

The Power of Trauma: Conquering Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

By Ute Lawrence

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Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is usually associated with soldiers in war-time or civilian law enforcement during major disasters (9/11). But PTSD also affects civilians who have experienced major loss, accidents, abuse, or other trauma, and, often, those people don't have access to the same support networks and professionals that exist for the groups traditionally exposed to the events that might trigger PTSD.

In 1999, Ute Lawrence and her husband were caught in a eighty-seven car accident—the worst accident in Canadian history. Trapped in their car, surrounded by, and under, other cars and trucks, the Lawrence's owed their lives to a young girl trapped in the car next to them who was yelling for help. While the girl, her father, and brother died, Ute and her husband escaped their car with the help of a stranger who broke through their windshield and pulled them to safety.

In the aftermath of the accident, Lawrence had repeated bouts of depression, numbness, and distraction. It wasn't until she recognized that she was not just going to "snap out" of her feeling that she began to pursue help and doing her own research into PTSD. She has gathered the lessons and skills she learned to create *The Power of Trauma*, which outlines different forms of therapy that can help people overcome PTSD, such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Eye movement desensitization, and reprocessing and counseling. She also uses other people's examples of life stressors that can lead to PTSD and the skills that were used to overcome them. *The Power of Trauma* is a short book, but contains a wealth of information for helping overcome trauma and stress, a checklist for self-identifying PTSD and reference information for further research or help. For someone dealing with a major negative, life-changing event, *The Power of Trauma* can provide a good first step in overcoming it.

Sincerely,

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