

# Author hopes to inspire abuse victims with his story

BY SUZANNE NOLAN WISLER

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Gregg Milligan's story has taken him all the way to "The Oprah Winfrey Show."

Last February, Mr. Milligan of Canton appeared on the show to talk about "A Beautiful World," his book that details sexual, physical, emotional and psychological abuse inflicted on him by his mother from ages 4-11.

Being on "Oprah," said the Writers on the River participant, "was both emotional and exhilarating."

"His interview with Oprah is very well done, and he's an interesting speaker. I think it's important to bring the issue of child abuse to light, and this book certainly does it," said Bernie Smith, public relations officer for Monroe County Library System.

Mr. Milligan grew up in Ypsilanti, Adrian, Tecumseh and Clinton, also enduring illiteracy and family members' suicides.

At 11, with help from an older sister, he and two siblings found help. Eventually, he even taught himself to read, served in the Air Force and earned a master's degree.

Today, he is an executive leader for a large health-care system and is a child abuse advocate and speaker. He has a 23-year-old son.

He hopes his story of survival will inspire other abuse victims.



GREGG MILLIGAN

"The very reason I wrote the book was because in doing so, I perpetuate the absolute belief (victims) are not alone. We have each other. Those suffering for any reason are kindred spirits forged in anguish. This is exactly why we are here. To save one another, and in doing so, we allow for the possibilities of a beautiful world," Mr. Milligan told The News recently.

He has two other projects in the works.

"I am completing Book II of 'A Beautiful World' titled 'God Must Be Sleeping' and illustrations for a children's book I wrote called 'Moussantonia,'" said Mr. Milligan.

"God Must Be Sleeping" recounts his life from ages 11-18 and will be released in February.

Mr. Milligan makes about 10 speaking appearances a year.

He's had only positive responses from readers and audiences.

"I receive several e-mails, Facebook messages and letters describing how my book has literally given survivors of abuse a 'voice,'" said Mr. Milligan.

"In addition, how several people who have read my book turned to therapy to begin the healing process and now truly believe they have a chance at overcoming the effects of abuse," he said.



To watch Mr. Milligan's appearance on "Oprah," visit [www.oprah.com/oprah-show/Full-Episode-Raped-by-His-Mother-A-Victim-Comes-Forward-Video\\_1](http://www.oprah.com/oprah-show/Full-Episode-Raped-by-His-Mother-A-Victim-Comes-Forward-Video_1).

To learn more about Mr. Milligan, visit <http://abeautifulwrl.com>.