

**DEMYSTIFYING MIND  
CONTROL AND RITUAL ABUSE**  
A Manual for Therapists

*Alison Miller*



**KARNAC**

*firing the mind*

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*Cover art:* Artist Jen Callow says: “This picture represents our inner people and the supportive inner community we have built over the years, which has been a key piece of our healing from ritual abuse and mind control.”

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## About the author

**Alison Miller** is a retired clinical psychologist, who practised in Victoria, BC, Canada for over forty years and specialized in work with survivors of ritual abuse and mind control for the last twenty-five years. She is the author of *Healing the Unimaginable: Treating Ritual Abuse and Mind Control*, *Becoming Yourself: Overcoming Mind Control and Ritual Abuse*, and (with Wendy Hoffman) *From the Trenches: A Victim and Therapist Talk about Mind Control and Ritual Abuse*, and has contributed to various edited collections and journals.

# Preface

This book is written for the person I was in 1990, when I met my first ritually abused client and desperately sought for help in understanding what I was dealing with and knowing what might help her. It is for every therapist who is now in that situation.

Even if you are a highly experienced therapist, you are facing something new when you see your first victim of childhood mind control. You may still develop a strong therapeutic connection with your client. You may still find the techniques in which you have been trained helpful. But these clients are unique in that their minds have been coopted for the purposes of organized criminal groups. They have not just been abused, they have been abused in systematic ways to produce the behaviors the abusers desired. Everything you have learned so far will still apply, but you need more. You need to understand what your client has gone through and the most effective ways to counter that and set your client free to take charge of their own life. This book attempts to provide that information.

The following quotation from Harvey Schwartz is from an online discussion of the Organized and Extreme Abuse discussion group of

the International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation (ISST-D) posted May 1, 2019.

Demystification is essential to our work. If therapists do not know or understand the specific methods, madness and dynamics of organized perpetrator groups including mind control, bizarre but strategic set-ups, lethal twinning, patterns of interlocking lethal double binding and variations on coerced perpetration ... our patients will be insidiously abandoned (without professionals treating them even realizing it) to their own dissociative worlds of internalized domination, annihilating shame, and soul murder. And their heartbreaking spirit-crushing isolation will be reinforced without anyone ever realizing this. Then, patients' acting out, retreat, or other mysterious behaviors in therapy might be misrecognized by ill-informed, or limited informed therapists who may end up frustrated and perhaps even acting out their helplessness and frustration on the patient, further reinforcing the pathological belief systems installed by the perpetrators and cultivated in years of living hell.

It is so important for our field to educate the larger trauma and mental health field about what survivors have actually lived through, as well as the what and how of the machinations of the perpetrators so therapists' minds and hearts can stretch to provide the kinds of holding, witnessing, containment and demystification necessary for healing extremely malevolent trauma. More than anything it is essential to realize that traumatized patients will not reveal to us or themselves, these extremely bizarre and sadistic experiences if they do not sense that we have some ability to "go there." And, more than that, an ability to willingly and courageously go there with them, but to go there with a combination of compassion, ferocity, and acceptance.

# Introduction

In 2012, I published *Healing the Unimaginable: Treating Ritual Abuse and Mind Control*, a book that has provided a basic understanding for many therapists working with victims of these atrocities. I have been delighted to see that the contributions of the survivors I have known, both through their own writings in that book and to my own understanding, have helped so many therapists and survivors. Since that book was published, I have learned more about how such abuse works within the brain of the victim, and how these abuser groups work. In 2022, five years after my official retirement, I presented a ten-session webinar series on treating survivors of organized extreme abuse featuring ritual abuse and mind control, hosted by the non-profit organization Survivorship. The webinars are available at <https://survivorship.org/survivorship-webinar-2022-healing-the-unimaginable-a-ten-session-course/>.

At the end of the course, one participant described the series as “a distillation of much of the content in *Healing the Unimaginable* with an emphasis on the practical.” He said that the webinar series struck him as a step-by-step guide to working with survivors of ritual abuse and mind control, looking at “how to work with/do XXX,” “how to



manage XXX,” and “what to do if this or that happens.” He concluded that “A book which provides information in a format similar to the lecture series would be a valuable reference guide for therapists and a helpful companion piece to *Healing the Unimaginable*.”

So, here is that book. This book is not a new edition of *Healing the Unimaginable* and is not a substitute for that book, which is not out of date and covers the topic in depth, including invaluable contributions from survivors. But hopefully this new book will fill a need for therapists who need a succinct, practical, down-to-earth guide for this challenging work.

Many therapists feel unqualified to treat these complex clients, and try to refer them on, but there is a desperate need for therapists who will rise to the challenge. This book will help you understand what you are dealing with and how to approach each situation.

In this book, I race through complex and difficult topics. All the way through, I invite you to consider that we are talking about human lives here, the immensely difficult and challenging lives of our clients, people whom we would have been if we had been born into a different family.