

A Still, Small Voice: Healing from Abuse. ©2010 By Diane K. Lavett, PhD.
ISBN 978-1-4502-1937-2 Published by iUniverse. Available from the author's website at www.dianelavett.com. \$22.95 in the US. 313 pgs incl illus. Paperback.

Diane Lavett's memoir is an exceptional book that should help overthrow the "self-published" stigma. It is perhaps the best-detailed, ably-written description of the therapy process that I've encountered. Every book, even a memoir of abuse, is a creative work, and is necessarily selective. Yet Lavett reports her therapy sessions in vivid dialogue that reads as if it is a verbatim account. I doubt that the book was "pre-recorded." But the discussion between herself and her therapist, as well as family members, friends, and others, is astonishingly true-to-life. Journal excerpts and significant letters are reproduced, adding to the perception of reality.

Like every survivor's history, Lavett's story is both familiar and unique. Complex family secrets emerge in flashbacks. Graphic details may be upsetting to some (my method is to skim those parts!) The author's life is turned upside down more than once. Yet she was fortunate to connect with a therapist who understood dissociation in the mid-1970s...and despite the serious work it takes to recover from a childhood of horrible abuse, Lavett kept reaching inside and pulling out the answers she needed, in order to heal.

This is a woman who went through most of her recovery as a single mother, working as a PhD geneticist, fighting custody battles, trying to reconnect with siblings, bridging gaps with extended family, desperately struggling to understand and deal with what happened to her, and why. Because this is a book based in reality, many of the questions are never fully answered. But by the end of the text it is clear that Diane Lavett has succeeded in her journey. She has become a strong, stable, and compassionate mother and friend, as well as a highly-competent researcher and writer. Witnessing Lavett's growth and progress, despite frequent upheaval, is an inspiration for counselors and recovering abuse survivors alike. I strongly recommend it.

LynneW, Founder, Editor & Executive Director of *Many Voices*, a newsletter for people recovering from trauma and dissociation, since 1988.