

# Beauty Rising from Brokenness; Journey through Childhood Trauma and Chronic Illness into Healing

Based on a True Story

## Dedication

For my family, Kathy, and God without them I would never have survived this journey. My husband Arnold for his unconditional love and unwavering support. My children Megan, Brittney, and Joshua, I'm sorry you had to go through this, but you are all strong, loving, and compassionate people and better for it, I believe. Your love and support mean more to me than you will ever know. To Kathy, my counselor, confidant, and friend for your guidance and love while walking with me down this long and difficult path. God, my Abba (Daddy), "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." (Romans 8:15 KJV) your great love, your Word, loving me enough to send your only son to die for me, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16 KJV) and your Spirit who comforted and interceded when I was so broken I couldn't even pray. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." (Romans 8:26 KJV)

## Endorsements

Elizabeth Clamon is a gifted natural health provider who understands the mind-body-spirit connection so well. This book helps you understand why, as she shares her personal journey from brokenness to wholeness. It is no easy task to travel that road. It takes great courage and perseverance, but her story inspires and challenges everyone struggling with a painful past to summon the courage to follow her example.

~Kathy Barton - Clinical Social Worker

Beauty Rising From Brokenness is a story very close to my own heart. The author, Elizabeth M. Clamon, does an amazing job at, not only sharing her story, but explaining how the feelings, emotions and brokenness can be transferred from life to life. I love the transparency. I can feel the resilience and determination, in every scenario, as I read the story. If you have every questioned brokenness in your life, need to know if you are dealing with someone who is broken or need to overcome the spirit of brokenness, this book is a must read.

~Precious S. Brown CEO | Founder Precious Empowers Enterprise

Amazon International Bestselling Author, The Business Liaison for New Mompreneurs,  
[www.buildingbusinessbasics101.com](http://www.buildingbusinessbasics101.com)

Chronic pain is a completely consuming condition with lasting and detrimental effects. Elizabeth Clamon, through her book Beauty Rising from Brokenness, shows how there is an alternative from suffering through your own personal, and possibly painful, circumstances. Elizabeth provides her unique perspective of childhood abuse and chronic pain intertwined with her experience as a Natural Health Provider for practical approaches to living with your unexpected issues. This is a great resource for anyone who is seeking wholeness in the midst of a broken life.

~Eric Eaton Author of The Raging Sloth and The Thrival Guide.

"... a totally engrossing, interesting book that will have you turning pages quickly as Elizabeth takes you through her journey, from broken to healed, from despair to happiness enlightenment and joy. She will help you begin your own journey of healing, no matter where you are in that process. This is a must-read for anyone who's been through trauma, who feels lost or who is truly broken. There is hope, and Beauty Rising From Brokenness is the answer."

~Lee Tkachuk, Award-Winning CEO, Best-Selling Author, Professional Speaker, and Founder of The Speaker Collaborative

## Foreword

I grew up hearing the saying that “the truth will make you free.” I believe my parents quoted the phrase because they believed I had done something wrong, i.e., left food out on the kitchen counter or accidentally missed the trash can while tossing some trash. Nothing major, but they were certainly looking for a confession from me. Naturally, I wasn’t a liar so I would confess, only when it was applicable. But I still didn’t have an appreciation for the statement, “the truth will make you free.”

My appreciation for the truth came as a result of growing up in my local church and witnessing what was then called, “testimony service.” It was a time in the just before an official service; bible study typically, and before the choir would sing. But the moderator of the church service would ask if anyone in the congregation had a testimony they wanted to share. Often people would stand up and share something that may not have been relevant to me. However, every now and again, someone would share their testimony about a personal experience or encounter that caused them to change their lives for the better.

No solicited or forced confessing from Elizabeth M. Clamon.

“Beauty Rising from Brokenness: Journey through Childhood Trauma and Chronic Illness into Healing” is Elizabeth M. Clamon’s relevant testimony. Her story is one that demonstrates the power of trusting the God in you, making a conscious decision, and taking necessary action. Elizabeth’s story is one that I longed to hear during testimony service that would stir my soul, bring tears to my eyes, and cause me to be introspective.

Elizabeth shares her truth in such a profoundly open and honest way that by the time you finish reading “Beauty Rising from Brokenness: Journey through Childhood Trauma and Chronic Illness into Healing,” you will experience the same freedom she has come to know firsthand. You will laugh. You will cry. You will hold your breath, and sigh breaths of relief. You will want to live your life for the better.

Elizabeth is both entertaining and inspiring. I had the pleasure of interviewing Elizabeth on my television/radio program. We clicked instantly because of her authentic bare-her-soul approach to life and serving others. She’s made it her life’s mission to help others live a life of freedom by living their truth, on their terms. She is a bold force to be reckoned with and well equipped, both experientially and academically. She is empowered to not only help others but also make a difference in the world.

Ready or not, Elizabeth M. Clamon’s testimony of transition from being broken to wholeness in “Beauty Rising from Brokenness: Journey through Childhood Trauma and Chronic Illness into Healing” will bless you, spirit, soul, and body.

Let the journey begin!

Dr. Lisa Lewis Ellis

CEO & Founder Kick Boxing Believers, L.L.C.

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## Introduction

What we fear doing most is usually what we most need to do.” – Tim Ferriss

I am broken!! It hit me like a ton of bricks. I was waking up to the fact that I was broken and probably always had been. What was broken? What would it be like to be unbroken? When did the brokenness start? How did I get this way? How did I become broken? Who or what broke me in the first place?

I had no idea. As I stood staring out the door of our new home in Michigan, the snow blew in drifts, it felt like the cold wind was blowing through the huge cracks in my soul.

I didn't know what to do or where to turn for help, I just wanted to disappear. Not from life but from my brokenness. I felt like an injured animal. I wanted to crawl in as small of a place as I could find and heal. The only problem, I didn't know how. I was the mother of three young children. My military husband had deployed just three months after we moved to this cold and lonely place. I had to stay out in the open, I had to try to live despite the gut-wrenching pain and brokenness.

In *Beauty Rising from Brokenness* I will tell you how I became broken and how I found my way back to hope and healing. Do I still have cracks, yes? But now there is a bright, beautiful light that shines through my cracks where there once was anger, rage, sadness, depression, illness, and pain.

Are you broken? Do you know? Do you feel like you have cracks that go all the way to the core of your very being? Do you want to run away, to escape the pain, to find a small, still, place where you can heal? Most of us have families, jobs, friends, and all sorts of other people who need us, who depend on us, and running to a safe place to heal simply isn't doable. So, what do you do? What did I do? I will guide you down the path I took to healing in this book.

I have walked this path of brokenness for most of my life. The journey was long and difficult. Being on the other side now. I realize how incredibly hard, yet worthwhile the trek was. I wrote this book because I've traveled this path and I know how long, lonely, and difficult it is. Also, I have studied Naturopathic medicine, so I can guide you on this journey, in a way few others can't. "Naturopathic medicine is a distinct primary health care method, emphasizing prevention, treatment, and optimal health using therapeutic methods and substances that encourage individuals' inherent self-healing process. The practice of Naturopathic medicine includes modern and traditional, scientific, and empirical methods." (1)

It was very important to me to heal naturally. I had been sick my entire life and it seemed all traditional western medicine had done was run down my body and make me worse, as I continued to seek out their treatments. I decided it was time for me to find a different way to heal so I pursued healing through natural means.

For me this meant following the principals that are the foundation of Naturopathic Medicine. There are five therapeutic principles found in Naturopathy.

1. Nature is a powerful healing force - this is the belief that the body has considerable power to heal itself.
2. The person is viewed as a whole - Understanding that a person is an individual is essential.
3. The goal is to identify and address the cause of the problem - Naturopathy does not deal in suppressing symptoms, since symptoms are seen as expression of the body's attempt to heal itself.

4. The Naturopath is a teacher - First and foremost the Naturopath is a teacher, educating, empowering, and motivating the client to assume more personal responsibility for their own wellness by adopting a healthy attitude, lifestyle, and diet.

5. Prevention is the best approach - Prevention is best accomplished by lifestyle habits which support health. (2)

In this book you will not only learn how we become broken, but how to heal and be whole again. To completely heal and be whole we must achieve balance. To achieve balance, we must heal physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. If one area is out of balance the whole cannot heal. I realized this when I had resolved three areas, but there was still one piece I needed to resolve to heal. Once I completed the very difficult task of facing down that last demon my health began to turn around. It didn't happen overnight, but it did happen for me and it can for you too.

Most of my life I remember always being sick, mostly with upper respiratory illnesses and lots of strep throat as a child. I was constantly taken to doctors and given antibiotics and steroids so that I would be back up as soon as possible. Now with my Naturopathic education I realize that the medication was only wrecking my immune system and setting me up to get sicker as I grew older.

I believe we must heal mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually to be whole and enjoy optimal health. Every person is a complex design of interconnected pieces. Every part affects all the fragments of the whole being. Western medicine splits us up into parts and just takes care of a problem in one area, never considering that every part is interconnected. We need to consider the whole person and realize that for example, physical pain can be caused by an emotional issue.

Deep emotional and spiritual wounds never heal if you cover them up with a bandage. Often, we try to hide them under a covering of humor, sarcasm, pretending, or self-hatred. This never heals, it only allows the wounds to fester until they are so infected the healing takes a very long time or destroys us from the inside out. Those traumas need to be out in the open to heal. It's always better to get those things out as soon as possible, so the process is easier and faster.

When you finish this book, you will identify the traumas that lead to your brokenness and how each area affects the whole. I will guide you down the path to healing the brokenness. You will know how each part of our being is intricately connected and begin the work of healing each area as we travel the path to healing and freedom.

The longer you wait to begin the journey the more layers get added on to those gaping wounds and harder it will be to heal. If you don't begin to walk the path to hope and healing today, well then when? Ask yourself what do you want. Do you want to live with the soul-shattering pain another day or do you want to take the first step to healing? Today is the best day to begin. The sooner you start, the closer you are to the finish line. Let's get going. The journey is long and hard, but the freedom at the end is so very worth the relief you feel. What are you waiting for? Let's get started.

## **PART 1 HARDSHIP- The Why**

### **Chapter 1**

Brokenness, How Did I Get Here?

Are you Broken?

I am not a product of my circumstances. I am a product of my decisions. ~Stephen Covey

The song Broken Things by Matthew West (3) speaks volumes to me, because I am one of those "Broken Things." I don't believe I was whole or unbroken at birth. The circumstances of my birth were stressful, to say the least, and my beginnings were humble and disturbing for everyone involved. My birth mother was under a great deal of stress while she was pregnant with me and that only multiplied after I was born.

I was a surprise child, as in, no one in my family expected me until I arrived. My mother says she had no idea she was pregnant. My family was not only in shock, but ashamed. Being a single mother in 1965 was frowned upon, to say the least. During her pregnancy my mother was going to college, working, and driving home to Louisiana from Mississippi on the weekends. After my birth she had to quit school, go to work, and move back in with my grandparents. That was difficult for everyone and caused a great deal of stress for the entire family.

Many people don't realize how much that stress, both pre-birth and post-birth affects the child. Perhaps as much or more than the adults in the situation. Adults can choose to make changes in their environment, and their thinking. A child, however, has no such choice. We are subject to the choices, feelings, and environment around us. Our brains and bodies adapt and overcome but that's due to our will to survive. We have an innate ability to survive. We want to live. We see this in premature infants that refuse to give up. Against all odds they fight to survive.

That survival instinct is a God-given ability to want to live and go on despite how hard living might be. However, it does take its toll on our brain and body. Those premature babies often have lifelong issues with hearing, vision, learning disabilities, and much more (3), but those of us that are born otherwise healthy don't escape without long-term challenges as well. It is well documented that children born and raised in stressful environments suffer changes in their brain chemistry and body that tend to affect them adversely for life.

In a study of Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) in Minnesota, "Ongoing adversity in childhood leads to a chronic state of "fight, flight or freeze." Researchers at Yale University discovered that when inflammatory stress hormones flood a child's body and brain, they alter the genes that oversee our stress reactivity, re-setting the stress response to "high" for life." (4) "This increases the risk of inflammation, which manifests later in cancer, heart disease, autoimmune diseases and many other chronic conditions." (5)

"Alters the genes that oversee our stress reactivity, re-setting the stress response to high for life."(4) Think about that for a minute, if you're born and/or raised in this type of environment you are altered for the rest of your life. Wow! By no choice of your own, the environment makes changes you will deal with forever. Fair? No, it's not fair. How many things in life do you know that are? I know from my fifty-two years of experience on this earth, not much has been fair.

So, what about hope? Is there hope? Yes, There is always hope. We have hope because God loved us so much he sent Jesus to die for us, so that we can live life in abundance. We often think of abundance being financial, but it is abundance in every area of life, even our health. The verse in the

song Broken Things by Matthew West, says, "The pages of history they tell me it's true, that it's never the perfect; it's always the ones with the scars that You use, It's the rebels and the prodigals; it's the humble and the weak, the misfit heroes You chose, Tell me there's hope for sinners like me" (1)

Sinners like me in this song refers to the fact that we are all sinners. We are sinners because we are born in a sinful world. This dates back to the book of Genesis when Adam and Eve sinned by disobeying God and eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

"And He said, Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat? And the man said, The woman whom You gave to be with me--she gave me [fruit] from the tree, and I ate. And the Lord God said to the woman, What is this you have done." (Genesis 3:11 - 3:13a AMP)

"The ones with scar that you use," (1) makes perfect sense and the biggest difference in the world. Maybe the challenges also make us strong in other ways, determined to make a change, even rebel against the things that changed us forever. Maybe those changes, while giving us challenges that must be overcome, also gives us a determined spirit to change the world.

That is at least true for me. Despite the circumstances of my birth, the dysfunctional and abusive childhood I endured, made me strong, stubborn, rebellious, and left me with irreversible scars. However, they are scars I'm proud of. I've earned every one of them. Without my scars I have no idea who I would be. The scars have also left their irreversible damage. Despite the difficulties. I refuse to sit on the sidelines and not leave my mark on this world.

When I was born in rural Louisiana, it was a very different time and place. You didn't have babies out of wedlock. If you did become pregnant while unmarried you were sent off to an unwed mothers' home to have the baby, give it up for adoption, and then you were expected to come back home and resume your life like nothing happened. These young women were impacted for life by this experience and their inability to have any say in their life. If they were unmarried, their father was in control; and if married their husband was in control. The stress of not having any say in what happens to you and having no control over your own life also takes a huge toll on the unborn child. A mother under that type of duress, emotionally torn and scared leaves those scars on the soul of her unborn child. Not to mention her fear of childbirth, alone, often with no opportunity to hold or care for her newborn child. This stress transfers to the child and the brokenness begins. (6)

I was not born under all these circumstances, however mine were similar. My mother was nineteen when she became pregnant with me. Somehow, she managed to hide her pregnancy for the entire nine months. She says she did not know she was pregnant and maybe she didn't. I can only draw from the experience of my own five pregnancies and I knew almost immediately something was different with my body. I've always had an innate, God-given ability, to listen and understand what my body is telling me.

Besides my mother being unmarried and pregnant, there had to have been other extenuating circumstances around her during and after her pregnancy. I have asked questions over the years, but to no avail. No one will tell me exactly what was going on in the home at the time. What I have been told was my mother was in secretarial school in Mississippi and working at the public library. This was apparently where she met my biological father.

What I do know is that I have always had extreme feelings of guilt, the need for everyone to be pleased with me, and the fear of abandonment has always been my constant companion. I never remember a time when I haven't felt that way. So why and how does a young child develop feelings like that, when they've never experienced anything to cause them to feel that way? Transfer; Yes, transfer of feelings the mother is experiencing to the child in utero and in those early informative years of growth and development. (6)

What Is Early Trauma?

"It has long been known that nicotine, alcohol, drug use and poor nutrition have traumatic effects on prenatals and babies. We are learning that stressful family events, emotional tension and the way routine medical procedures are performed may also have long-lasting traumatic effects. In fact, trauma occurs in many different situations. It can come from something as obvious as being born prematurely or something as subtle as losing a twin in the early stages of fetal development. Early prenatal experiences like a death in the family and not being wanted are significant examples. Likewise, being whisked away from one's parents right after birth can be particularly traumatic, as can interventions like induced labor and birth by caesarian section. The term "birth trauma" specifically refers to adverse experiences one has during birth, but any traumatic events that take place between conception and about the age of three have particular significance in shaping an individual's life." (6)

My mother had to have been under extreme stress and huge feelings of guilt, knowing how her parents would react to my birth. Or like she told me, not knowing what was going on until she started having pain so severe she had to be rushed to the hospital where, I made my grand entrance. I know she was shamed, looked down on, and felt terribly guilty when the truth came out. Also, not knowing where my biological father was must have been especially difficult. Once she found him, after my birth, she discovered he was already married and had a child. This discovery took its toll on her. I don't know who she was before, but the woman I knew was broken and has never found healing and freedom.

It seems to me that she allowed her brokenness to destroy her life. The negativity seem to have affected every relationship she has had since. Now she has no contact with my children or me due to it. Her inability to move on is sad and I feel for her, however I will not and cannot have sympathy for her.

Life is about the cards your dealt and what you chose to do with them. Some people take the hand they are dealt and chose to close themselves off emotionally and not even try to get help and healing. Others seem to be able to take the blows life inflicts and pick themselves up and put the pieces back together and keep going.

I am the type of person who took the cards I was dealt and chose to seek out help, because I desperately wanted to be free and healed of my lifelong brokenness. For years I went through life not even knowing why I was the way I was. I was always a people pleaser, had a huge fear of being left or abducted and not knowing how I would get back home, and I always had an overwhelming feeling of being responsible for everything and everyone. I lived my life from these feelings and thought I was functioning. I was attempting to hide it from everyone around me.