

# BOOKS: A SMALL BOY SMILING



Local author **Matt Carey** takes us on a remarkable, courageous journey of healing from the trauma of child sexual abuse through alcoholism and into recovery with a spiritual awakening.

It is only in recent years, since moving to Hampstead, that I have been able to write in detail about what happened.

It was during this process that I knew instinctively that I needed to place the trauma of the abuse into a broader, healthier perspective.

I started writing notes in various cafes in the area, and these notes gradually evolved into what has since become a memoir; *A Small Boy Smiling*.

My life has been one of extremes, since suffering the horrific trauma of being regularly sexually abused from the age of eight years old in public toilets, and leading on to teenage alcoholism, 'sexual anorexia' and living with complex post-traumatic stress disorder.

And now? I have been blessed with over 25 years of recovery from addiction, a successful, fulfilling career in theatre and, for the most part, a sense of peace and purpose in my life.

Far beyond the material success I have achieved, the most important realisation is that I know I am being intuitively guided on a journey of spiritual awakening which is hugely rewarding and profoundly healing.

I have become aware of a beautiful presence deep within me, which is a source of immense strength and love. It has been a long, tough journey to get here...

As soon as the abuse had finished, I buried the horrific memories so deep inside of me I could barely remember anything – until, aged 12, my reaching puberty triggered off savage memory flashbacks to the abuse. I immediately became aware of a deep, visceral feeling of horror inside of me, which was so overwhelming it was soon crippling my life.

I felt dirty, ashamed and disgusted with myself but didn't have enough visual memory to understand exactly why.

I had my first drink of alcohol when I was 8 years old and I loved it. Whilst I hated the taste, the effect throughout my body was sensational. It felt like a chemical reaction was surging through me, and I felt *alive* in a way that I never had before.

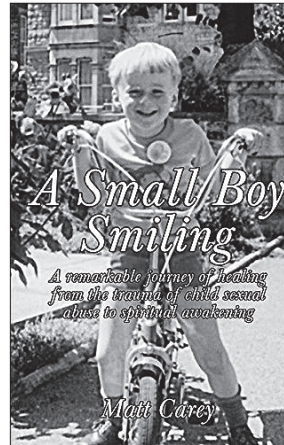
These feelings of euphoria didn't last and by my late teens I was a desperate alcoholic. Getting drunk was the only way to drown the horrific feelings and savage, obsessive thoughts, and I would do anything to get hold of enough alcohol to reach the oblivion I now craved.

I started getting the delirium tremens (DTs) most nights which brought on horrendous palpitations. I hit rock bottom aged 20 and, with much fear and trepidation, attended *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

AA has since become my spiritual foundation and created the opportunity to explore a variety of healing pathways which have included conventional trauma therapies for PTSD in the UK; to Spain where I enjoyed an exhilarating month long pilgrimage along the 500-mile Camino to Santiago de Compostela; to Brazil where I experienced profound healing on a meditation

retreat; and on numerous visits to India where I studied spiritual philosophy, meditated in ashrams, and trekked the Himalayas.

Writing the book has been profoundly healing for me. I do hope my story might offer some hope and encouragement to fellow survivors on their healing journey.

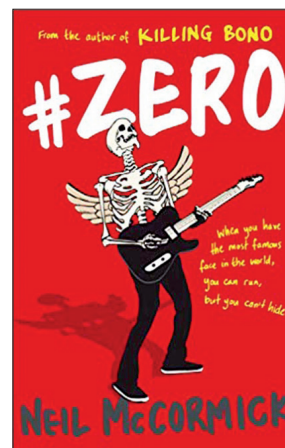


**A SMALL BOY SMILING**  
**Matt Carey Books.**  
**Kindle £3.99 Amazon**  
**£10.99**

A testament of survival against the odds. His courage and humility is a lesson to us all.

A beautifully written, compelling and mesmerising story of triumph over evil and the strength of the human spirit. I couldn't put it down.

- Maddie Kitchen.



**#ZERO**  
**Neil McCormick**  
**Unbound**  
**£8.99 West End Lane Books,**  
**Waterstones, Amazon.**

Neil McCormick's free flowing novel is a joy, but you had better enjoy some sex, drugs, rock'n'roll and in-context political incorrectness with your holiday read.

'I asked Beasley once why we'd hired a Hindu homo from Hoxton and he said it was

because I kept screwing all my female assistants and then requiring Beasley to replace them. Which was fair enough...'

Oh, and there's a lot of swearing too. Fuck me, yes, there's a fair amount of it. But what do expect when you're on a PR-media tour with a narcissistic, coked-up mega-pop-star and his entourage.

Of course McCormick should know – as the *Daily Telegraph's* chief music critic, he's rolled with probably every rock'n'roller on the planet. Big ones. The biggest.

Needless to say the *Telegraph* gave the novel a glowing review, and why not? It's a jolly entertaining read. Belly laughs and squirms galore.

A rock'n'roll rollercoaster of a read. Not for the faint hearted. Mary Whitehouse will certainly be rolling in her grave. *See also: Neil McCormick on page 7.*

- Emmanuel Goldstein