This chat transcript is part of a case study that is a fictional composite for illustration purposes. This transcript is excerpted from:


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[12:30:00 PM] Clara says: Hi Mary

[12:30:16 PM] Mary Flynn says: Hi Clara - thanks for agreeing to meet up again

[12:30:25 PM] Mary Flynn says: really sorry abt yesterday

[12:30:50 PM] Clara says: That is fine - it happens with technology! I am glad we were able to reschedule for today.

[12:31:14 PM] Mary Flynn says: good - i think I said Jen downloaded the virus from facebook?

[12:31:23 PM] Mary Flynn says: THAT was a learning curve for us all

[12:31:40 PM] Clara says: Yes- I hope you have resolved that issue. And with that, the technology glitch and your concern about the security of email, I just want to assure you that because we use encrypted email, your communications are as secure as when you purchase something at a website and use a credit card.

[12:31:45 PM] Clara says: Does that make sense?

[12:31:55 PM] Clara says: I also hear that you think chatting might be easier for some issues.

[12:32:09 PM] Mary Flynn says: yes, thanks - perfect sense I'm learning a lot doing this!

[12:32:31 PM] Mary Flynn says: I think that I've really understood yr points abt owning stuff

[12:32:47 PM] Mary Flynn says: and so being able to control it

[12:32:56 PM] Clara says: very good-

[12:33:12 PM] Clara says: How do you think communication is going with your daughter?

[12:33:37 PM] Mary Flynn says: i think we're fine - with the virus happening in particular we had another chance to talk about safety

[12:33:39 PM] Mary Flynn says: online i mena

[12:33:41 PM] Mary Flynn says: mean
[12:34:20 PM] Mary Flynn says: *i think she thinks I'm a little over-cautious but then i was able to say to her more abotu safety and stuff overall*

[12:36:43 PM] Clara says: *well if you can communicate about her online life in a way that appears that you are interested instead of a prying mom, that will be helpful.*

[12:36:50 PM] Mary Flynn says: *yeah that seems to work*

[12:37:01 PM] Clara says: *She will give you some information and she will decide what mom does not need to know.*

[12:37:26 PM] Clara says: *But it is also a way to indicate to her that you 1. care and 2. pay attention*

[12:37:32 PM] Clara says: *I know- but you are doing what you need to do.*

[12:37:48 PM] Mary Flynn says: *i still worry abt her*

[12:37:53 PM] Mary Flynn says: *but i think we reached a point where she can keep herself safe*

[12:37:54 PM] Clara says: *or as safe as possible anyway*

[12:38:06 PM] Clara says: *You are laying a foundation for her and teaching her responsibility.*

[12:38:53 PM] Clara says: *So Mary, you said you wanted to chat because you thought it might be easier to tell me about your assault.*

[12:39:03 PM] Clara says: *(now you are doing it for yourself!)*


[12:39:20 PM] Mary Flynn says: *bit scary*

[12:39:27 PM] Mary Flynn says: *but built meself up for it today*

[12:39:34 PM] Clara says: *What can we do here to make it safe for you to talk about it?*

[12:39:39 PM] Mary Flynn says: *and the others know to leave me alone for the next hour*

[12:39:47 PM] Mary Flynn says: *it's nice to talk to you live!*

[12:39:49 PM] Clara says: *good so you are in a quiet place*

[12:39:52 PM] Mary Flynn says: *yeah*
[12:40:30 PM] Clara says: Mary - do not feel compelled to tell details. My concern is that details can retraumatize you.

[12:40:50 PM] Clara says: So tell me generally what happened, be aware of your feelings while you tell and know that I am here

[12:40:57 PM] Mary Flynn says: i dont think i could be retraumatised... i feel like i've been traumatised for ever

[12:41:02 PM] Clara says: you can chunk the information in short bits if that helps

[12:41:05 PM] Mary Flynn says: but i want to get rid of that now

[12:41:10 PM] Mary Flynn says: no I’m ok

[12:41:12 PM] Clara says: ok

[12:41:35 PM] Mary Flynn says: tehre was this bloke who used to hang around the school

[12:41:42 PM] Mary Flynn says: we all talked to him

[12:41:52 PM] Mary Flynn says: seems odd now but in those days it was different

[12:42:12 PM] Clara says: yes

[12:42:16 PM] Mary Flynn says: but everyone talked to him - bioys and girls and even the teachers sometimes

[12:42:28 PM] Mary Flynn says: i think we all thought he was fine cos everyone talked to him

[12:42:36 PM] Mary Flynn says: can u imagine that happening now?

[12:42:53 PM] Mary Flynn says: Jen practiccally has to show her pasport to get into classs lol

[12:43:16 PM] Clara says: It is good we have better boundaries around schools now for sure!

[12:43:22 PM] Mary Flynn says: yes - that’s reassuring

[12:43:55 PM] Mary Flynn says: so i'd been chatting to him over a while and he just was walking with me away from the school

[12:44:16 PM] Mary Flynn says: my friends (didnt have that many) walked a different way home

[12:44:24 PM] Mary Flynn says: and i was glad of the company now i think abt it

[12:45:00 PM] Mary Flynn says: and we sort of tookt he shortcut past some woods

[12:45:10 PM] Mary Flynn says: well not really woods - more of a pond and copse

[12:45:29 PM] Mary Flynn says: and he just suddenly grabbed me

[12:45:49 PM] Clara says: that must have been startling!

[12:45:59 PM] Mary Flynn says: i didnt know what was going on

[12:46:10 PM] Mary Flynn says: one min we were talking - no idea about what

[12:46:22 PM] Mary Flynn says: the next we were within the trees and i was on the ground

[12:46:56 PM] Mary Flynn says: now i think of it, i think being so suddenly startled was the most confusing thing

[12:47:11 PM] Clara says: do you remember what you felt like when you found yourself on the ground?

[12:47:34 PM] Mary Flynn says: confused and i banged my knee quite hard

[12:47:39 PM] Mary Flynn says: so that hurt

[12:47:53 PM] Mary Flynn says: i remember thinking someone had fallen on me

[12:47:54 PM] Clara says: yes I can imagine both the confusion and the pain.

[12:48:22 PM] Mary Flynn says: from the tree (that actually happened to my big sister once at the same place - lad in a tree fell out and hit her, hurt her back)

[12:48:54 PM] Mary Flynn says: so i thought that was what was going on that the hand over my face was to stop me crying out in pain

[12:49:01 PM] Mary Flynn says: god i was niave

[12:49:27 PM] Clara says: Twelve year olds should be allowed their naivety

[12:49:40 PM] Mary Flynn says: yeah but it seems so obvious now

[12:49:57 PM] Clara says: Of course because you are peering in on the experience with adult eyes

[12:50:02 PM] Mary Flynn says: i think i said in one of my emails that think the worse and that was what it was

[12:50:16 PM] Mary Flynn says: i see it now.

[12:50:23 PM] Mary Flynn says: god this is hard


[12:50:41 PM] Mary Flynn says: ok


[12:50:44 PM] Mary Flynn says: that would be good
[12:51:02 PM] Clara says: **I am sensing that you feel overwhelmed so will you let me pace this experience for you**

[12:51:07 PM] Clara says: ?

[12:51:09 PM] Mary Flynn says: **I'm going to get a glass of water i've drunk this one is that ok?**

[12:51:18 PM] Clara says: **Indeed**

[12:51:20 PM] Mary Flynn says: **brb**

[12:52:50 PM] Mary Flynn says: **k, I'm back thanks**

[12:51:53 PM] Mary Flynn says: **you can pace this better?**

[12:52:44 PM] Clara says: **well I think for this session you have given me enough of the story. And what I would like to do now is talk a bit about the feelings behind the story so far.**

[12:52:48 PM] Mary Flynn says: **ok**

[12:53:13 PM] Clara says: **Then I want to make sure you are feeling good about self before we end the session.**

[12:53:18 PM] Mary Flynn says: **ok thats fine**

[12:54:15 PM] Clara says: **So, what you have described is this: someone you trusted (doesn't matter what you know NOW as an adult- the 12 year old little girl trusted this person) caused you harm and instilled great fear in you,**

[12:54:43 PM] Clara says: **Without me knowing anymore of the story, I know that in that moment you were terrified.**

[12:54:51 PM] Mary Flynn says: **yes**

[12:55:11 PM] Clara says: **And there were more moments to come. So the experience was a series of terrifying moments**


[12:55:22 PM] Clara says: **Can I ask you a question?**


[12:56:03 PM] Clara says: **Do you feel anxious much? Or, maybe not really anxious in the purest sense of the word, but do you well, startle easily?**
[12:56:53 PM] Mary Flynn says: i feel anxious all the time but worse than that i think that the person i was before wouldnt be

[12:56:57 PM] Mary Flynn says: does that make sensse?

[12:57:04 PM] Mary Flynn says: he changed me

[12:58:07 PM] Clara says: Yes. Here's how it makes sense to me. That experience became imprinted on you- not just your memory of the event- but it became imprinted at a soul-level. Some would even say a cellular level,. 

[12:58:19 PM] Mary Flynn says: ok...

[12:58:38 PM] Clara says: It is like the fear gets trapped. And part of you grows up into the reasonable and responsible adult that you are-

[12:58:55 PM] Clara says: but that frightened 12 year old got trapped

[12:59:10 PM] Clara says: and was never able to truly escape the experience

[12:59:20 PM] Clara says: Now it is time to release her from that fear.

[12:59:31 PM] Mary Flynn says: yes i see what yr saying

[12:59:40 PM] Clara says: It is somewhat symbolic but also very real.

[12:59:47 PM] Mary Flynn says: how can i do that?

[12:59:58 PM] Clara says: It takes practice...:

[1:00:03 PM] Clara says: But-

[1:00:08 PM] Mary Flynn says: :) thot it might

[1:00:08 PM] Clara says: here is how to start.

[1:00:13 PM] Mary Flynn says: ok

[1:00:30 PM] Clara says: Be aware the next time you feel scared, fearful or anxious.

[1:00:52 PM] Clara says: Let the adult part of you do that ‘check’ - sort of like you did when you said ‘Seems so obvious now...’

[1:00:57 PM] Clara says: remember earlier in the chat?

[1:01:01 PM] Mary Flynn says: yes!

[1:01:02 PM] Mary Flynn says: oic!

[1:01:15 PM] Clara says: Look into your feelings with that rational adult part of you.
[1:01:52 PM] Clara says: If you look in and see that it is the 12 year old inside who is scared then nurture that part of you just like you would your daughter

[1:02:19 PM] Clara says: The first step is being able to recognize the feeling that is attached to the event

[1:02:24 PM] Mary Flynn says: ok

[1:02:53 PM] Clara says: Then next is being able to be the parent to yourself - the nurturing adult to yourself- who was not there to protect you then in that moment

[1:03:05 PM] Clara says: It is a way of ‘reframing’ the experience

[1:03:10 PM] Mary Flynn says: yes - when I found out Jen was talking to a stranger online I was more startled, I was like a deer in headlights

[1:03:46 PM] Clara says: ok. And part of that fear is reasonable. We have fear to alert us! But part of that fear comes from your own experience

[1:03:50 PM] Mary Flynn says: so like I do with Jen except I need to do it in reverse?

[1:03:58 PM] Mary Flynn says: no not reverse - like retrospect?

[1:04:09 PM] Clara says: It is a bit of self-talk.

[1:04:12 PM] Mary Flynn says: yes I see

[1:04:24 PM] Clara says: That can be literal or you can talk to yourself quietly.

[1:04:44 PM] Mary Flynn says: sometimes I say ‘come on Mare, get it together already’

[1:04:55 PM] Mary Flynn says: but I could be nicer than that to me I suppose

[1:04:57 PM] Clara says: But if you can imagine the little girl inside you - scared in that moment- then also imagine what you as a nurturing parent would do in response.

[1:05:04 PM] Mary Flynn says: yes!

[1:05:18 PM] Clara says: Instead say, ‘Mary, you will be ok because I am here and will keep you safe.’

[1:05:38 PM] Mary Flynn says: I like that a lot

[1:06:02 PM] Clara says: Good. I am glad that feels like a fit for you.

[1:06:16 PM] Mary Flynn says: yeah - cos I do that with Jenny so I can do it for me as well

[1:06:28 PM] Clara says: That is right!

[1:06:30 PM] Mary Flynn says: and if I can keep her safe I can certainly keep me safe

[1:06:40 PM] Mary Flynn says: I just always thought to keep her safe which is fine
[1:06:48 PM] Mary Flynn says: **but i can keep me safe as well**

[1:07:11 PM] Clara says: **And in keeping yourself safe you will have more to give to her.**

[1:07:41 PM] Clara says: **So we have covered alot of ground today. I want to make sure you are ok.**

[1:08:08 PM] Mary Flynn says: **i feel excited actually - its nice to think of it positively rather than this (that?!) big black cloud**

[1:08:41 PM] Clara says: **Sometimes when we disclose feelings about things we have never or rarely talked about it causes us to feel vulnerable.**

[1:09:00 PM] Mary Flynn says: **i feel ok - i think cos i didnt have to talk abt the detail**

[1:09:05 PM] Clara says: **So if in the next day or two you feel ‘exposed’ - like you told a secret or like it was unsafe to tell, that is normal.**

[1:09:07 PM] Mary Flynn says: **thanks for that i thot i would have to**

[1:09:27 PM] Clara says: **Mary, do you like to read?**

[1:09:32 PM] Mary Flynn says: **i have a lot to think about**

[1:09:38 PM] Mary Flynn says: **yes i do when i get the time**

[1:10:52 PM] Clara says: **Ok- I am going to make a book recommendation. Let me know how you like it. But I do caution not to read this sort of material late at night before bed.**

[1:11:00 PM] Mary Flynn says: **oh ok**

[1:11:06 PM] Mary Flynn says: **sounds like a horror movie lol**

[1:11:14 PM] Clara says: **When you read, do this when you are fresh and then take time like we did here to get centered**

[1:11:21 PM] Mary Flynn says: **ok**

[1:11:30 PM] Clara says: **No actually it is good nurturing reading but it can have a tendency to drudge up feelings.**

[1:11:41 PM] Clara says: **And I don’t want your sleep to be interrupted.**

[1:11:50 PM] Mary Flynn says: **ok - the family are getting used to giving me time when i need it now**

[1:11:59 PM] Clara says: **The feelings are good- but when they come up it can be ...startling sometimes.**

[1:12:07 PM] Mary Flynn says: **so i have a kinda space after dinner to do this sort of stuff**

[1:12:12 PM] Clara says: **So take time for yourself like we have talked about here.**
[1:12:28 PM] Mary Flynn says: **I'll be prepared for the startling**

[1:12:53 PM] Mary Flynn says: **what is the book?**


[1:13:31 PM] Clara says: **it is called Inner Bonding.**

[1:13:34 PM] Mary Flynn says: **ok**

[1:13:52 PM] Clara says: **Becoming a Loving Parent to Your Inner Child.**

[1:14:04 PM] Mary Flynn says: **oh thats rather nice!**

[1:14:06 PM] Clara says: **Captures much of what we talked about today.**

[1:14:07 PM] Mary Flynn says: **nice title**

[1:14:14 PM] Mary Flynn says: **yes i can see how it would**

[1:14:26 PM] Mary Flynn says: **thanks ! :)**

[1:14:29 PM] Clara says: **So, are you feeling centered?**

[1:14:47 PM] Mary Flynn says: **yes i feel fine i think - Geoff is cooking dinner and Jen's doing homework**

[1:14:57 PM] Mary Flynn says: **they have a pact to clear up so i can have a bath’**

[1:15:14 PM] Mary Flynn says: **i feel like part of the family more these days**

[1:15:27 PM] Mary Flynn says: **rather than the person who ‘they don’t get’**

[1:15:28 PM] Clara says: **Ok good! -**

[1:15:38 PM] Mary Flynn says: **yes its very good**

[1:15:52 PM] Clara says: **Would you like our next exchange to be email or chat?**

[1:16:13 PM] Mary Flynn says: **i think i'd liek to think about it and send you an email when i've thought about all this?**

[1:16:17 PM] Mary Flynn says: **is that ok?**

[1:16:59 PM] Clara says: **Absolutely! And by the same token, I may suggest we take up a particular issue in chat. Would that be ok with you?**

[1:17:16 PM] Mary Flynn says: **yeah sure**

[1:17:32 PM] Clara says: **I have a better sense of how you process with email and chat now. And I think the combination could be beneficial.**
[1:17:47 PM] Mary Flynn says: **ok**

[1:17:48 PM] Clara says: **Ok so I will wait to hear from you in an email.**

[1:18:03 PM] Mary Flynn says: **good - I'll have a look at the book as well.**

[1:18:11 PM] Clara says: **It is a pleasure working with you! Take care and have a great dinner!**

[1:18:23 PM] Mary Flynn says: **Thank you so much i'll be in touch**

[1:18:24 PM] Mary Flynn says: **bye**

[1:18:29 PM] Clara says: **bye**