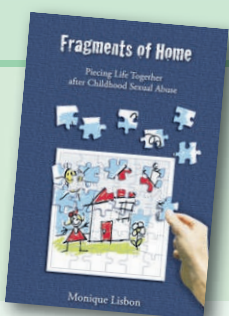


BOOK REVIEW



Fragments of Home:

**Piecing Life Together After Childhood Sexual Abuse
by Monique Lisbon**

Review by Trudy Skilbeck

This innovative book and CD brings together all of the elements of Monique Lisbon's ministry; her understanding of trauma, her original songs, her ability to reflect theologically and above all, the powerful voice of her story as a survivor of childhood sexual abuse. I was involved in the editing of the book and so I have read and re-read it many times, only to find that it holds freshness for me still.

Fragments of Home is beautifully constructed, pursuing each chapter's theme by weaving together anecdote and reflection. The book includes a full-length CD of Monique's haunting and evocative songs; 16 songs, each connected to one of the 16 chapters. The songs speak of lament, of hope, of despair and of the resilience of God. They aid the reading in a way that encourages all of our senses to be involved in the work as a whole.

The use of anecdote brings us inside Monique's story with simple snippets of her life retold in the 'voice' of the age she was at the time of each vignette. There is nothing graphic or gratuitous in the retelling despite the gravity of many of the incidents and this quality gives the narrative a compelling poise.

Each chapter's reflection unpacks the anecdotes and acknowledges the many difficult questions raised by these life experiences without offering simplistic answers. Readers find reflections upon forgiveness, reconciliation, suffering healing, self-image, boundaries, safety, loving relationships, doubt, anger and more. Whilst we cannot all fully enter into Monique's experiences, her reflections have a rich application to all forms of trauma and to our experiences of Christian community in all settings.

Fragments of Home offers great depth and insight into trauma and abuse without being a heavy read. It is invaluable for survivors of abuse as well as the friends, family members, pastoral workers and other 'caring professionals' who support them. I think this means all of us.

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Trudy Skilbeck is the Field & Promotions Manager at the BUV.

Fragments of Home is available now for \$29.95 plus postage by visiting www.monomusic.com.au