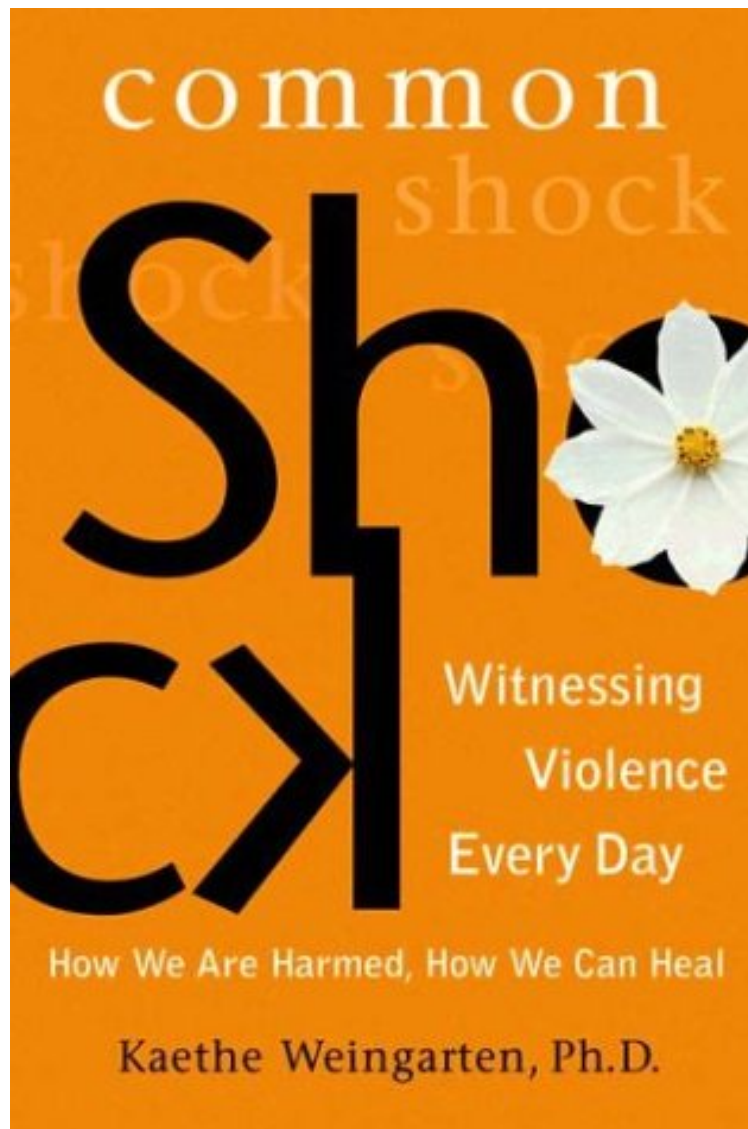


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## Common Shock: Witnessing Violence Every Day--How We Are Harmed, How We Can Heal

*Kaethe Weingarten*

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**Kaethe Weingarten : Common Shock: Witnessing Violence Every Day--How We Are Harmed, How We Can Heal** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Common Shock: Witnessing Violence Every Day--How We Are Harmed, How We Can Heal:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent!By Connie ChapmanI'm a resiliency coach and I enjoy the research and perspective she's put into this book.9 of 10 people found the following review helpful. A powerful resource for healing connectionsBy W. A. ZeckhausenHaving heard a moving interview with Diane Rehn of NPR, I bought Dr. Weingarten's book. The book lived up to and beyond my expectations. Ditto to the 2 reviews above. I'm a pastoral psychotherapist, and bought it to help me in my work. It's also helped me personally and I've recommended it to clients, patients, relatives and friends. Besides addressing everyday violence, it addresses the "shock" of chronic illness, and dying... and the potential harmful effect of not communicating in these crises, as well as insight and practical examples modeling ways to do so. There is so much sensitivity and insight in its pages, that I look forward to reading it again.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four StarsBy Annapurna McQueenmost people could benefit from this book just in terms of violence and its effect.

A ground-breaking work from a renowned trauma expert reveals a problem that profoundly affects us all - and shows what we can do about it. Every single day, whether we realize it or not, we witness and are affected by violence - often with serious, long-term consequences. At times the violence is extraordinary, impossible to neglect: the terrorist attacks of 9/11 make us anxious - even panicky - unable to sleep. More often the violence is mundane: the customer ahead of us in the cafeteria line berates the cashier and we feel inexplicably edgy for hours. Most of the time we don't even notice: our 12-year-old watches a murder on television (one of the more than 100,000 acts of TV violence he has seen by that age) and zones out. In her revolutionary new book, *Common Shock*, Harvard Medical School psychologist Kaethe Weingarten, Ph.D., defines a problem that up until now had no name. Drawing on the latest scientific research and her years of clinical and community experience, Kaethe Weingarten describes common shock -- the biological and psychological responses that are triggered when we witness violence. It is common, because it happens all the time, to everyone in any community. It is a shock, because whether our response is spaciness, distress, or bravado, it affects our mind, body and spirit. Addressing the full range of violence we all experience, Dr. Weingarten then offers us tools to take effective action, including: \* How to manage the physical symptoms of common shock \* How to cope with the suffering of those who are ill or dying \* How parents can help children who witness violence \* How ordinary citizens can make a difference Practical, hopeful, and inspirational, this breakthrough guide lets us discover what we can do in our homes and neighborhoods to transform common shock into a compassionate prescription for healing ourselves, our families, our communities, and the world.

From Publishers WeeklyWeingarten defines "common shock" as the biological and physiological feeling that "is triggered by our being witness to an event or an interaction that we appraise as disturbing," which can range from watching a parent hit a child to watching a television news report about a terrorist bombing. She argues that this kind of common shock is an experience that can have "chronic debilitating effects," but that "few people know how to deal with it themselves or, crucially, help children do so." Drawing upon recent research as well as her work as part of the Witnessing Project (which helps individuals, families and communities deal with violence), Weingarten details typical interpersonal consequences of common shock, such as being driven into silence and losing trust in people. Her primary solution to common shock is encouraging people to act "as compassionate witnesses to others," as a way of helping others regain a "sense of safety" and community, and she states that research suggests that "small compassionate actions performed routinely could have a major impact." Weingarten may overexplain what seems to be a fairly straightforward idea, but she provides a beneficial service by responding to what is clearly a current social problem; the two appendices provide direct and useful recommendations for how to help others deal with the shock triggered by disturbing everyday events. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.From BooklistHarvard professor Weingarten explores how witnesses are affected by violence--from the trauma of September 11 to international battlefields to the everyday aggression of families and communities. Common shock, defined by Weingarten as shock that is widespread, collective, and shared by all of us, is far more prevalent than we think. Drawing on 30 years of clinical experience, Weingarten begins by examining the kinds of everyday shocks and traumas from the gratuitous violence found in entertainment and everyday life and our need for awareness of what is happening to us as witnesses. She details the biological and psychological effects of witnessing violence, including numbness and anger, memory loss, sadness, and shame. She then explores how we pass along the aftereffects of shock in societal consequences beyond posttraumatic stress disorders. Finally, Weingarten offers advice on how we can convert ourselves, both individually and as a society, from passive witnesses to violence to "compassionate witnessing" that offers the prospect of healing. This is a thoughtful look at the impact of violence on us all. Vanessa BushCopyright American Library Association. All rights reservedAbout the Author: Kaethe Weingarten, Ph.D., associate clinical professor in Harvard University's Department of Psychiatry, has been on the faculty of the Harvard Medical School since 1979. Dr. Weingarten also teaches at the Family Institute of Cambridge and has taught across the United States and in Africa, Australia, Canada, Europe, and New Zealand.