(adapted 04/28/21 from the 2021 book Children Of Pain by Robert Ben Mitchell, pages 80-86)

Mosaic Patterning is a Step Three exercise. Remembering past abuse is one of the hardest things a survivor can do because no one wants you to remember. When the abuse finally ends, we may look intact outside, but inside we have never-ending hurricanes, tornadoes and earthquakes. We are broken and shattered, left with many unrecognizable pieces, while other parts are completely missing. Unfortunately, there is no pill or magic wand that can remove the abuse from our past and instantly make us whole, again. So, putting our parts and pieces back together is difficult and can seem impossible. Some memories won't fit with others or may even contradict each other, and there may be large gaps where nothing fits at all.

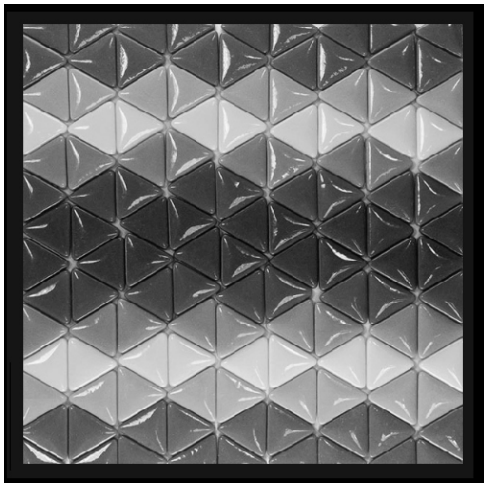
One way to address this problem is through *Mosaic Patterning*, a process that can be repeatedly practiced over weeks, months, years, or even a lifetime. It can be done continually for long periods or for just a short time, then set aside and returned to later. The goal of *Mosaic Patterning* is to explore ways of putting your pieces back together, again, the best way you can so as to explain the most you can about your past abuse. It's a process of connecting the dots to form the most consistent picture possible of what happened to you in a way that feels truest to you.

When we first went through our abuse, we were ill prepared to deal with any of it. Beyond overwhelming, it contorted and distorted our worlds into dimensions we never dreamed could exist. So, just like when we move to a new home and leave behind the things we don't need, our little minds moved on and left behind the things it did not want. All those terrifying moments of madness simply disappeared by waving the magic wand of repression. Don't like remembering mommy constantly yelling and hitting you? Repress it! Don't want to think about what daddy did in your bedroom at night? Repress it! Having a hard time admitting you were given neglect instead of love? Repress it! Repress it! Repress it!

But repressing something - the act of partially or completely blocking our ability to recall - is not the same as solving or resolving something. In other words, just cause it's gone from you conscious memory does not mean that it's really gone. It has just been pushed down into an even bigger playground: your sub-conscious. Unlike the conscious which has boundaries and limits, the sub-conscious is boundless with infinite dimensions and time. Unlike the conscious which migrates towards pleasure and retreats from pain, the sub-conscious entertains, and even magnifies, all emotions from the most sublime to the most sinister. And unlike the conscious which is only active while we're awake, the sub-conscious is full on, 24/7/365, ready and waiting to take over, to take charge, and more than happy to empower our repression.

Due to repression that occurs during child abuse, survivors' memories, like mosaics, are made up of many pieces, and, when we start our recovery process, they can seem like a jumbled pile that doesn't make any sense:

Many of these pieces are unhappy. Many of these pieces are painful. Many of these pieces are overwhelming. Many of them are terrifying, and some of them are even suffocating. But, none of these pieces are lies. They are just the repressed memories of our past: what remains from our childhood of pain. Yet, over time, with practice, we can begin to put these pieces together in ways that speak to us, make sense, and help to explain who we are:



Mosaic Patterning can help you to complete incomplete memories, to rediscover those which were repressed, and to create an un-obscured picture of what you endured. And with each new piece that you find, you will create a stronger resonance, a more complete picture, and a fuller truth. It goes like this:

1. Settle into a quite space where you can comfortably sit or lay down.

2. Take a few minutes to center yourself and your breathing.

3. Create a blank wall in your mind.

4. Consider the pieces your have: memories, feelings, impressions, faint stirrings, or even questions. Remember, begin with whatever you have.

5. Focus on those pieces which elicit the strongest emotions from you. Even though these feelings will likely be unpleasant or even painful, these are your key pieces. In the beginning, you may only have a few of them, but as time goes on you will find more.

6. Now place your key pieces on your wall, and then arrange them in four different ways:

    - first by **TIME** - place them along a timeline that makes sense to you.

    - next by **PLACE** - group pieces together that occurred in the same place.

    - then by **PERSON** - group pieces together that involved the same person or persons.

    - finally by **THINGS** - group pieces together that involved the same acts or objects.

7. Carefully look at all four patterns - time, place, person and things - to see if:

    - they invite you place more pieces on your wall, the ones that were not initially key pieces, so as to create a fuller picture of what happened...

    - or they clarify pieces that currently seem vague or incomplete, like the questions, stirrings, impressions and feelings that don't yet seem to fit into your mosaic...

    - or they reveal gaps which suggest what might be missing, so as to identify some of the memories that are still repressed in your subconscious.

8. Continue working with these patterns to find your missing pieces and bring clarity to others so as to create a fuller mosaic of your past. And as you work, remember, you are your own best advocate, so *be guided by what feels truest to you!*