

Journeying Home by Fiona Gardner (Darton Longman & Todd, 2004, 0-232-52524-2), x + 166pp.; £9.95.

Reviewed by the Revd Neil Broadbent of the *Sozein* Trust and a Council member of CFPSS.

Psychotherapist Fiona Gardner has given us a delightful exposition of psychological and spiritual recovery from childhood traumas.

The Introduction and chapter 1 'Making sense of our past' remind us of St Bernard of Clairvaux's four stages of loving, tell us of the author George Orwell's beatings at boarding school, and introduce us to the fictional Alan and Kirsty. Throughout the book, four stories from Scripture are used: the betrayal by St Peter and his forgiveness, the oppression and exodus from Egypt, the exile and return from Babylon and the account in Luke 15 traditionally called the Prodigal son. Chapters 2 and 3 relate the movement from feeling ashamed and guilty to acceptance and forgiveness. We discern that within the stuck, besieged state of self-hate lie seeds for change and movement towards love.

Chapter 4 looks at the state of oppression caused by abuse of various forms at an age when it is not possible to deal rationally with such nightmares. Overwhelmingly strong feelings imprison the psyche and damage one's ability to relate freely and spontaneously. The need for an Other to stand alongside us in our pain to model for us a healthier way of looking at the one who caused us so much distress is the subject of chapter 5, 'Freedom to think'.

The story of exile from our true self and the journey home to residence within divine love require something more than finding one's own way of expression. Belief in a higher, benevolent power frees us from the tyranny of self and opens us to contemplation of the present moment.

This is a lucid account of the stages of movement from personal rejection to taking one's due place in the Divine economy. Psychoanalytical healing through re-thinking and spiritual growth through forgiveness and learning to love are both displayed in painstaking care. All involved in pastoral care and spiritual growth owe a great debt of gratitude to this skilled guide to *Journeying Home*.