

Telling Is Healing

A compelling 35-minute filmed conversation for survivors, their family, friends, colleagues, communities, and organizations serving survivors.

“Each time I tell, I heal a little bit more. Telling can be a painful part of healing, but not telling leaves you suffering forever.” - D. Jenson

Donna Jenson, a survivor of childhood sexual abuse and activist, performs excerpts from her one-woman play, What She Knows, and her book, Healing My Life, bringing the audience along on her journey from victim to survivor to activist. Between excerpts, Donna and her friend Suzanne Beck’s dialogue is palpable – sharing their discoveries in this friendship between one survivor and one ally as they navigated the delicate path of disclosure to understanding and support.

“There is a lot of guilt that a non-survivor feels – it’s a guilt of not having suffered enough; of not sharing the survivors suffering. It took me a while to realize that the book is a healing process for non-survivors, too. It offers hope.” – S. Beck

A powerful use of this program is to show it to pairs of survivors and their allies on Zoom. Separate discussion groups are formed after viewing the film; one for survivors and one for their allies. With professional facilitation each group focuses on their side of the relationship; what they need, what they can give. They then return to a full group discussion.

Here are two brief video clips from the program:



Watch Donna Jenson's "Not Your Fault" here



Watch Donna Jenson's "Family of Choice" here

Participant responses to this program:

“I came away with the sense of - oh wow, I'm not alone...there is more than just me doing this with my wife. I didn't know there was such a thing as an ally-- it makes sense though. I was affirmed that I'm doing a lot of what is helpful. Learned a bit of how to be more helpful to my wife.”

“The event strengthened our relationship through deeper understanding and also the sense that our responses and struggles are 'natural' and we (both survivors and allies!!) are not alone!!”

“We've been having more conversations, it brought us closer.”

“My ally benefited from it in ways I hadn't predicted. I feel like the survivor part of me is not a burden but rather a healing opportunity for us both!”

“This cracked a new door open. I feel more acceptance and integration between the two worlds. I felt shame lifting and more emotional safety created in our relationship.

“Very informative, emotional, and uplifting. I'm inspired to continue healing and sharing my story not only through writing but also through dialogue with both survivors and non-survivors.”

“Since the film I've shared even more with my ally.”

More praise for Telling Is Healing:

“Telling is Healing should be seen by not only survivors but those who care about them. It should also be seen by those who do not understand the impact that sexual assault has on a person. I know that survivors will find validation for all that they have experienced as they watch this powerful documentary.”

- Kathy Peluso, Sexual Assault Response Team Coordinator, Family Services Inc., Poughkeepsie, NY

“Donna Jenson’s Telling is Healing is a groundbreaking film. While warm and inviting, it breaks a taboo so thick, dark, and murky: The taboo of talking about incest in “mixed company” between a survivor and a non-survivor. Historically, such conversations usually shut down before they even begin. The conversation is often too difficult and painful to have, whether it’s because the survivor is met with denial, minimization, and anger or because the non-survivor is too emotionally overwhelmed, frightened, or worried about saying the wrong thing. Jenson’s brave and beautiful film changes all of that. By modeling how this conversation can happen in a way that is liberating, connecting, and healing, she and her friend and colleague, Suzanne Beck, open the door for other survivors and non-survivors to walk through together into their own healing. I felt the molecules of my brain and soul realign while watching this film. It will surely have a profound effect on all who see it.”

- Anna Holtzman, Mental Health Counselor, and incest survivor

To learn more visit <https://www.timetotell.org/telling-is-healing> or to book a viewing contact: donnajenson8@gmail.com