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Forgive and forget

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Two words of critique The authors focus exclusively on the problem of sexual abuse of girls by men and boys with little attention given to sexual abuse of girls by women or of boys by both men and women I was also disappointed to see the authors shy away from affirming the feminine characteristics of God as a tool for restoring one's relationship with the Creator

Otherwise this book is an excellent resource and a welcome tool for Christian workers and all who struggle with the pain of their own abuse or that of ones they love

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**Forgive and Forget:
Healing the Hurts We Don't Deserve**

by Lewis B Smedes
Pocket Books Simon & Schuster 1984
Paper 192 pages \$4
Reviewed by Reta Finger

This popular book is not about incest alone but about the many ways we are hurt when we do not deserve it Through graphic stories Lewis Smedes looks at these outrageous hurts from many angles and shows us how the forgiving process can help heal our souls Thoroughly Christian and thoroughly honest Smedes lays his finger on the nerve of our pain in captivating prose and the tears that come through reading help us become whole

The small book is divided into four parts the four stages of forgiving forgiving people who are hard to forgive how people forgive and why forgive? Through his own bitter experiences and through counseling many others Smedes provides some answers to these hard questions I heartily recommend it



Sad Statistics

- Studies suggest about 40 million Americans about 1 in 6 may have been sexually victimized as children This includes 25 to 35 percent of all women and 10 to 16 percent of all men
 - Immediate effects of sexual abuse include sleeping and eating disturbances anger withdrawal and guilt Some children also exhibit sexual preoccupation and have numerous physical complaints—rashes vomiting or headaches—without medical explanation
 - About 50 percent of women survive incest without long-term ill effects 50 percent do not
 - As a group women who were sexually abused as children have lower self-esteem than others and are more anxious depressed and guilt-ridden
 - Since girls in our society are abused more commonly than boys perhaps it's understandable that women as a group have lower self-esteem than men
 - Girls who are abused are more likely to be later victims of rape or attempted rape Boys are more likely to become aggressors
 - Most sexual abuse occurs to those between 9 and 12 although 2-and 3-year-old victims are not uncommon Victims are most traumatized if their abuser is between the ages of 26 and 50
- From Shattered Innocence
Psychology Today, Feb 1987