way.

**Dotsie:** That’s wonderful.

**Lynn:** So I would encourage anybody listening to go to the site, and to look for some of the books. I’ve also listed resources, and the first resource I would go to would be RAINN, and that stands for *Rape and Incest National Network*. And that is an organization that connects people with communities. So we talked about earlier, if you knew of somebody, or if you yourself revealed or knew that you needed some kind of help, or that person needed help, RAINN is the “go to” organization that connects people to what is available in their community.

**Dotsie:** That’s wonderful. You know what I’m on your resource page and I don’t see that. Am I missing it? Under organizations you have *Girls from Within*, a *Web Radio* interview and *Divine Seeds of Hope*. And then you have *Recommended Viewing*.

**Lynn:** Oh, the blog page, I see what you are saying. You are at Resources and I would encourage listeners to then go to my blog page. The Web site is static, I don’t change that very often, but I do change the blog frequently. I recently listed a very important documentary on my blog. I came across this documentary called *Incest, a Family Tragedy*. It is a documentary that is trying to delve into the causes of incest in regard to why is it still a silent subject, and what can we do about it and how can we protect children?

**Dotsie:** Oh very good, so prevention too, right?

**Lynn:** Yes. This is a society that, I just want to say, it's after the fact, you know, when something has already occurred. But the focus of this particular documentary that I'm mentioning, is to stimulate thought as to how can we prevent, especially child sexual abuse?

**Dotsie:** Very good. Now in case someone does not have the Internet, you would recommend RAINN and perhaps they could go to the library, and use the Internet at the library to look them up, and that's RAINN.com?

**Lynn:** [www.rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org).

**Dotsie:** Thank you, and then the first book that you would recommend would be *The Courage to Heal: a Guide for Women*. So if you are not in front of the site you might want to jot those two things down. Okay, Lynn anything else before we open the line for questions?

**Lynn:** I don't think so.

**Dotsie:** If you are on the call, and you have a question, please push the six button so we can hear you.

**Caller No. 1:** Hello, can you hear me?

**Dotsie:** We sure can, go ahead.

**Caller No. 1:** This is Karen I spoke a little bit earlier but I read the book. One thing when Lynn was talking, she said it was a memoir, and then you talked about this came out to you in therapy, were there any other resources? Did you journal as a child or was there any way you could go back to what it was that you experienced, and then feel the emotion after going to therapy? Do I make sense?

**Lynn:** Yes. I did journal as a child only we didn't call it a journal. We called it a diary.

**Caller No. 1:** Oh, okay. The little lock and key thing.

**Lynn:** Yes. So I did have some diaries, and when I read them in retrospect I was shocked at what I was reading. And yes all the emotions came back to me, and I was triggered, and I had flash backs, and I had to go to therapy again in my forties. But this time therapy was different. In my twenties, it was how do I live without suicidal thinking? In my forties, it was how do I live with the truth that I've just uncovered? And I recommend journaling as a way to get in touch with yourself.

**Caller No. 1:** You're right; there were diaries. That is so true, that is so true. Can I ask you another question?

**Lynn:** Yes, go ahead one more.

**Caller No. 1:** When did you first have those thoughts of suicide? I've listened to you where you were isolated or you went to school or you were a rebel. But how old were you when you first tried, or gave into that?

**Lynn:** The Excedrin I was ten.

**Caller No. 1:** You were ten. Well, your book says right in the beginning if anybody has not read that, it actually describes your suicide.

**Lynn:** Yes the suicide attempt when I was 25.

**Caller No. 1:** Oh that was when you were 25?

**Lynn:** Yes, 24 or 25. It was way more than Excedrin.

**Caller No. 1:** How old were you when you wrote this book?

**Lynn:** When I started to write the book, I was 44 and 45. And I used my journal. I also did something that was when I think about it, was very brave. My mother had sent me my childhood photo album and I did not open it for years. But in my forties, I opened up my photo journal and saw myself as a child, and that's when the floodgates opened, and that's when I started writing, and writing, and writing.

**Caller No. 1:** See that's the whole thing that I'm thinking here. For all of us, there has to be a trigger mechanism that opens it up again. I mean I've lived in silence for years, you know for years. And now I find myself telling everybody about your book; a lady on a plane that I contacted through [www.beyondthetears.com](http://www.beyondthetears.com) and told her where to get a book. I'm talking about it all the time, but each time I talk about it.....

**Dotsie:** Each time you talk about it, I'm sorry what was that?

**Caller No. 1:** More memories come up.

**Dotsie:** Oh for you, more of your memories.

**Caller No. 1:** So I feel like I'm healing every day.

**Dotsie:** So it's good to talk about it?

**Caller No. 1:** Absolutely. I encourage people to talk about it.

**Dotsie:** Yes, because as Lynn says nothing gets solved in silence.



**Caller No. 1:** Yes, that's true.

**Dotsie:** That is really one of the most important messages this evening.

**Caller No. 1:** Well, I'm not going to hold up this whole conversation, I just want to thank you Lynn for writing the book. Thank you for coming out and telling your story, which was in essence, my story; it's everybody's story who has gone through domestic violence, or incest, or child molestation in any way. Thank you for allowing me to open up.

**Dotsie:** That's great. Thanks Karen. Okay anyone else want to ask a question?

**Caller No. 2:** Hi, Lynn.

**Lynn:** Hi.

**Caller No. 2:** I didn't know if you could hear.

**Lynn:** I'm here.

**Caller No. 2:** This is Lisa Dickinson. I'm actually with *Stop the Silence Child Sexual Abuse*. I'm the Outreach manager, so listening to you was great, and I appreciate everything that you said. I know the book *The Courage to Heal* as well, and not knowing who is on the phone, there is a book called *Invisible Girls* for teenage girls and young women, if anybody wants to look at that.

**Dotsie:** Oh, it's called, Invisible Girls.

**Caller No. 2:** Invisible Girls.

**Lynn:** I wrote a review of that book, it's on my blog.

**Caller No. 2:** Oh, do you have it? Okay.

**Dotsie:** And is that for young girls to read; for any young girl?

**Lynn:** It is for teen girls, young girls, basically targeted towards women, and the younger generation.

**Dotsie:** So is it a book of prevention?

**Caller No. 2:** Actually it's just an entailed book about dealing with child sexual abuse. And the way that is written is more targeted for the younger generation.

**Dotsie:** Okay, that's great.

**Caller No. 2:** Yes, dealing with survivors and as being a survivor myself, I think that having people write is very therapeutic in healing. And when you talked about being able to deal with it; I guess two of the questions that drew me to speak about being able to deal with it was when your mind is able to handle it, is when, and I'm sure you agree, is when you sort of remember even more; because your body does protect you. Your mind does protect you, and I have found talking to children and talking to adults, that the more that they are able to deal with it, the more they are remembering, which makes perfect sense. Yes, now you are absolutely right, it depends on the community. If somebody comes to you and asks you a question, there are times when I spoke to a school, and not being a counselor myself, but being a survivor, and having experience with children, I was a counselor at a jail, and I ran a daycare of 125 kids. So the subject matter in *Child Protective Services*, I have known since age of 16 was helping.

And you do, you go to the authorities and you do believe first, and you go to the authorities, you go to the school counselor, you go to anybody that is going to listen. I never went to the parent first because of how it could be handled within the home. I'm sure you know the mother could protect the father. The question or not if there are threats. So but you are right, it depends on what community you are in. But you generally go to the authorities, or to the counselors, or Child Protective Services. I wanted to know, I have not read your book and I apologize for that, but I will, I will I promise. I wanted your email. When I got online I must have missed it or my little three year old was running around so I was trying to hear and I don't know where you are located.

**Dotsie:** Okay, you want to repeat that Lynn?

**Lynn:** Well, my site is [www.beyondthetears.com](http://www.beyondthetears.com), and for anyone who wants to email me it is simply [info@beyondthetears.com](mailto:info@beyondthetears.com).

**Caller No. 2:** Say that again, I'm sorry.

**Lynn:** [info@beyondthetears.com](mailto:info@beyondthetears.com).

**Caller No. 2:** And being your – how old did you say you were?

**Lynn:** I'm sorry, how old am I now?

**Caller No. 2:** Yes.

**Lynn:** How old am I now, I just turned 54, I am a boomer woman.

**Caller No. 2:** I think age is great. I think women mature better when they get older, but at 38 years old, I agree that even in my generation the way that we

were brought up, it was so hush- hush. And what I am thrilled about is that when I go out and speak that kids know; they've heard it. When I was growing up, you did not talk about incest, you did not talk about child abuse, you didn't talk about sex.

**Caller No. 2:** You didn't even mention the word sex, or else you got hit.

**Caller No. 1:** No and every family was perfect, everything was behind closed doors, and as I said I'm a survivor of incest, and it was just not spoken about. So what I'm glad as the Outreach Manager is prevention through education and awareness, so I applaud that you wrote the book. I applaud that you came out and told your story, and I'm glad I sat through this phone call.

**Dotsie:** Well, oh good. Your name is Lisa?

**Caller No. 2:** Yes.

**Dotsie:** Lisa if you're interested in having a link to the audio or if anyone else is interested on the site in having a link to the audio, or the transcription of tonight's teleseminar to use for educational purposes or whatever it is that you are doing, feel free to email me and you can email me at [dots@NABBW.com](mailto:dots@NABBW.com) and that's the National Association of Baby Boomer Women who is sponsoring the call this evening. So if anyone is listening and is interested in corresponding with me, you can get in touch.

**Caller No. 2:** Does that go directly to you?

**Dotsie:** Yes, it does.

**Caller No. 2:** And say your name again.

**Dotsie:** My name is Dotsie Bregel and I am the founder of [www.nabbw.com](http://www.nabbw.com), The National Association of Baby Boomer Women, and [www.boomerwomenspeak.com](http://www.boomerwomenspeak.com). Also, if anyone is on the call and has really enjoyed the call, or felt like they learned something from it, and want to email me I would love to hear from you. I also invite you to join us in the Forum community at, [www.boomerwomenspeak.com](http://www.boomerwomenspeak.com) and that's [boomerwomenspeak.com](http://boomerwomenspeak.com). You can also join the association where we have several of these types of teleseminars per month for members only. Tonight we opened it up to the public because we thought that it was really a great way for us to do some outreach and offer an educational opportunity, and hopefully help heal some people.

**Caller No. 2:** I'm sorry I didn't get the answer. Where are you guys located?

**Dotsie:** Well, I'm in Towson, Maryland. That's where the National Association of Baby Boomer Women is, but Lynn is Colorado.

**Lynn:** I've lived in eight different states, so I'm from a lot of places, but right now I'm in Colorado.

**Dotsie:** That's one of the great things about these teleseminars is that people from around the country, actually the world really, but pretty much the country, can be on the call at their convenience. And then members of the Association can listen to any of our teleseminars. They are all on our **Member Only** page and it's every teleseminar we have done for the past two and a half years are listed there, and they have to do with all things boomer women. And you can listen to any of them for the \$50 fee at your convenience. Or you can read them too because they have also been transcribed. We are out of time.

**Caller No. 3:** Can I jump in here a bit?

**Dotsie:** Sure, we're really out of time but we'll take one more question, go ahead.

**Caller No. 3:** I think what you guys speak about – this is Edward Blackoff, the director of a film, *Incest, The Family Tragedy*. I think what you guys are doing is really terrific, and I would like to put an emphasis on one thing; and that is becoming as you are, not just self motivated, but empowering yourself by accepting that there is some things that you can do, and in that doing you will become stronger, and that is the best way in my view to deal with the injustice and the violation done to you. In that process, you become a beacon for everyone who is going to going to go through that, who has gone through that, and you afford a way of providing a Forum.

**Dotsie:** Absolutely, and I'm sure that Lynn never thought or had any idea that this is how her life would evolve, and that she would be the person helping other people.

**Lynn:** I was so silent that the book was published, and it took me like two years to tell anybody I wrote this book.

**Dotsie:** That's a perfect example.

**Caller No. 3:** What it provides is the conscious awareness that things can be done. So for example, I am offering to those who want to get involved to see film as a way of organizing, and advising, and illuminating, I'm offering to all of you who are listening, and anyone else who you might speak to, I have very practical, very sensible ways of changing this. My problem is not enough money, not enough help. That's all of our problems.

**Dotsie:** Okay, I'll tell you what if you want to give us your web address why don't you do that.

**Caller No. 3:** [www.shazzamfilms.com](http://www.shazzamfilms.com)

**Dotsie:** Okay, tell me again.

**Caller No. 3:** Anyone who wants to get in touch with me I got a job that is going to help you help yourself, and save kids.

**Dotsie:** Okay, can you give us the web address again please.

**Caller No. 3:** [www.shazzamfilms.com](http://www.shazzamfilms.com)

**Dotsie:** Okay, if you want to correspond with me through my web address, I would be happy to see if there is a way that the association can help. Okay is there anybody that really has a question that they feel like they have to ask tonight, if so I'm going to take one more question. And if not, then did somebody want to say something.

**Lynn:** No, that was just me.

**Dotsie:** If not, I think what we're going to do is close the call now, again we'll give Lynn's web address so you can correspond with her through her site; and that is [www.beyondthetears.com](http://www.beyondthetears.com), and there is a contact button on her site, and then you can also correspond with me through either site, [www.nabbw.com](http://www.nabbw.com), or [www.boomerwomenspeak.com](http://www.boomerwomenspeak.com). And Lynn do you have anything else you want to say this evening.

**Lynn:** I want to add that this subject is very complex, and it's hard to cover basics even in an hour, but if this opened up lines for communication for anyone, I would be really glad to know about that.

**Dotsie:** Okay great. Thanks everybody for being on the call. Have a great night.