

Book Review: Ellie: A Story of Profound Loss and Abuse

Contributed by Marian L. Swindell, Ph.D., MSW

Book review of Ellie: A Story of Profound Loss and Abuse.

Rose, D. (2005). *Ellie: A Story of Profound Loss and Abuse*. Baltimore, MD: PublishAmerica. 97 pages, \$14.95 paperback.

Ellie's life story starts out wonderfully. She and her brother and sister are loved and adored by both her mom and dad. At age seven, her life is ripped apart immediately following the unexpected deaths of her parents. She is then tossed from relative to relative, year after year, enduring sexual abuse at the hands of her Uncle Gordon, emotional neglect and abuse at the hands of other caregivers, and through it all, she prays to God to help her make it through each day.

Ellie struggles with making and keeping friends, settling down, feeling welcome in the world, and trying to feel comfortable in her life. Most of her teenage years and young adulthood are spent hiding from her abusive uncle, who tracks her down and consumes her life almost everywhere she goes. This young girl, though, has the resolve of an angel and never gives up. At age 23, she graduates from nursing school. She later marries and becomes a mom.

I experienced almost every emotion reading this book. The book brought tears as well as laughter, and I feel blessed I had the opportunity to read this book. This is a must-read for every social work student who wants to work with children, teens, or young adults. It should be required reading for anyone who wants to become a therapist, work in a homeless shelter, develop a teen support group, have children, or interact with children. This is a recommended read for social work clients who have experienced or are currently experiencing similar struggles, because they will relate with Ellie and the challenges she overcomes in her life.

Social work educators will benefit from the reading of this book, as it provides true-to-life, graphic insight about the disgusting atrocities associated with sexual abuse. I would highly recommend this book to anyone in the helping professions, including pastors, nurses, educators, therapists, and physicians. Ellie is a sobering, valuable book that may be too graphic for some readers, but is definitely worth the inspiration it provides.

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