



**Breaking Through
Betrayal**

**And Recovering
the Peace
Within**

Holli Kenley, MA
Marriage and Family Therapist

Therapists praise *Breaking Through Betrayal*

“This volume deals with the subject of *betrayal*, and is appropriate as a self-help aid for clients. It also contains useful suggestions for therapists dealing with those who have experienced betrayal of trust of several kinds: interpersonal, familial, sexual, and financial. The steps in the healing process are well outlined and make clear that relapse is to be expected. Overlap with loss and the grief process is also well discussed.”

Lucy R. Ferguson, Ph.D.
Member, AFTNC

Faculty Member and Dean Emerita, CSPP, Alliant University

“Holli Kenley brings to light aspects of betrayal with passion and storytelling, clarifying its phases and processes’ complexities and resolution. She gives perspectives on work with this tangled, distressing and often missed theme in therapy, reaching out to people with tools and resources to work through the pain of betrayal.”

Lani B. Stoner,
Marriage & Family Therapist (CA)

“With an all-encompassing definition of betrayal, Holli Kenley provides support and guidance through conflicted relationships of all kinds including institutions and destructive natural events. She helps us with empowering cognitive-behavioral methods to examine numerous losses and wounds that are often minimized or denied. She is able to guide us through the pain of awareness and feelings with compassion and insight, and develops solutions, hope and growth that is needed to go beyond the victim and survivor roles. An excellent read and powerful workbook for unresolved feelings and losses that need to be addressed in the treatment of addicts/alcoholics (and their loved-ones) in order to examine relapse triggers and will contribute to long-term sobriety.”

Melissa Yarbray, MA,
Marriage & Family Therapist, Chemical Dependency Counselor

“Holli Kenley’s *Breaking Through Betrayal* makes a complicated issue of dealing with betrayal easy to understand and more importantly strategies that really work to recover the peace within. Everyone has had to deal with one form of betrayal; rejection and abandonment to violations of trust or a truth that becomes a lie. Ms Kenley’s experience as therapist and her openness to share her own feelings will help anyone to move past their pain to peace.”

Gary Jeandron, Marriage & Family Therapist

“Holli Kenley’s *Breaking Through Betrayal* is useful for anyone caught in self-blame, shame or repeated victimization. Though almost the antithesis of my inner-transformation approach, this empowering ‘in-control’ approach can help readers take charge, assess injury, gauge healing and find excellent strategies to protect themselves from future trauma when relating to one’s betrayer.”

Beth Hedva, Ph.D.
author of award-winning *Betrayal, Trust and Forgiveness*



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Holli Kenley, MA
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In Loving Memory
David Joseph Miller
April 17, 1987—February 28, 2009

*~ The goodness in David, simply and beautifully,
brought out the good in everyone ~*

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Preface

“The first wealth is health.”

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

A Note to the Clinician/Counselor

One of my concerns in the writing of the book is to not discount any of the mental disorders, medical or medication-induced disorders, or relational problems (or any other additional conditions that may be a focus of clinical attention) as outlined in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV-TR). As trained clinicians, the DSM is our foundation and it is the basis for our diagnoses; thus, determining our treatment approaches and treatment plans. Most therapists, psychologists, and psychiatrists that I have worked with formulate their initial assessments and preliminary treatment plans using the DSM-IV multi-axial classification system:

Axis I	Clinical Disorders Other Conditions That May Be a Focus of Clinical Attention
Axis II	Personality Disorders Mental Retardation
Axis III	General Medical Conditions
Axis IV	Psychosocial and Environmental Problems
Axis V	Global Assessment of Functioning

Throughout my Masters program, internships, and ensuing years of licensed practice, the DSM-IV has been (and must be) my “clinical bible”. Thousands of hours have gone into its making—researching, validating, and delineating the explanation of and symptomatic presentation of mental disorders. The authors have had the guts (chutzpa) to name the nameless and to give recognition to what was so often dismissed, discounted, and discarded—mental illness. The authors’ work has been and continues to be revisited, researched, and revised as witnessed

by the numerous editions and text revisions.

I utilize my DSM-IV with every client during every intake and assessment. Etched into my brain is the Five Axis Diagnostic Criteria. During the initial intake, I fill in the blanks for each Axis for which I then formulate a diagnosis, a treatment plan, and treatment approach(es) that will best serve the client. During the ensuing sessions, and as additional information is gathered from the client, the diagnosis is altered where called for; treatment approaches and plans are adjusted accordingly. At the same time, therapists assess crises issues, legal and ethical issues, human diversity/cultural issues; and they give referrals where appropriate or necessary. The work of mental health care providers is a heavy and meaningful responsibility, never to be taken lightly. Therefore, by examining the issue of betrayal with its exhausting prevalence among us as well as its harmful manifestations, I do not intend to minimize the authority of the DSM-IV. The DSM-IV is our diagnostic compass with which we navigate through the mental waters of pain, charting our course, and sailing towards healthier and more stable ground.

A second concern in writing this book is not to name betrayal as a catch-all or substitute for any disorder or presenting issue. As is the case in many professions, health care professionals are constantly being challenged by new ideas and approaches with the intent of raising the standard of care, of increasing successful outcomes, and of improving the quality of service. As a former English teacher, I remember the “waves of change” (often referred to as “fads” among educators) that were marketed as the new hope for educational reform. Many of these movements would come and go, making little or no difference on student achievement or growth. From my experience as a teacher and as a therapist, it is wise and necessary to embrace change and to remain open to new ideas. At the same time, I believe it is foolish to say, “This is *the* cause or *the* remedy”, or “This is a one-size-fits-all approach to therapy”. Therefore, when stating that “it all boils down to betrayal,” I am not suggesting that we should all jump on the betrayal bandwagon and discount or discard previously proven therapeutic theories, ideas, or approaches.

Quite the contrary, what I am suggesting is that betrayal be given some attention. It is an emotion that is often missed or dismissed. It is frequently embedded within other presenting issues: depression, grief, anxiety, anger. Because we, as health care professionals, are anxious to see our clients experience some degree of relief, we address what is in front of us—a crises situation, a disorder ravaging an individual’s life, a relationship/family being torn apart. Of course, we

must continue to do so, and yet, at the same, time let's challenge ourselves to look deeper.

Further, what I am suggesting is that when the waters of pain are calming down (or even, perhaps, during the storm), we take another look underneath the surface. Have our clients mentioned the word "betrayal"? Have we asked about it? If it has been brought into the room, what have we done with it or about it? And, if we have confronted it, has that been enough? As health care professionals, do we really even know what to do with these deep, dark destructive feelings?

Come join me, as we give the topic of betrayal a thorough and complete investigation. We can't afford to wait any longer; it is time.

“When it is dark enough, you can see the stars.”

—Charles A. Beard

Introduction

This is a book about betrayal, a dark human experience that is uninvited, unwanted, and most commonly unexpected. It is a timeless, costly, and ever-reaching experience. Almost no one is exempt from its infectious fabric. Its historic infamous fibers weave their way back even as far as the Greek gods and goddesses. The Greeks rich elaborate myths, based on their pantheon, are filled with deception. Zeus betraying Hera; Hera betraying Zeus; Zeus, along with the aid of Poseidon, casting Odysseus (from Homer’s *Odyssey*) out to a ten-year exile from his homeland for betraying them. The Greeks at once feared and revered their gods, never knowing how, when, where, or why their loyalties to them may be tested.

The timeless myths are just as relevant today as we read them and tap into the common emotional fabric of deception. Through the threads of time, we continue to see that even Jesus was not left unscathed by betrayal, not just by a vast army of Romans or, more personally, by his own people, but more intimately by one of his loyal disciples—Judas. Those of us who know the story are both sickened and moved by its outcome and implications. Sadly, most of us can relate to the story because we have come face to face with this cancerous emotion. It can rear its ugly head at any time, in any place, and with anyone. And if it doesn’t infect us, it is probably targeting someone we know or know of. There is no sanctuary from betrayal; it touches every aspect of our lives: spiritual, relational, political, environmental, behavioral, and the list goes on.

As I write this book, the word betrayal is being thrown around every day, on almost every news story. While the United States is embroiled in wars with both Iraq and Afghanistan, it is concurrently engulfed in a frightening economic crisis. Wounds and emotions run deep on all sides of the debates and on political perspectives.

- “We were lied to about the war; the American people have been betrayed.”
- “No, you are the one who is disloyal. You need to stand by the decisions made. By not doing so, it shows others we are weak and vulnerable.”

This is not a book about who is right and who is wrong, but about the depth and prevalence of betrayal in our society and about its implications for us.

- “We have lost our home and our life savings. We feel so betrayed by the banks and our government. Who is going to help us?”
- “I don’t know who to trust anymore. I have always believed that we were a government for the people and by the people. But when I read and hear about the depth of economic abuse and corruption, I don’t see much hope anymore. The American people have every right to feel betrayed. Where do we turn? Who can we believe?”

The wars abroad and the economic crises exemplify the vast scope of betrayal, that deep dark emotion of injustice and injury rebuking all reasoning. It is an emotion so commonly felt and yet so uncommonly dealt with. It is heard and then in the whisper of a moment, it is dismissed. It is uncomfortable and unsettling; we are uneasy to confront it. But it swarms around us daily, not just in our political and financial lives, but in our personal, relational, and professional ones as well.

- “My husband was just diagnosed with inoperable lung cancer; how could this happen to me? We are so young?”
- “My dear friend’s son was killed in a tragic car accident over the weekend. I can’t make sense out of it; he was just beginning his life.”
- “My best friend went behind my back and started dating my boyfriend. How can I ever trust anyone?”
- “I gave this job the best ten years of my life, only to be looked over for the promotion—again.”
- “The justice system did it again! That ‘scum of the earth’ walked after assaulting more young children! I’ve lost all faith in our legal system.”
- “If he hits me one more time, I swear, I’ll leave. In the meantime, I’ll try to be a better wife, or maybe he will change.”

From the vast political arena to the personal scope of our relationships and encounters, betrayal penetrates through our barriers and boundaries. Sometimes, we don’t know what is festering within us or even what to name it. And even if we do name it, we don’t know what to do with it. What we do know is that it doesn’t

just go away. We hold onto the darkness and the darkness holds on to us.

How this book came about

I am a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) in the state of California. Although I have been treating clients since becoming an intern in 1998, it wasn't until the fall of 2003 that the issue of betrayal really began to tug at me. I was practicing in a Counseling Center that had been established at a large church in my community. Over a period of two years, I counseled with a steady stream of clients (mostly women) who, even though they were working through their respective recovery programs, remained stuck. As their therapist, I felt frustrated that these intelligent, successful, dynamic women were debilitated, to varying degrees, by the rejection, violation, and abandonment of their unfaithful spouses. They could not fully climb out of their pits of betrayal. They were surviving, but certainly not thriving.

In the fall of 2005, I moved into private practice. In addition to my regular client load, I facilitated a Codependency Group. It was a closed group of women only, all of whom had experienced infidelity in their marriages and had been or were in the process of separation/divorce. During the six month duration of the group as well as in the follow-up sessions, their anguish resurfaced time and time again.

- “How could he? Why would he choose her over his family?”
- “Don't his children matter?”
- “I gave him everything—doesn't that count for anything?”
- “I 'now' realize it was all a lie.”
- “And to make it worse, he blames me!”
- “I just want to hear him say he is sorry—or even just explain why.”

Betrayal, betrayal, betrayal—the dark emotion penetrated the room like thick tulle fog on a cold winter night. These remarkable women couldn't get through it or past it. Betrayal remained the noose around their neck; at times it choked them. It suffocated them. And because they couldn't find peace or make sense out of their pain, they couldn't fully heal. Thus, these women remained vulnerable, continuing to feel betrayed and even re-betrayed by their ex-spouses' actions, words, and behaviors, or lack of them.

As their therapist/facilitator, I pulled out all the stops. In addition to the group process work, I gave them homework: journal assignments, grief work, anger management exercises; letters to write (to send or not), emotive-creative work such

as collages of themselves and their feelings (past and present and future), “twelve-step” assignments where appropriate; bibliotherapy and cinematherapy; and many other cognitive/behavioral tools that seemed timely and therapeutic. There was some degree of release and relief from the betrayal. It varied on an individual basis. Overall, I remained frustrated; they remained fragile and their spirits fragmented. The group concluded in the summer of 2006.

Throughout the ensuing year of July 2006—August 2007 of private practice work, I continued to work with clients presenting a myriad of disorders. As an LMFT, I work under the umbrella of “relationship issues”. My areas of specialty include trauma/abuse (especially sexual abuse); mood and anxiety disorders; addiction and codependency issues; and spiritual and faith issues. Most of my practice is comprised of individuals and couples; periodically, I work with families. Believing strongly in, and working from primarily a Cognitive Behavioral therapeutic approach (where the therapist functions in a coaching role), I have been privileged to witness clients embrace the therapeutic process and their treatment plan. And because clients were committed and worked hard, many experienced a change in their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Their relationships evolved into healthier ones; they experienced a well and more vibrant life.

At the same time, it was during this period of time that I witnessed, over and over again, clients plateau in their recovery. They reached a level of relief and well-being and then got stuck. In some cases, clients regressed and worked their way back. Others regressed and remained in their dark place.

I examined their respective treatment plans. I moved into therapeutic approaches of family-of-origin work, transference work, object-relations work, and tapped into Rogerian as well as Gestalt principles, where appropriate. I reminded myself that all this was normal—a part of the therapeutic process. I kept telling myself, “clients proceed at their pace—what is safe, what is comfortable, what their egos can handle.” But was I missing something? I thought I was and it began to haunt me.

As I continued to reflect, think, and process the missing piece, I tapped into a personal struggle of my own. During the winter months of 2006-2007, I was deeply wounded by a family member. It was a relationship comprised of complex and complicated twists and turns. Over many years, it was strained, broken, bandaged, and then damaged again. In February 2006, it took its final turn, spiraling downward. It shook me to the core. I felt like a knife was rammed into my gut and twisted. My insides felt numb, yet nauseous. I carried around this

anchor of despair inside the pit of my soul. For weeks, every day I would awake and feel the dark weight filled with anger, sadness, despair, confusion, and what-ifs. There were no answers, no remedies, just the feeling—*betrayal*.

Revisiting this experience allowed me open my mind and to feel the feelings again. The emotions were quick to surface as I replayed many of the exchanges in the relationship. Perhaps, this was “it”—the missing piece—betrayal. I logged the insight into my memory box. It seemed so important; I didn’t want to forget it. I didn’t have to worry, the “found” piece wouldn’t let go of me.

One late, cool evening last spring, I began straightening up my office after finishing with my client. I was exhausted. I was frustrated. Yet, I remained determined and intrigued. Over the past two weeks, I had seen a dozen or so clients presenting with various disorders/issues:

- Depression
- Bipolar
- Abuse and trauma recovery (especially sexual abuse/assault)
- Anxiety disorders
- Substance abuse and dependence
- Codependency issues
- Relationship issues: infidelity, anger management, communication problems, parenting problems, blended family issues, separation/divorce
- Grief and loss issues

Again, most were progressing well. Presenting symptoms were relieved; cognitions were more realistic and in-check; behaviors changed and were continuing to become healthier. But there was a void; there was a hole. There was a residual darkness that dwelled in the depths of some clients. Every now and then, I got a glimpse of it, or maybe I inadvertently overlooked it. Perhaps the client felt it was gone, dealt with, and in the past. Embarrassed or reluctant to speak up, it was still there, like a shadow lurking in the dark. My mind began to reel through the Rolodex of past clients. I had seen it, heard it, and been witness to it so many times. I had listened, empathized, reflected feelings, and processed pain, but it wasn’t enough.

I gathered up my belongings and stared at the soft white loveseat where individuals and couples had nestled themselves among the lavender suede throw pillows. Their faces were etched in my mind—their smiles, their tears, and their

unresolved pain. I reached over and turned out the last light. The room was dark. I stood in my doorway, almost in a daze. I walked over to open the blinds on the large window across the room to let the moonlight in. But I decided against it. The room remained completely dark. For a moment, I felt lost. I found my hands feeling for the loveseat, the pillows, for things familiar and safe. As I sat down on the loveseat, I remained in the emotion and in the feeling of darkness. My mind went to my injury, the family member who had scarred my soul. The feeling became a thought, a deep and haunting thought: “This is what my clients are feeling; it is what dwells within their deepest recesses. Someone or something has injured them, injured them to their core. Darkness has penetrated their being.” I sat for several minutes as tears of release and relief made their way down my cheeks. Taking a deep, relaxing breath, I slowly made my way to the door again. I relished a sweet moment of understanding and revelation. The swirling thoughts from moments before settled down like calm water after a crashing wave. I locked my office door, went down the elevator, and then out of the building into the cool desert night. I looked up at the silky moon and the stars spoke my very mind: “Underneath the intricately and uniquely formed layers of your clients’ feelings—*it all boils down to betrayal.*”

The Purpose of the Book

The purpose of this book is to address the issue of betrayal and to give it some much-needed attention and investigation. To say the word is no longer enough; it needs to be fully named, explained, and proclaimed! We, clinicians and clients alike, need to know what it looks like, feels like, and what to do with it. We need to explore it and examine it. We need to take apart its anatomy, educating ourselves about its meaning, prevalence, manifestations, sources, and impact on our lives. We need to get comfortable with getting acquainted with our enemy. Knowledge is the conqueror of fear; we need not to be afraid of our betrayal or betrayer anymore and what it has done or is doing to us.

The purpose of this book is to take you, the reader, on a journey—an invitation into un-chartered waters to become intimately acquainted with your own experience with betrayal. At times, the process may take some real digging. The betrayal may be buried, repressed, or residing underneath a myriad of emotional and behavioral camouflage. We need to know how and when to get to it, and then what to do next? Through a series of exercises and activities at the end of each chapter, I encourage you to make your journey an interactive process, no longer

sitting on the sidelines of the playing field. One thing I have learned as a therapist, teacher, and a betrayed person, is that betrayal does not just go away or heal by itself over time. While betrayal takes residence within your soul and spirit, it disrupts and interrupts your quality of life. I have witnessed hurt people who have become cynical, resentful, and bitter; others become more vulnerable, self-doubting and thus easily re-injured; still other injured persons resort to unhealthy, destructive means to cope. And sadly, some pain-filled people invite additional harm to themselves after becoming less resistant to debilitating physical and mental illness.

Some time ago during a counseling session, a young married mother of two sat across from me with tears streaming down her face. We had spent months working together. She was a survivor of childhood sexual abuse perpetrated by her older brother. She had endured the unimaginable for years; she had worked tirelessly on her recovery to become a more vibrant and whole woman. She thought she was navigating on safe ground. But recently, her mother, who had never believed the abuse took place, betrayed my client, again.

“I thought that after all this time and all the trouble my brother had had with the law, my mom would believe me. I mean, my brother has just been arrested again, after sexually abusing his girlfriend’s daughter. My mom still thinks he is innocent! She is putting up his bail money and paying for his attorney. I told her he is sick! He is guilty! I told her he did the same thing to me! All she said was to ‘get out’. She wants nothing more to do with me. How can this happen...what is wrong with her?”

My client dissolved in front of my very eyes. Betrayal had engulfed her, suffocated her, and sucked the life out of her. At this moment, the bundle of benign scar tissue that dwelled within her began to explode, fueled by the most recent injection of rejection. Clearly, our work was not done and, if left unattended, this client would succumb to the malignancy of despair.

This book is for anyone who has known betrayal and who has been left scarred from its acquaintance. My intention is, at the very least, to give your heart a rest and your spirit a repose. At the very most, I intend to provide you with knowledge and insight about the issue of betrayal along with validation of your feelings and experiences. And, I intend to provide you with tools and strategies to enable and empower you to move into a healthier, peaceful place of release, relief, and recovery.

Come join me now as we begin this journey. Get ready for a rocky but

rewarding ride. Get comfortable in a soft cozy chair and grab a soothing cup of tea. Let's dig into the first layer of betrayal and find out what it is. Let's identify this cancerous culprit and move ahead armed in the knowledge of betrayal. It has known us far longer than we have known it; it is time to change that!

Section I:
Knowledge and Awareness

1

What is Betrayal?



“Betrayal is the only truth that sticks.”

—Arthur Miller

Definitions and Explanations

I find that with my clients, as well as with myself, there is almost always a small degree of relief when I understand what I am feeling. When I can give a client a diagnosis, an explanation, a reason for why he/she is feeling the emotions or symptoms being experienced, there is a level of comfort that allows for further investigation and intervention. If we can define our pain, we can explain our feelings and not just feel like we are going crazy!

After researching specific definitions/explanations for betrayal and finding hundreds of interpretations as well as applications, I have decided for our discussion to narrow down the definitions/explanations into three categories. These three categories are based on my work with dozens of clients whose personal stories and their manifestations of betrayal seemed to lend themselves to one of the areas. Although there is some overlap in their respective explanations and implications, there is enough disparity among them to give each one attention.

As you read through them with me and learn about them, you may find that you can relate to more than one explanation. There is no problem with this. The important thing is that you can connect with at least one of them and that you have the opportunity to experience that what you have been feeling and/or are feeling is real. You will be able to say to yourself, “Yes, that is what I went through; that is how I felt; I now know why I am feeling the way I do!”

I also suggest at this point that you grab a notebook or journal. There are times where I encourage you to write down some thoughts and feelings. And, there might be moments where you need to unleash or unravel your emotions. Or, perhaps you

may just want to note something for more investigation at a later time. In any case, have some writing materials ready for whatever the need may be.

Here are the three areas we will be investigating:

- An investment into someone or something met with rejection and/or abandonment
- A profound trust in someone or something which is profoundly violated
- A truth that becomes a lie/ a belief that is shattered

1. An investment met with rejection and/or abandonment

This area of betrayal is extremely common. As healthy human beings, it is natural for us to give and invest into our relationships, into our work, and into those arenas of life that bring us meaning and value. Some of us are taught at an early age that it is “better to give than to receive” or that “the reward is in the giving”, and so on. There is certainly truth in these statements. However, when the investment is lost or when it is not received in the manner in which it was intended, we feel the pain of rejection or abandonment, or at the very least we do not feel appreciated. This wounds us because our intentions or actions become meaningless; we become valueless. And it is we, not they, who are left holding the bag of betrayal.

Several years ago, a couple came in to see me. Their marriage was on rocky ground. In years past, it had survived an affair, and now, the same issue had resurfaced. Although the female had every right to be angry with her unfaithful spouse, I sensed there was something more to her pain. I suggested that she and I spend some sessions together. Over a period of time, I learned that this woman lived under a blanket of betrayal. Each and every investment that she had made into those whom she cared about had been met with rejection and/or abandonment.

“My mom died when I was about ten. We were so close; she was my ‘protector’. She was the only person who made me feel safe. I loved her and she left me... My dad was an abusive alcoholic. As a little girl, and even now, I have always tried to please him. But I was never good enough, and I couldn’t do anything right. When I tried to reach out to my siblings, they taunted and abused me—verbally and physically. I was even bullied at school because of my weight. When my dad remarried, I did everything possible to make my step-mom like me. She hated me, and I was forced to

leave home as soon as I graduated from high school. When I married, I thought it would be ‘forever’. I gave selflessly to him, to our children, and to our home. I thought I had finally found someone who loved me and cherished me, only to be discarded, again!”

This illustrates an extreme case of multiple betrayals—one that left the client with deeply embedded scars. The common denominator is that each betrayal involved her investment into someone, each one leaving her emotionally cheated and depleted. Although this client was layered with wounds of betrayal, she worked tirelessly on her recovery. Over a period of several months, she was able to experience a much needed level of healing.

With this definition of betrayal, there is no set time period required for the investment or for the feelings of rejection or abandonment to present themselves. The investment may be short or long term; it is quite individual. However, I tend to find that the longer the investment has transpired or been left unattended, the more severe the manifestations of betrayal, and thus, the recovery work may need to be longer or more in-depth.

It is important to point out that this explanation of betrayal includes the investment into *something*. This covers a myriad of meanings, but the one that I most commonly have addressed with clients involves their work or professions. Because most adults work in or outside of the home, there is opportunity to come face to face with betrayal. It spans the spectrum from being unappreciated, to being overlooked for a promotion, to outright being laid off, fired, demoted, or phased out! This kind of betrayal tends to wreak havoc on one’s self-esteem and worth. Many times, its consequences are far-reaching, affecting families’ financial security and their faith “in the system”.

Several years ago, I worked with a client who recently had taken on a new position in a large prominent organization. Although we were working on a separate issue, he began to struggle with the dynamics of personalities within the organization. Although his evaluations over a significant period of time were superior, his work ethic and performance professional, and his product impeccable, he was abruptly asked to tender his resignation. This amazingly strong individual crumpled up in my office. This tower of strength fell before my very eyes. His endless hours of commitment, quality work, and perseverance were met with the reward of rejection. Pain was his only payoff.

Therefore, as you are reading through this explanation of betrayal, think not only of your investments in people, but also in any relationship or thing.

Other examples might also include:

- A romantic relationship
- A friendship
- A family relationship or dynamic
- A marriage or partnership
- A job, career, or profession
- An educational opportunity or position
- A personal ability, talent, or gift
- A business relationship or partnership
- An organization or group involving people of common interests, beliefs, or abilities
- A faith-based organization
- The death of someone or the demise of something

Before we leave this area of betrayal, I want to highlight two of the above examples because I witnessed so many clients struggle in these arenas, and their deep seated feelings of inadequacy were often dismissed or minimized by well-intentioned friends or family members. First, let's take a closer look at the personal ability, talent, or gift. Being a former high-school teacher where I worked with juniors and seniors applying to colleges as well as a therapist working with adolescents and teens, I was deeply moved by young vibrant students who had invested so much of themselves into their education, their sports, their theatre/music, and so on, only to be gravely disappointed by college rejection letters or by talent scouts and the such. Some, at the very least, felt misled by the system; others felt outright crushed as they watched their dreams fade into the dust. Comments such as these are etched into my memory: "It was all a waste; why did I even bother; I would have been better off just enjoying high school more like most of my friends; instead, I gave all this up and for what?" This type of betrayal is so common, especially among young people, and it is devastating. Because they have spent so much time investing into their identity which has been shaped and transformed by their respective achievements (academics, athletics, talents/gifts), they internalize the rejection and suffer with deep wounds of self-doubt and lack of worth.

The other example that needs mentioning is that of investing into an organ-

ization or group involving people of common interests, beliefs, or abilities. To evolve and grow as human beings, many of us choose to belong, join, or support certain organizations. For the most part, these experiences can bring us much personal satisfaction and fulfillment. Selfless humans feel the intrinsic rewards as they serve in their respective places of worship, service clubs, and/or non-profit organizations. Others raise countless amounts of money through their charities and foundations of choice, and in turn, reach out to help thousands in need. Others give of their time, their influence, and their own personal resources with the sole motivation being improvement in the welfare of others. Although there are numerous implications of betrayal in this type of investment, it typically occurs when an investment into someone or something is not received with the same intention or spirit with which it was given. It is not honored as it was meant to be, causing injury and injustice for the investor.

Many years ago, I was working with several clients who attended a large church in our community. Each of them was an active member of the congregation who gave of his/her time and resources, each in their unique ways utilizing their respective talents and gifts. When a scandal occurred which led to the downfall of the pastor which then prompted an investigation into the business dealings of the church, each of these clients felt terribly betrayed. Their eagerness and willingness to serve, along with their varying venues of generosity, had been misused, mishandled, and misdirected. What shattered these clients the most was that they were misinformed; they were led to believe their investments were of a worthy nature, never thinking they would be treated as worthless by another.

Sadly, each of us can probably think of at least one person, if not ourselves, who has experienced this deep sting of betrayal. Because our intentions are of the purest nature and our investments are of such personal sacrifice, the absence of regard for them leaves us blindsided and bewildered.

As we leave this definition of betrayal, I would like you to spend a few moments thinking about your past and with experiences that may connect with this explanation.

- Was there someone or something where you freely and openly gave of yourself—emotionally, physically, intimately, sexually, financially, professionally, intellectually, and/or spiritually?
- Was that investment of yourself (your personal as well as external resources) met with rejection, abandonment, or utter disregard for the value of the giver?

- Were you left feeling bankrupt from the experience?
- Were you left broke and broken, navigating through a fog of shattered emotions?

Although it is hurtful to recall these memories, I encourage you, for now, to log this experience (and any others that connect with this explanation). Writing it down is a good idea (notating it in a journal or notebook). We will get back to it later in the *activity section* of the chapter.

2. A profound trust in someone or something that is profoundly violated

This second definition may seem, at first glance, all too similar to the first one. However, I have chosen to separate it from the first because I believe there are some significant differences. The premise from which we want to work from with this explanation is that *one* component of a healthy relationship is trust (but there are other components as well). Some believe that trust is the only basis of a relationship; without it, there is not much to build upon or that the two are entirely intertwined. For the purposes of this book and our study on betrayal, I am suggesting that we examine trust as a separate entity but with two important considerations.

Trust as an innate emotion

In some of our encounters, relationships, dynamics with people and things, trust is *not* a seed lying dormant in a relationship which is then nurtured, fostered, and matured by the development of the relationship. Instead, it is a natural innate emotion. It is a preconceived bond, an almost supernatural current within us and/or between us. This kind of trust comes with the entitlement shared by the title of the trustee and the trustor.

Let us take a look at an example of this kind of trust issue, and it will become clearer. Perhaps, you will be able to connect to this explanation, or perhaps you know someone who does. Some examples that I want to share with you cover extremely fragile and tender territory. Please know that this can be difficult for some readers. So take your time, pace yourself, and keep a pulse on your emotional responses. This area of betrayal carries with it deeply embedded wounds, ones that can be easily reopened and re-injured.

One of my areas of experience and competence in my work as a therapist is in the field of abuse, in particular, sexual abuse recovery. Tragically, this kind of

abuse (as well as with other kinds) is frequently perpetrated by someone whom we trust—fully, completely, and most uniquely—innately. Fathers, mothers, step-parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, cousins, aunts, uncles—our closest relations break that inbred bond of safety and security. They misuse and abuse the “entitlement” of trust bestowed upon them by their very title. This profound violation of trust is indescribable, immeasurable, and inconceivable; its tentacles of damage far-reaching.

The following vignette is all too common, all too tragic, and an example of violation at the purest level of entitled trust—a child and a parent. A young married mother of three small children came in to see me. Recently, she had been feeling anxious, irritable, and at times, rage-filled. Slowly and tenderly, we navigated through her childhood. Gingerly, we pulled down the blanket of betrayal to expose the wounds. As she unveiled her past, she dissolved into a mass of liquid pain.

“My stepfather was the only father I knew. He met and married my mom shortly after I was born. My biological father left my mom when she got pregnant. I loved my step-dad so much...why would he hurt me... ? So many years of abuse—so many broken pieces. I was just a little girl—maybe seven or eight. I trusted him! I was scared! I didn’t know what to do! He told me not to tell anyone—it was *our secret!* Now, look what that *secret* has done to me!”

As my client recalled and revisited her years of sexual abuse, there was even yet additional betrayal. As a teen, she was able to muster up the courage to tell her mom about the abuse, only to be shamed, blamed, and disclaimed. And not just by her own mother, but also by other family members who were told and who rallied around the stepfather, the perpetrator.

Where was trust? Where were the security blankets of childhood? Where were the safety nets of adolescence and teen years? Where was the protective provision endowed upon those who were responsible for her care and well-being?

Sadly, this kind of profound violation is also common in other inherent bonds of trust: a close family friend, a teacher, a coach, a person of faith/leadership, a therapist or counselor, or any person whose title or role lends itself to a position of non-refuted respect and responsibility.

Several years ago, a middle-aged couple came in to see me. Although there were some minor issues that needed attention, the male was clearly suffering in more

intimate and personal ways. After many sessions working together individually, he shared his private pain.

“I was a little boy and she was a grown woman! A nun at the private school I attended!! She was to watch over me after school—to protect me, to make sure I was safe!! Years and years of using me as her toy—exploiting me in ways I did not understand! How could she when I was so young? Why? Why would someone like that want to hurt me? She ruined my life! I have left a trail of broken people, promises, and places wherever I go. I can’t get rid of the shame, guilt, and at times, rage. I can’t trust anyone—even myself....”

In bonds of this kind, trust is assumed; we walk blindly into it and with it. We don’t question it; we don’t give it a second thought. We shouldn’t have to; it is inherent, it is natural, and it is pure. And so, when the veil is blown off and we are slapped around by the winds of treachery, we fall and we fall hard. The profound violation of our profound trust keeps us face down in our quicksand of betrayal, sucking us under. No wonder we struggle to find our way; no wonder life seems so hard and harsh.

There is a very strong possibility that some readers may be hurting right now. The vignettes shared may have triggered repressed and extremely painful memories. Some may be experiencing flashbacks, panicky feelings, or other reactions to the discomfort of the recall. Please take some time to calm yourself and to soothe your reactions: take some deep breaths; put the book down and walk into another room and sit down and relax; make yourself a cup of tea and take a short break. If needed, take a short walk or listen to some music. Please, do not read on until you are ready. The last thing we want to do is to betray ourselves by not listening to what we need to do to take care of bodies and minds. When you are ready, let’s move on to the second area of trust.

Trust without the relationship component

The second trust issue is similar to the first; however, there is an important difference. We can have/feel trust in people and things *without* the relationship component. Through our knowledge (or lack of) about someone or something, we then form a perception about that person or thing. We then decide to trust or to presume there are grounds for trust.

This kind of trust violation may sound less injurious than the others, but it is

not. We can go long periods of time and not be affected by this kind of violation, but when it does hit us, we are often blown over and trampled upon. We feel as though an emotional tsunami has struck. There is vast devastation.

Again, because I work in the areas of abuse and trauma recovery, I have experienced this kind of profound violation with many of my clients. Many years ago, I was doing an internship in a battered women's center. As a professional organization, the center provided legal advice and assistance to women who needed help or protection. Although in most cases, women and their children were given safeguards and tools in order to live healthier lives, there were many instances where the legal system failed to provide for the safety and security of these victimized women and children. Their trust in the justice system failed them; at times, it mocked them.

We only need to turn on the TV, read the newspaper, or turn on our computers to see the injustices that abound in our society. Tragically, even if we have escaped this kind of devastation, most of us know someone who has lost someone or something due to the selfishness, greed, manipulation, or evil of another person or thing. Every day, we see or hear about victims of crime—innocent men, women, and children—whose lives were savagely scarred or taken from us. We count ourselves fortunate when we hear of others who have lost everything—victims of scams, scoundrels, and sinister misrepresentation. In these instances, the trust that we have decided to put into these people or things has been, for the most part, our choice based on the information we have, our perceptions, and the level of trustworthiness we assign to it. Most of us motor along with a somewhat false or fragile sense of security, but a level of security none-the-less. We are whipped into a whirlwind of confusion and despair when the violation rips away our sense of safety, security, and sanity.

About a year ago, an elderly couple came in to my office. They had recently experienced a drastic financial loss and it was taking its toll on both of them—physically, emotionally, and thus, in their marital relationship. These two extremely vibrant and intelligent human beings were diminished to two floundering souls, wondering whom to trust, how to go on, and where to turn. In their own words, they had been taken to the cleaners; their financial security blanket pulled from underneath them. As the gentleman spoke, his despair filled the room.

“I researched this investment thoroughly and completely. I spent five years “doing my homework”, leaving no area in question, leaving no

stone unturned. I was convinced this was a solid way to go because the other investors and backers were people I knew and trusted.”

His wife wiped her tears and added, “We’ve always believed that if we do everything right, if we are fair and just, things will work out. Of course we know there are risks no matter what we choose to do, but we had no reason to doubt the integrity or intension of the people at the helm of the organization.” This lovely fragile woman wilted in my presence. “I am afraid, for the first time in my life. Now, we have nothing left and we are too old to start over, nor do we have the strength to do so.”

Sadly, and all too tragically, this scenario and others similar to it are occurring repeatedly in our society. People, of all ages, are losing their personal retirement funds, their pensions, their health insurance, their homes, their jobs, their investments, and so on. Responsible intelligent people have chosen to put their trust in someone or something on the basis of their knowledge about that person or thing. It appeared to be the right thing to do, the smart thing to do, the wise thing to do, only to be overshadowed by its haunting devastation.

Financial ruin is one aspect of this violation of trust. Along with the financial fallout (or aside from it), many people suffer from the professional plummeting that can occur. We are taught at a young age to put our trust in the system. Work hard, play the game, do what you need to do, and the rewards will come. This kind of trust violation does not just apply to young people, but to anyone at any age who has put in the time, moved up the ladder, proven his/her loyalty, only to come face to face with indifference—the violation mask.

A young man in his early thirties sat in my office several years ago. He came in to deal with his depression after being referred by his physician. After just a couple of sessions, his story explained his situational onset of sadness. After obtaining a college education with an advanced degree, he started out on his journey, a road that had been clearly laid out for him by his mentors and program advisors. He trusted the plan for his life. The experts had given him the blueprint for advancement and he would follow it. Only, the roadblock came before the freeway opened up. His voice quivered and quaked as he relayed his violation.

“I did everything I was supposed to. I spent time in each area of the organization. I did ‘hard time’ in one office that no one could or would take. As my mentors put it, ‘Go in and clean up this office; do whatever you need to do and we will back you all the way’. And so I did—I took

the heat, but that was my job. I was told to stay there until the ‘right opening’ came up; advancement was right around the corner. With my eyes on the top position, I waited. Then, one day, a rumor came across my desk—the bosses were looking outside the organization to fill the position. There was no one on the inside who qualified. Spinning with disbelief, I made a few calls to find out the truth. This had to be a mistake! In a few sentences I was told:

‘Times have changed. We need someone with different credentials and experience. We need to stay on the cutting edge of what other organizations are doing, and you are not the person with those qualifications or experience. You are most effective right where you are.’

Nothing or no-one could have prepared me for this. I trusted the system and the system failed me. I bought into the plan and the process; my payoff short-changed and my purpose cheated. Recently, I can’t seem to pull myself out of this slump. I keep drifting downward, flirting with bouts of anger and blame. I’m not sure if I’m more upset with the powers that be or with myself for trusting a life map that guided me to a dead end.”

Does this story sound familiar? Was your life map drastically altered or changed? Does either of these two scenarios bring up a past of pain and of broken promise? These violations can be difficult to recall and relive, even if it is just for a few moments. As with other places in this book, if you need to put your reading aside, do so. Give yourself the time to sift and sort through any emotions; however, I do encourage you to minimize any self-blame. When you feel ready, begin again. Please, continue to pace yourself and your responses.

As you think about your experiences and this aspect of trust, some areas to consider, as you take your own inventory, are the following:

- The legal or justice system
- Financial investments, organizations, accounts
- Political causes and leaders
- Marketing and advertisement campaigns
- Governmental procedures and policies
- Charities, foundations, fundraisers
- Professional organizations (of any kind)

- Leadership positions (of any kind)
- Healthcare systems and practices
- Environmental causes/issues

As we conclude with this section on betrayal, it is important to remember that *trust* is at the core of the explanation. Whether it is profoundly inherent within our bonds with one another or whether it is profoundly tethered by choice to another individual or thing, its profound violation pulls us into the depths of despair. The feelings and realities of loss are vast. Erosion of our spirits and souls is common place. We try to hold on to the fragile rope of hope, one day at a time.

Again, spend a few moments reflecting on this definition of betrayal and its implications with trust. Do any of these examples tug at you? Can you feel the uneasiness of a past experience nudging you? If so, jot it down in your notebook or journal (just briefly). At the very least, log it into a mental compartment to be addressed at the end of the chapter.

3. A truth that becomes a lie / A belief that is shattered

How many times have you heard the words—“How could you not know?” “Didn’t you see it coming?” “Wow, you would have to be blind not to have known that!” “Are you *that* stupid—were you born yesterday?”

Probably all of us have heard these kinds of comments at one time or another. And, it surely does not make us feel better!! We already feel enough hurt and shame, at the very least, self-doubt. In this section, it is my intention to give your truth or belief validation as well as discuss its relevance to our discussion on betrayal.

One of the very first principles that I share with my clients (if appropriate and therapeutic) is that *your perception is your truth* (or belief). Our perceptions are based on what we experience and what information we gather from our relationships and daily interactions. How we perceive these exchanges or dynamics is through our own individual filters—filters that are layered with emotion, reason, and logic, as well as linguistic intricacies. Therefore, how each of us has viewed, interpreted, or understood someone or something to be true or believable should not be questioned, at least when it comes to the issue of betrayal.

Therefore, when examining this definition of betrayal, we will work under the premise that your truth or belief was based on your perceptions of the person or thing. And, your perceptions were well-founded and grounded in your experiences and interpretations of them. That is why violation in this arena is so painful; we

have trusted ourselves. We have relied on our thoughts, our analysis, and our explanations. We have chosen to trust what we know—our truth or our belief. And, we are shaken to the core; we are made fools of; we become our worst critics, filling ourselves up with self-loathing and condemnation when this type of betrayal cuts us to the core.

Although there is some crossover with the two other definitions and explanations of betrayal, again, I think it is important to give this third interpretation some attention because of the aspect of self-blame. Two cases come to mind of clients who struggled with this kind of betrayal, clients who trusted their truths and their beliefs.

Several years ago, a client in her golden years came to see me. She had been married to a pastor for over forty years. She was (in her words) a dutiful wife—a model pastor’s wife, mother of several children, a perfect home-maker, and in her spare time, a career woman as well. She explained how she compromised herself in many ways through the years, but felt it was her role to do so. My client believed this was the right thing to do. She believed that someday it would all payoff and she and her husband would enjoy their retirement years together. This woman trusted in her husband, in her faith, and in the commitment that she had given so many years earlier. One day her husband came home and spoke the unspeakable:

“I am leaving you. I want a divorce. There is someone else who loves me and cherishes me like you never did. I’ve stayed this long and I can’t live this *lie* any longer. I don’t know if I ever loved you.”

This woman’s life was turned upside down within seconds. A few words were spoken and a lifetime of beliefs was dispelled and shattered. Decades of truths were redefined as lies. Golden years turned into tarnished, tainted, meaningless memories. And, as is the case with this kind of betrayal, the pain this client felt watching her husband walk out the door was no match to the brokenness within this woman, for the recrimination in allowing herself to believe in this man.

Another example that is all too common in this kind of betrayal involves cases where substance abuse or dependence is an issue. Ask anyone who has had a friend or family member who has struggled with addiction—was their trust tested? Were their beliefs in the person and his/her recovery broken? At the very least, did they experience disappointment in putting their faith in their loved one?

A middle-aged couple came in to see me a number of years ago. Their twenty-two-year old son was abusing drugs again. Their beliefs in him and in the recovery

process were dispelled. As the father spoke, his brokenness spilled out:

“We believed our son was on the right track. He has been clean and sober for over a year. He got a job, moved into his own apartment, and was finally making it on his own. Then, we started to catch him lying and we started to watch things fall apart”.

As this loving father’s words tapered off, his wife sobbed at his side. Her fragile spirit spoke a few words:

“I thought that this time we had done everything right—stepping back, setting boundaries, staying strong with ‘tough love’. I wanted this to work. I wanted to believe he could do it. I wanted to trust him, one last time. He is lying, stealing, hiding again. We don’t even know where he is...it’s the same behavior, over and over. I don’t believe anything about him that he tells us. His life is a lie.”

These two examples demonstrate the devastation in two different kinds of relationships. However, this third definition of betrayal—a truth that becomes a lie/ a belief that is shattered—covers a wide range of experiences. As you are thinking about this explanation and how it may have impacted your life, consider the following applications (along with a couple of examples for each one).

- A belief or trust *that* someone or something is who he/she/it represents him/her/itself to be—but is not.
 - a loving friend or boyfriend/ girlfriend breaks off the relationship
 - a secret about someone/something which is exposed—revealing revisions to the truth
- A belief or trust *in* someone or something—an expectation, a standard, a quality, a principle which proves false or less significant.
 - a hero, role model, or parent who *falls from grace or falls short of set standards*
 - a law or regulation which is meant to protect or to help proves ineffective and/or worthless
- A belief or trust *about* someone or something—based on fact, history, research, or experience that is later negated.
 - scientific DNA evidence reverses pre-existing claims and judgments
 - over time and with new evidence, historical truths become misguided

stories or myths

Unfortunately, most of us come face to face with these situations on a daily basis. We feel let down and disappointed, but we are able to put it behind us and move on. However, there are circumstances that affect us and infect us covering a gamut of feelings, from discouragement and despair to those of devastation and disillusionment.

Working as a high school teacher and then as a therapist, I was witness to the highs and lows of young love. Although I had a front row seat to the blossoms of newly found love as well as the discarded buds from an abrupt breakup, no story moved more than that of a teen client who was brought in by her parents to see me. These parents were beyond frustration. They were frantic, and they had every right to be. After a recent breakup with her boyfriend, this gregarious, positive, and extroverted daughter was riding a tidal wave of self-destruction: she was losing weight by causing herself to throw up; she was shutting everyone and everything out; she was hiding behind closed doors, entertaining thoughts of suicide (information shared by her friends); and they had recently discovered that their beloved daughter was self-mutilating. After the necessary referrals were made and crisis intervention steps put into place, this fragile and fragmented young lady and I began to work together. Her words of betrayal were piercing and poignant:

“It all started after my boyfriend broke up with me. We were together for over a year—he said he ‘loved me’—that ‘we would always be together’. We were even making plans of how we would see each other after we both went away to different colleges. I believed *everything* he said—especially his promises.”

This tender teen began to melt into a pool of pain, disclosing her deepest despair.

“I wanted to wait to have sex, but I didn’t. I loved him and he said he loved me. For some girls, it is not that big of a deal, but for me it was. I wanted to wait; it was really important to me. A few months after we started having sex, he started to lose interest in me: stopped calling or texting, pulled away, and then he told me the unthinkable—he had feelings for someone else. Being desperate, I compromised myself in ways I would never have thought of, all just to hold on to him! But it didn’t get us back together. It only pushed him further away!”

I listened as this confused and tormented teen asked about her bonds of

betrayal.

“How could he say one thing one minute and then do the opposite the next? How could he love me—make love to me—and then toss me away like trash? Didn’t I mean anything to him? Didn’t it matter that I gave myself completely to him? Was I such a fool to believe him and to trust him? I see him going on with his life, moving on. And all I can do right is try to hold on, feeling myself slipping away piece by piece. Not believing any more, in others and in myself.”

As this vignette illustrates, broken promises dispel our beliefs—in people, in their intentions, and in their representations. Sadly, as in the case of this teen, many of us have believed in the words spoken to us, taken them to heart, and acted upon them accordingly. It is our human nature to do so. What we are not prepared for is the shattering of our spirits that comes with the puncturing of the promise, and being left to reel in the remnants of our lives, if we can.

As with the other explanations of betrayal, spend a few moments reflecting on this area and your experiences. I encourage you not to diminish or to negate any betrayal you might feel, blaming yourself instead or making it your responsibility. Who or what misrepresented him/her/itself to you? Who or what did you put your trust in or belief in, only to be left with feelings of foolishness and futility? Lastly, after feeling that you really knew someone or something and that your truth was supported by fact, when did you feel blindsided by your shattered realities? As you revisit these experiences, again, keep your pulse on your reactions. Take some time to soothe your soul and calm your spirit. When you feel ready, continue.

As with the other areas of betrayal, note these experiences in your journal or make a mental note. As painful as this is, it is the first step to healing the wound of being wronged. It is the critical beginning to opening up the bag of betrayal, releasing its hold on you, and offering comfort to you.

Activities – Chapter 1

Please choose one of the following activities below.

1. If you have not already obtained a journal or a notebook, please do so. Take a piece of paper and divide it into three columns (see next page). If you have already noted some betrayal experiences while reading chapter one, place them in the columns where they fit. If there is crossover, put it down in more than one column. Do not second-guess any level of betrayal; write any and all down. If you have a few written down, and more come to mind, add them in. Pace yourself and keep a pulse on your emotions. Take a break if needed and return when ready.
2. If you have not already written down any experiences, use the chart on the next page and the instructions above to notate them. I encourage you not to minimize or disregard any occurrence with betrayal.
3. If the chart feels unnecessary, or too rigid, then “free write” your experiences with betrayal. For now, just briefly listing them is fine. We will go into more detail later. The important message is that you validate these violations and that first step comes with this process. As with #1 or #2, pace and protect yourself.

<p>A truth that becomes a lie / A belief that is shattered</p>	
<p>A profound trust in someone/ something which is profoundly violated</p>	
<p>An investment into someone/ something met with rejection and/or abandonment</p>	

Breaking Through Betrayal And Recovering the Peace Within



Photo by Julianna Calin

Are you ready to finally recover your peace of mind?

We are living in a time where betrayal abounds. Tragically, most of know or know of someone who has been scarred by the betrayal bandit. In whatever form it takes (financial, political, personal, social, legal, environmental, cultural, etc.), no one is immune from the infectious waves of betrayal moving through our society. *Breaking Through Betrayal: And Recovering the Peace Within* is for any individual who has experienced or is experiencing betrayal, who carries the wounds or scars of betrayal injury, and who is struggling to break through its bonds. Betrayal has known us far longer than we have known it; it is time to change that. Readers of this book will be challenged to:

- Explore the different kinds of betrayal while connecting with the experiences of others.
- Unravel the emotions and behaviors that accompany betrayal injury and explore the factors which contribute to the intensity and duration of symptoms.
- Empower yourself by embracing an interactive healing process tailored specifically for recovery from betrayal injury.
- Revive and restore your mind, body, and spirit through a series of activities, exercises, and self-assessments which provide tools for renewal, as well as working through relapse or re-injury.
- Reclaim your rightful sense of self.

“Useful for anyone caught in self-blame, shame or repeated victimization. Though almost the antithesis of my inner-transformation approach, this empowering ‘in-control’ approach can help readers take charge, assess injury, gauge healing and find excellent strategies to protect themselves from future trauma when relating to one’s betrayer.”

Beth Hedva, Ph.D. author of award-winning *Betrayal, Trust and Forgiveness*

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