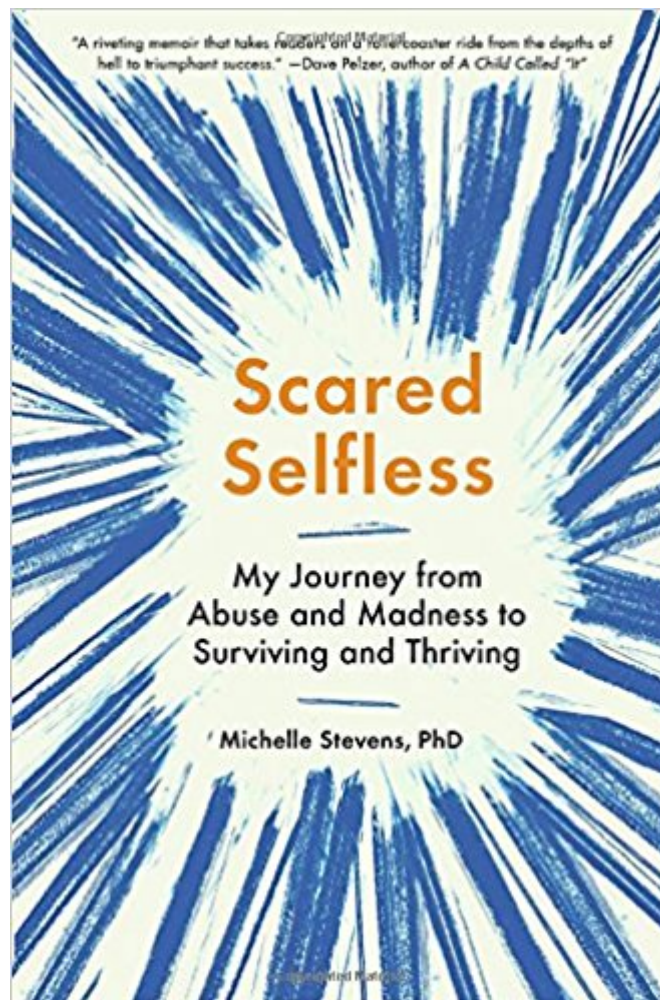




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# Scared Selfless: My Journey From Abuse And Madness To Surviving And Thriving



## Synopsis

“A riveting memoir that takes readers on a roller coaster ride from the depths of hell to triumphant success.” —Dave Pelzer, author of *A Child Called It*

Michelle Stevens has a photo of the exact moment her childhood was stolen from her: She’s only eight years old, posing for her mother’s boyfriend, Gary Lundquist — an elementary school teacher, neighborhood stalwart, and brutal pedophile. Later that night, Gary locks Michelle in a cage, tortures her repeatedly, and uses her to quench his voracious and deviant sexual whims. Little does she know that this will become her new reality for the next six years. Michelle can also pinpoint the moment she reconstituted the splintered pieces of her life: She’s in cap and gown, receiving her PhD in psychology — and the university’s award for best dissertation. The distance between these two points is the improbable journey from torture, loss, and mental illness to healing, recovery, and triumph that is Michelle’s powerful memoir, *Scared Selfless*. Michelle suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, and depression, and made multiple suicide attempts. She also developed multiple personalities. There was “Chelsey, the rebellious teenager; “Viscous, a tween with homicidal rage; and “Sarah, a sweet little girl who brought her teddy bear on a first date. In this harrowing tale, Michelle, who was inspired to help others heal by becoming a psychotherapist, sheds light on the all-too-real threat of child sexual abuse, its subsequent psychological effects, and the best methods for victims to overcome their ordeals and, ultimately, thrive. *Scared Selfless* is both an examination of the extraordinary feats of the mind that are possible in the face of horrific trauma as well as Michelle’s courageous testament to their power.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“In *Scared Selfless*, Dr. Michelle Stevens takes readers on a remarkable journey. Her account of childhood trauma is told with candor and, yes, even wit—and how she found the strength and resilience to ultimately recover and triumph is an inspiration not just to other survivors, but to us all. The book is a guide for anybody seeking to overcome challenges and lead a richer and fuller life.”—Arianna Huffington

“*Scared Selfless* is a riveting memoir that takes readers on a roller coaster ride from the depths of hell to triumphant success. Michelle is an extraordinary life story and a diligent, compassionate work as a therapist teaches us that, with true-grit determination, it is possible to overcome the worst adversity. *Scared Selfless* offers courage, strength, and resilience to anyone who desires a better life.”—Dave Pelzer, author, *A Child Called 'It'*

“Some books should be read. Dr. Michelle Stevens book must be read. Prepare to cringe, to sob, and to rejoice. This is a captivating yet harrowing read of innocence denied, a childhood obliterated, parental indifference, grotesque and serial predation, psychopathy, and institutional inadequacies. But one has to exhale to be fair, because that is not all. This is a story about the psychological legacy of abuse, the struggle to survive a troubled mind, the challenges of finding elusive help and about finally and triumphantly finding redemption through the most unapologetic example of personal grit I’ve ever read. I could not put this book down and neither will you, not if you care about others, not if you care about children. There are heroes and there are giants in this world: Dr. Stevens is both.”—Joe Navarro, Special Agent (Ret.) and author of *Dangerous Personalities*

“Michelle Stevens has written a fierce, honest account of her life that will stay with any reader long after the last page has turned. This book does more to explain what it feels like to live with the effects of trauma than anything I’ve ever read. It’s the rare book that’s both personal and clinical. It should be a resource and an inspiration not just to survivors but to those who love and seek to understand them.”—Sara Corbett, co-author of *A House in the Sky*

“What an astonishing and extraordinary book! I wasn’t planning to read the whole book in one sitting, but I literally couldn’t put it down. In a few brief hours I experienced shock, dismay, and eventually hope as Michelle Stevens shared her remarkable journey. Then I told five friends, ‘You have to read this book.’ Now I am telling you ‘You have to read this book.’ It is a story that has to be told. I celebrate Michelle Stevens for having the courage to write it. It

will mesmerize you, confound you, and eventually inspire you – as you realize that anything, no matter how horrific – can be overcome. – Jack Canfield, coauthor of the bestselling *Chicken Soup for the Soul* series and *The Success Principles: How to Get from Where You Are to Where You Want to Be* – “Courageous and insightful, Stevens’ book is not only important for the light it sheds on some of the effects of extreme sexual abuse. It also provides hope to survivors that living “a successful and satisfying life” is absolutely possible. A raw and powerful account from a survivor of unspeakable abuse. – Kirkus

Reviews – “Occasionally, a book comes along that absolutely takes my breath away. *Scared Selfless* is such a book – I could not put it down. It is as harrowing as it is deeply engrossing. What I hadn’t prepared myself for was this: a tale that, in the end, would leave me in the presence of such unrelenting beauty, grace, and hope. Dr. Stevens is not only a remarkable storyteller, she is also an extraordinary healer. Her greatest balm is that of her unflinching personal truth, laid bare on these pages. – Michelle Burford, coauthor with Michelle Knight of *Finding Me* – “Powerful. – GoodHousekeeping.com – “A beautifully written book – with honesty [and] humor – Through grit and hard work, what begins as *Grand Guignol* finishes with a big Hollywood ending. – Vanity Fair

Dr. Michelle Stevens, a psychologist, is the founder and director of Post-Traumatic Success, a nonprofit organization dedicated to educating and inspiring those affected by psychological trauma. She studied writing at New York University before earning her doctorate in psychology from Saybrook University, where her thesis was honored as the Dissertation of Distinction. Stevens has presented her research to the International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation and the Los Angeles County Psychological Association, where she also received an award for Outstanding Research. She works with survivors around the globe, encouraging them to heal, grow, and fight for better lives.

By the time Michelle Stevens was 13, she had been her mother’s boyfriend’s sex slave for 5 years. The memories of him remained a destructive force in her life, tugging at the frayed strings of her mental stability and will to live. She had PTSD, tried to kill herself with pills twice and developed multiple personalities. AND YET (I’m putting this in caps because it’s such an exceptional accomplishment) THIS IS A TRULY INSPIRING, AT TIMES HILARIOUS, AND ALWAYS INSIGHTFUL MEMOIR! It took about 15 years, 3 hospitalizations, and

multiple suicide attempts to work through Gary's dark legacy. En route to healing herself, she grew fascinated in how the mind absorbs and deals with trauma, and her fascination to study it further and further until she eventually earns a PhD with a thesis that tells her own story as a case study! Emboldened and empowered by her remarkable journey to healing, she was inspired to help others heal through her private practice as a clinical psychotherapist who specializes in trauma. Now, with SCARED SELFLESS, she hopes to help millions by telling her story in full for the first time—and, by consequence, freeing others from the mental vise in which their tormentors have held them for years. Yes, at first it's raw, but mostly it's fascinating and completely engaging.

This book was well written, in a manner that the unspeakable horror of her life, could only be understood as she herself began to understand it. You cannot help but want to help, and empathize with all who cannot help but act out these symptoms of abuse.

I heard about this book from my english teacher and purchased it on kindle, I had to put it down and take a break within the first chapter! Its very intense but also intiguing a must read for any student but not for the faint of heart.

Very good book in teaching how to help those in such a tramatic state that should never occur! Michelle does an awesome and very transparent job in sharing her story of hope.

The fact that she and so many children can survive and tell someone "Who "put you through this night mares.i have a lot of this in my childhood,from family,uncles ,cousin,friends...some still bother me at times,I have a lot of trust issues.would recommend to anyone who has been touched,raped or mentally wronged by someone.

This book was a real eye-opener. . This was an an interesting read, but disturbing subject matter for sure .

This is an excellent book for anyone who has been touched by some sort of trauma. It provides helpful insight into those who have been affected. Great read but not for the faint of heart

So good and well written, I couldn't put it down. Gives eye opening explanation on mental health.

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