

Marmalade Jam

written by

Darleen Claire Wodzinski

cover illustration

Nicholas Bono

interior illustrations

Kara Hayden



**A Therapeutic
Children's Story ...
that can also help heal the hearts
of adults who experienced
childhood trauma/loss**

Here's what people are saying about *Marmalade Jam*

This sweet and simple tale is a profound story of healing, one that contains deep wisdom about how to help traumatized children. Many children struggling with attachment trauma, food issues and fears about trusting their caregivers would find this book comforting, encouraging and hopeful. Darleen Wodzinski's skills as a parent and practitioner shine through in this book, demonstrating her expertise in helping children find their way back to life and love. It would also be a great resource of adult caregivers who have a wounded child inside.

I can imagine adults doing just this while reading it aloud to the children for whom they care.

Janae B. Weinhold, Ph.D. Licensed Professional Counselor
Author of *Healing Developmental Trauma & Developmental Trauma:
The Game Changer in the Mental Health Profession*

A beautiful, healing story for young children who have suffered abuse and violence, and for the wounded child in all of us. Darleen Claire Wodzinski demonstrates her knowledge of cutting edge neuroscience and the brain's awesome ability to transform traumatic memories, and associated behaviors, into a narrative of courageous survival. She then sprinkles in a huge dose of heart-centered modalities and deep understanding and compassion for a child's hurt and fear. The book also encompasses the vital role of the nurturing caretaker who patiently helps the child learn to trust again. Through the step by step process of introducing new, pleasurable experiences and tastes to the once feared strawberry jam, the child is now able to begin to see the world as a potentially safe place with adults who can be depended on. A therapist reading the book with a child, can gently bypass the natural resistance to talking about the trauma, and help the child open up in a non-threatening manner to share his/ her own experience.

I hope this author continues to write a series of books for children who have experienced abuse, neglect and violence, as she successfully combines her knowledge with her loving heart.

Yael Layish, LCSW, ACSW
Child, Adolescent and Adult Trauma Survivors Therapist

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Foreword



by
Dr. Kathy A. Thomas

Darleen Claire Wodzinski's first children's book, *Marmalade Jam*, presents a very creative and unique introduction for adults, educators, and mental health professionals to demonstrate the healing of children who experience violence. Like marmalade jam, a child's brain is malleable and “gooey”. As such, traumatic events can leave a massive imprint on the brain – and negatively impact the child's cognitive, socioemotional, and psychological development.

The emotional harm from a negative and violent incident is “sticky” with actions and reactions that spread over a large area just like a spilled jar of jam. No matter how hard you try to clean up the mess, new sticky places emerge. In the same way, the harmful implications of trauma and abuse are often multiplicative, triggering a wide spectrum of maladaptive responses in vulnerable children. Yet children are often reluctant to discuss or even think about such traumatic experiences, which interferes in the healing process.

Bibliotherapy is an effective tool that allows children to engage in themes of childhood trauma in small bites through reading. *Marmalade Jam* gives helping adults the opportunity to talk about important steps toward healing and recovery while demonstrating the scope and depth of such a journey toward wholeness.

Just like a newly made jar of marmalade must sit and cool in order to “set up”, the negative consequences of violent exposure can “set up” a series of dysfunctional thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that are more difficult to resolve. Parents, educators, and helping professionals must engage the child in early intervention to address the components of the violence-induced maladaptive responses to clear the way for healthy learning, growth, and development of the child.

If left to cool before tightening the lid, an unsealed marmalade jar will allow mold to grow because a vacuum seal never sets. Darleen Claire Wodzinski demonstrates how to nurture a bonding relationship with children of trauma/abuse/neglect/loss, sealing the child's marmalade jar with love, compassion, and healing that is sweet, tender, and a gelled but flexible consistency.

From a technical perspective, *Marmalade Jam* demonstrates the gentle and subtle ways that caregivers can begin to resolve issues like food insecurity, anxiety, attachment disorder, and developmental trauma. The story teaches about the levels of patience and compassion that are required to move a child through a mucky morass of trauma and back toward a sweeter reality.

Adults can read this story with children, stopping along the way to help the child reflect on personal perspectives and experiences. The coloring pages that are available with *Marmalade Jam* will allow children to engage creative aspects of the mind as they explore how the fluffy bunny Juno's experiences parallel their own in some way.

Each time a child works through all or part of this story, they have the opportunity to clean up another bit of sticky mess left behind in their hearts and minds from messy experiences with trauma, abuse, neglect, or loss.

For the love of a child, please read this book. And remember to spread the word ... I mean spread the *Marmalade Jam*!

- Dr. Kathy

Introduction

by the author

Darleen Claire Wodzinski



Marmalade Jam is a fairy tale version of a true story of healing and recovery from trauma, abuse, and neglect along with food insecurity during very early childhood. This therapeutic story served as a healing tool for the real child who inspired the book ... and continues to serve as a healing tool for others. Parents, mental health professionals, and educators can read this lovely story to children who suffered from trauma, abuse or neglect early in life. Meanwhile, adults with similar childhood experiences can read the story aloud to their children – or even to themselves – to share in the magic of healing through fairy tale and imagination.

The magic of therapeutic books stems from complex brain-based tendencies of the human mind. Children who have suffered abuse may stringently resist talking about their own pain and suffering, but become engrossed and mystified by the story of a character like Juno the Fluffy Bunny. As children of trauma, abuse, or neglect begin to talk about Juno's experience in the story, they often easily transition to comparing their own experience with the character's.

The story teaches the long and slow process of recovery. Juno's caregivers demonstrate the logical and purposeful process of moving a victim slowly away from the triggers and memories that can instigate emotional suffering and potential PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder). Little by little, Juno shows how the tiny and slow steps from honey to apple butter to preserves helped him heal from the traumatic strawberry jam incident of his early years.

The book further demonstrates how to help a child gently review traumatic events of the past, bringing them into a new positive light. Juno comes to realize how very special his life is in the loving house. The little bunny remembers and accepts the tragic circumstances of his early life, and embraces the new loving family in which he is so joyfully entrenched. His realization that marmalade is just another word for jam is a truly magical healing moment in his fluffy bunny life.

Another amazing benefit of therapeutic books is related to the mind's willingness to embrace fairy tales. Individuals – children and adults – who are in recovery from some form of trauma or abuse can create stories in the imagination that the brain will accept as an alternate truth. The individual may cognitively recognize that the fairy tale is not the truth, but will still gladly fall back on memories of the story with a happy ending when being reminded of upsetting situations. In this way, individuals in recovery can begin to heal from the constant replaying of sad or painful memories, and instead remember an alternate happy ending, as depicted in the peaceful face of Juno the Fluffy Bunny as he falls off to a sweet sleep with happy dreams at the end of Marmalade Jam.

To further support healing and recovery of adults and children, Marmalade Jam has a companion coloring book. Recovery is further supported through creative activity with these black and white images, lovingly sketched by illustrator Kara Hayden. Children can color the characters, cut them out and paste them to popsicle sticks to use as puppets, or come up with their own creative use of the images.

To each seeker of healing and restoration – whether for the sake of a child or the self – I wish boundless love, self-compassion, and mystical restoration from suffering. No matter what happened in the past, the human condition can always embrace a loving and hopeful future.

With love and compassion,

Darleen Claire Wodzinski



Darleen Claire Wodzinski, MS ESE, MA CMHA, QPPE, PhD Psychology Candidate is the founder of Orchard Human Services, Inc., a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that

Uplifts Lives by Counseling, Educating and Caring.

She specializes in promoting healing, growth, and development for individuals who experienced a disruption or interruption of attachment development. A national presenter, Clinical Mental Health Counselor, Exceptional (Special) Educator, and Parent and Teacher Trainer, her work represents a unique blending of the areas of psychology, brain-based learning, and human development.

Available for live and web-based speaking and training, she can be reached by email at D@OrchardHumanServices.org or through the website www.OrchardHumanServices.org

Marmalade Jam

Mornings were a happy time for Juno the Fluffy Bunny, especially when it came to breakfast!

One of Juno's favorite things about breakfast was orange marmalade on whole wheat waffles. Juno often wondered how orange marmalade could make his tummy and his heart feel so happy.

One morning, Juno asked grandma bunny about it.
"Grandma, why do I love marmalade so?"

Grandma thought for a moment and then asked,
Juno, dear, do you remember why Grandpa and I started putting marmalade on your waffles?"

Juno tilted his head and answered,
"No, Grandma, I do not remember.
Can you tell me please?"



Juno tilted his head and answered, "No, Grandma, I do not remember. Can you tell me please?"

At that, Grandma leaned back in her rocking chair and slapped the seat next to her. "Here, Juno, you had better climb up in the rocking chair with me. This is an important story."

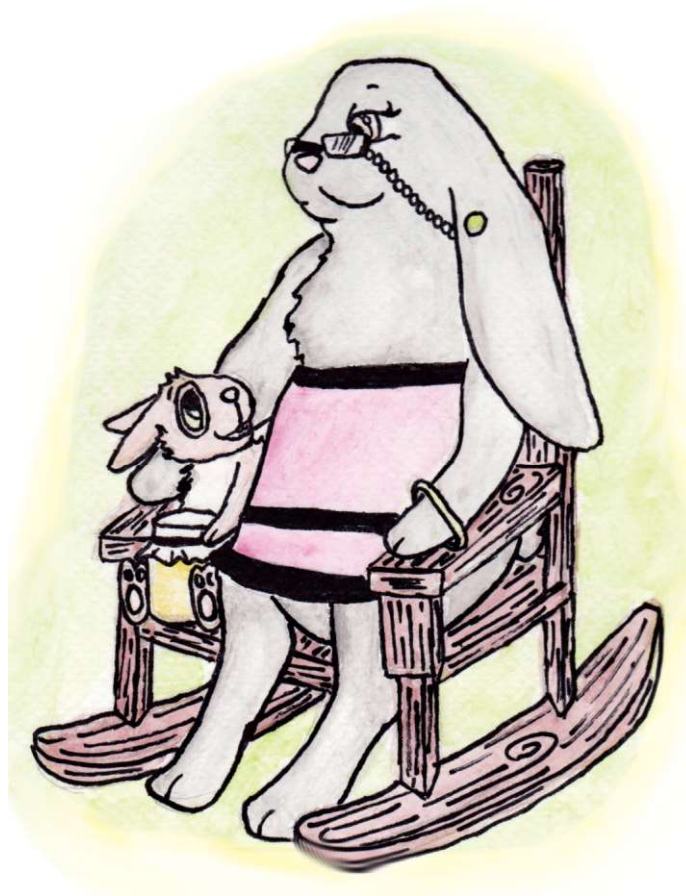


Juno climbed into that safe and lovely place next to Grandma, eager to hear the story about how he came to love marmalade so very much.

Grandma spoke very slowly and carefully, asking Juno, "Juno, my love, do you remember a time when someone very angry smashed a jar of strawberry jam ... and it scared you?"

Juno thought very carefully with his head still tilted to one side so his brain could work harder. "Hmm, it sounds sort of familiar, Grandma. Please tell me more ... "

“Well, Juno, when you were a wee little fluffy bunny, you used to live with a bunny family who did not take very good care of you. They were often angry and did not treat you kindly.





The end of this story ...

and the beginning of the next ...

Please Look For These Other Titles

Juno's Butter Knife

Book 2 of Marmalade Jam Series

by Darleen Claire Wodzinski

Developmental Justice

by Darleen Claire Wodzinski & Kathy A. Thomas

Dead Children Can't Read: Classrooms of Compassion

by Darleen Claire Wodzinski

Raising Social Children

by Darleen Claire Wodzinski

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