

Effective Pastoral Care for Adult Survivors of Sexual Abuse or Trauma

by Teresa Pitt Green
Spirit Fire

DON'T

DO

Don't talk.

Don't know.

Don't defend.

Don't minimize.

Don't intellectualize.

Don't launch a pep talk.

Don't be impatient.

Don't be directive.

Don't be linear.

Don't wing it.

Don't be goal-oriented.

Don't judge or shame.

Don't talk to a diagnosis.

Don't own.

Don't fix.

Don't fuel a focus on past.

Don't push.

Don't expect efficiency.

Don't expect reliability.

Don't personalize.

Don't take responsibility.

Don't analyze.

Don't shift into therapy.

Don't be manipulated.

Don't feel responsible.

Don't hesitate.

Listen.

Learn.

Acknowledge guilt of abusers and enablers.

Recognize the burden.

Permit strong feelings.

If it were possible, we'd be over it already.

Remember healing is on God's timing.

Follow our lead and pace.

Appreciate healing as circular, repetitive.

Prepare and be knowledgeable.

Be God-oriented. His Presence is enough.

Offer radical respect for a humiliated person.

Talk to us about the diagnosis.

Respect boundaries on a person's burden.

Accept healing as a process.

Care for need here, now.

Pace, go slowly.

Simplify, repeat, confirm.

Expect no-shows, late arrivals.

Depersonalize errors and rough edges.

Set firm boundaries softly.

Affirm mystery and grace in this life.

Know how to refer for professional help.

Live the boundaries you set.

Let the Holy Spirit do the heavy lifting.

Pastor.