

Inside It's Never Too Late to Have a Happy Childhood by Claudia Black

Introduction

While my previous books have primarily addressed addiction in the family, *It's Never Too Late to Have a Happy Childhood* is meant for anyone who for any reason is learning for the first time to 'parent' themselves in a manner that may never have been available to them as children. It is a book that reminds us that no matter how much we approach our lives from an adult frame of mind, within us remains an 'inner child,' that wondrous little being inside each and every one of us that lets us know that it's never too late to begin the experience of self-discovery.

The thirty-four inspirational messages in this book are designed to replace the hurtful messages of our childhood. It is by reframing these hurtful messages that we can begin to live in a way that allows us to reconnect with our transcendent human spirit. Reclaiming the Self lost in childhood doesn't have to be overwhelming and immobilizing. Self-healing can also be exciting – an unexpected gift that can inspire one's sense of inner peace and serenity.

It has been an honor to bring messages that I hope you will find inspiring together with the paintings of artist Laurie Zagon. Laurie's work reflects my belief that every person's life is distinctively colorful – a rich tapestry of color, energy, and light. We often lose this sense of our own inner richness because we become disconnected from our inner child. The vibrancy of color in Laurie's work truly reflects the process of recovery – an ongoing process of growth and movement that is sometimes astonishingly subtle and at other times intense and dramatic.

Laurie's vision of the triumphant human spirit is a perspective that I certainly share. As Laurie says, "I believe that the inner light within all of us is sometimes dimmed because of certain painful experiences, but what I attempt to do in my art is to show that even our pain can be transformed by letting in even the smallest ray of light – one moment of penetrating consciousness can open the window to the soul and allow our inner greatness and joy to surface once more."

It is our hope that this book will be an ongoing gift you give to yourself at those moments when life most threatens your serenity. And that it will remind you to take time out in your day to re-center yourself.

May these messages help you to tap into your inner strength and wisdom at the times when you are feeling most vulnerable. May they provide ongoing validation for what you are discovering on the path of your own self-healing. May *Its Never Too Late to Have a Happy Childhood* remind you that you are a kaleidoscope of colors, constantly shifting, changing, and growing.