

When You've Experienced a Difficult Childhood

Childhood is inherently difficult. After all, growth involves a constant process of destruction and creation: destruction of old worldviews and creation of new ones.

As a young child, you realize at some point that you're not the center of the universe. Then you find out that Mommy and Daddy aren't all-powerful gods. You have to work hard to learn how to print and then write letters and memorize how to spell words. You discover that life isn't always fair, and that you're sometimes on your own. And these challenges all happen in a *good* childhood! Nevertheless, whether you had the best or most horrific childhood, what you can do as an adult is to be the best and happiest of who you are today. Here are some ways that focusing on who you are now can help free you from the harmful effects of a difficult childhood:

- Focus on who you are now and see how your challenges have come together to create your particular combinations of strength and vulnerability. For example, in my situation, a lack of parental nurturing during childhood created certain benefits along with the drawbacks, such as a greater sense of inner dependence above outer dependence. Being focused on who you are now helps you to have compassion for your "inner child." You can nourish the vulnerable parts of yourself with maturity and gentle kindness.
- Being focused on who you are now allows you to be more present and able to help heal others — and by healing others, you also heal yourself.
- **Being focused on who you are now helps you remember your spiritual nature.** Remember that you are a great and divine soul who took birth on this planet in your specific circumstances because they were the best conditions to help you learn the lessons and have the experiences that will fulfill your soul's destiny.