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## ABOUT THE COVER

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I chose a lotus flower for the covers of *Beyond Anger and Violence* and *Beyond Violence* because the lotus can be a meaningful symbol of a woman's transformation. Although it grows with its roots deep in the mud, the lotus rises from the muddy waters and emerges pure and unblemished. It unfolds gradually, one petal at a time, to blossom in the sunlight.

The mud can symbolize murky beginnings or the dark side of anger as well as the experience of trauma and/or addiction. The water can symbolize a developmental experience or a transition to healing and recovery. The lotus can symbolize the purity of the soul, rebirth, spiritual awakening, and enlightenment. For thousands of years, the lotus has been associated with profound change.

I see the lotus as the symbol of a woman's healing and recovery. Making the shift from anger, aggression, or violence to calmness, nonviolence, and peace is a transformational experience. When a woman makes this shift, she is able to say, "Who I am today is not who I was." The elegant and beautiful lotus flower that emerges from the mud is the beautiful woman within.