Beth Thomas was adopted at nineteen months old to two loving parents, Tim and Julie Thomas. It was not long after the adoption of Beth and her younger brother John was finalized that they begin to see that Beth was having issues from killing baby birds and stabbing the family dog with a needle to physically abusing her younger brother in the night while her parents were sleeping. Beth would go into rages of destroying her room and belonging to – in Beth’s words – “kill” her brother, even admitting she wanted to stab her entire family as they slept. It got to the point of where Beth’s family was terrified of the, then, six year old Beth. After a several attempts the Thomas’ was able to gain more information on Beth and John’s life before being removed from their father’s care. Sources revealed that Beth and John would go hungry for days, John was found lying in a crib with a dry bottle, he had been laying in the bed for so long that his head had become flat in the back. Beth was the victim of sexual abuse by her father, although to young to remember everything she would still have nightmares from the abuse in the middle of the night. This abuse suffered in the first year or year and a half of Beth’s life had traumatized Beth severely and caused her to develop reactive attachment disorder or “RAD”. As a result Beth never was able to learn to establish bonds with or to trust people around her, she never felt safe or that her needs would be meet because the one place that a Beth should have been safe as an infant was a place of mistreatment and horror. After years of attachment therapy Beth finally found a way of learning to trust and bond with people and pets, however it was not easy for neither Beth nor those surrounding her, Beth is healing but will never be able to complete leave her past behind her without the memories.

Source: Child of Rage Documentary, 1990
Angela Goodwin-Slater is a child abuse survivor but unlike Beth’s story Angela’s nightmare was her mother. Angela’s mother would occasionally spank her children and would lose control but most always her mother was verbally abusive and would often call her children names and swear words to put them down when she was anger with them. Many people see abuse as physical and sexual but there is verbal abuse, when someone deliberately puts another person down by purposely emotionally harming someone as a form of punishment or to make them feel bad about themselves. Angela’s mother was not always mean to her children and trying to upset them, Angela felt that she had a good mom; she would work hard to provide for her and her siblings and even take them on vacations. Although Angela loved her mother and her mother would only scream and call her names when she was angry most of Angela’s memories as a child are not of the fun vacations and mall trips but instead of her “loud and angry household”. The pain that Angela’s mother was directing towards her, although not physical, was enough to send Angela down a negative spiral towards drugs and alcohol to try to cover up the pain she was feeling. Angela began seeing a therapist in her early twenty’s to get help, now twenty-five years after beginning therapy she is a mother who works hard to build her children’s self-esteem instead of tearing it down. Everyday Angela still faces struggles with her self-worth and is still working with a therapist and is also relying on anti-depressants because of the abuse suffered many years ago.

Source: American Psychological Association