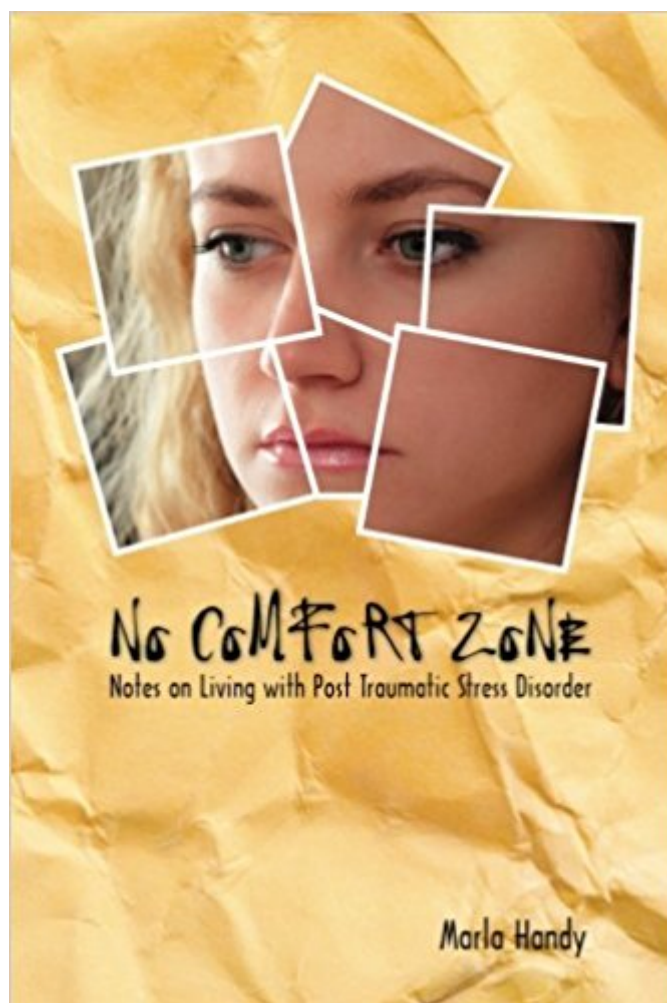


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# No Comfort Zone: Notes On Living With Post Traumatic Stress Disorder



## Synopsis

No Comfort Zone exposes a jagged slice of humanity that is all too present, but often shielded from our view. The author challenges us to see life as she does, so we can understand a bit of what it's like to live with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). With insight and humor, she describes the fear and unpredictability of growing up in an unstable household, the terror of being raped as a young adult, and the confusion and shame of living with perceptions and reactions that are often so very different from others'. After years of treatment for depression, a diagnosis of PTSD came as a surprise. Isn't this something that only happens to combat veterans? But it made sense. In writing this highly personal account, Marla Handy helps the rest of us understand what PTSD is and that it happens here at home, too.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I highly recommend No Comfort Zone for both those learning to live with PTSD and those of us who provide them treatment. It weaves educational threads with personal stories in such a way that you won't be able to stop reading. --Amy Connell, M.D.

Marla Handy, Ph.D., has over 25 years of experience consulting with nonprofit and community organizations in the areas of strategic planning, governance and managerial development, and has worked domestically and in South America, Africa, Asia, the South Pacific, Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. She has retired from teaching at a large university.

One reviewer wrote (paraphrasing), ". . . buy multiples of this book and give it to everyone you wish could better understand your behavior and feelings." I'm a survivor of nine years of father/daughter incest, and no one with a similar background has told me about it, leaving me feeling extreme loneliness. My husband read it immediately, and came to me with tears in his eyes, saying there was so much in the book he recognized. He was finally able to better understand what my life is like every day. And so I say, if you've suffered childhood sexual abuse or trauma of any kind, please get this book and pass it around. It honestly does help. And it feels like more than understanding - it feels like validation. A rare and very good feeling.

This review is for *No Comfort Zone: Notes on living with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder* by Marla Handy. I've had the idea "There is no safe place," and was continuing my search to understand my own PTSD when I purchased this book. It's a fast read, and could easily be my own story with some changes here and there. It is written plainly and from the heart. The figures of speech used I found 'comforting,' in that I could understand myself better. I also have been able to 'translate' the author's reactions to ones that I have, and in turn try to explain to my loved ones why I "freak out" over "simple" things. There is a treasure trove of material in this book that is easy to take in, easy to relate to, and even somewhat comforting. This book is great for someone who has PTSD or loves someone with it, particularly when the PTSD is non-combat related. There are too few books on other traumatic events causing PTSD, and this open sharing doesn't direct the reader on what to do or think-- it's just the sharing of the author's personal story, given in glimpses and peeks, not unlike what it's like in re-experiencing traumatic memories. I highly recommend this to anyone who has suffered from abuse in any form (but know that the book may be "triggering") and who still can't put "THOSE" memories behind. I also recommend loved ones to read this, to help in understanding a person who has been through trauma and/or has PTSD as a result. The author has succeeded in sharing as if in conversation, not preachy or demanding or overly technical; she shares what your loved one may not be able to convey about what's going on inside one's mind and heart. UPDATE: 29 Feb 2016 I still love this book and this is my top recommended non-fiction book. I lent mine to my husband, and he loved it, too! It also helped him, not in just understanding my quirks, but his own to, and his own PTSD diagnosis (3 combat zones, yet not combat-related PTSD; how's that for "crazy?"). I bought copies for each of my teens to read, so they can understand a little better when I over-react to something. I bought one as a "lender" copy, and one "just in case or gift." The first person I lent the book to got a lot out of it, but needed more time to plunge the depths that it brought

out in her own life-- I told her to keep it, because I had purchased another copy "just in case." :-))As you can see by my original review, this was one of the first, first-person accounts of living with PTSD that wasn't related to combat. As such, I still hold it in high regard, and believe it was just the start for the many people--like me-- who needed to make some sense of our "quirks" and ways of explaining to our loved ones "what is happening in our head," because they cannot see what we are living. I have re-read parts of the books, parts I highlighted or made notations, and this book--though it seems that it'd be the exact opposite-- still gives me comfort. If such a highly intelligent and educated person can be crying in the corner of the closet, then I'm not alone and I'm not a failure. I just have this thing that is a huge part of me. Maybe one day, it will be easier for me to carry. Until then, I will recommend this book to those who want to better understand what living with PTSD is like.

I'm part of online support groups for PTSD but nothing I have experienced with those groups can compare to the way I felt after I read Marla's book. For the first time in my entire life I felt like I knew someone who understood me. I felt like she was a secret family member who I didn't even know I had. The overwhelming connection I felt just by knowing that someone else lives this life made me feel less alone and more understood. I only wish that everyone could be on that same level of understanding. I sat down the night I received the book to read just a chapter or two before bed time. I did not move from the couch that night until every page in the book had been read. If you have PTSD, this book will make you feel less alone. If you have a loved one with PTSD, this book will help you understand some of what goes through our head on a daily basis and hopefully help you come to a better understanding and patience with us. Thank you Marla, for making me feel like I had a loved one who knew all the "inside jokes" and daily struggles I go through. You brought me peace and motivation.

People with PTSD are everywhere. I think many of us might suspect this in an ever-so-subtle way that manifests as a certain anxiety from people we know, work with and casually meet. It's sad, but it's true and very important that we don't ignore it. Thank goodness for Handy's book, No Comfort Zone - a very accessible volume that allows us to understand PTSD so we can meet people where they are and accept what might be needed for them to live with us more openly, and hopefully a little more comfortably. This book has the potential to insert compassion and healing into our communities. I would encourage it's circulation into book clubs, discussion groups - even high school required reading.

As a trauma survivor, this spoke to every nook and cranny of my mind, heart and soul. I passed it on to loved ones so they could better understand where I'm at in my healing process and it has helped open the door to open, honest, healthy conversations.

I had to read this book for my assessment and diagnosis class. I am so happy I chose this book. It's an easy read. I finished reading this book in a few hours. The author was straight and to the point. It was well written and told the story nicely of her life with chronic PTSD. This is a must read.

The author did an extraordinary job explaining the experience in its entirety. It is one of my favourite books. I appreciate her honesty. As is often thought, soldiers are not the only ones with this disorder. If you have it, you know someone who does, or you want to know what it's like to have it then this is the book for you. As someone who has PTSD, it is nice to read from someone who also has it. This book is very helpful. I highly recommend it.

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