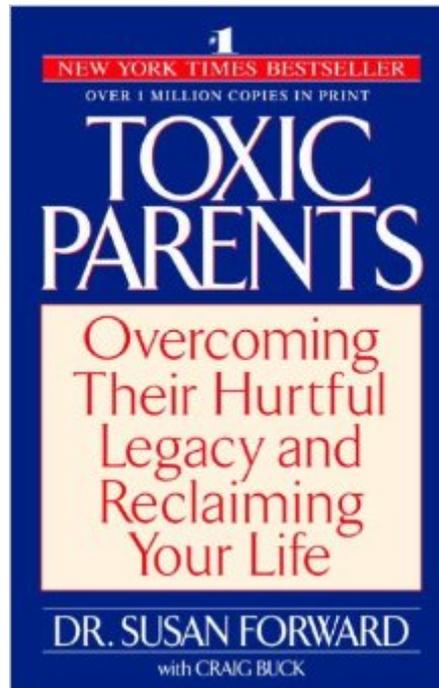


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# Toxic Parents: Overcoming Their Hurtful Legacy And Reclaiming Your Life



## Synopsis

Are you the child of toxic parents? When you were a child...  
• Did your parents tell you you were bad or worthless?  
• Did your parents use physical pain to discipline you?  
• Did you have to take care of your parents because of their problems?  
• Were you often frightened of your parents?  
• Did your parents do anything to you that had to be kept secret? Now that you're an adult...  
• Do your parents still treat you as if you were a child?  
• Do you have intense emotional or physical reactions after spending time with your parents?  
• Do your parents control you with threats or guilt? Do they manipulate you with money?  
• Do you feel that no matter what you do, it's never good enough for your parents? In this remarkable self-help guide, Dr. Susan Forward draws on case histories and the real-life voices of adult children of toxic parents to help you free yourself from the frustrating patterns of your relationship with your parents and discover a new world of self-confidence, inner strength, and emotional independence.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Open the front cover to this important book by Dr Susan Forward and almost as an introductory note we are told that toxic parents are the inadequate parents, the controllers, the alcoholics, the verbal abusers, the physical abusers and the sexual abusers. This is not a book about parents who get things wrong. As parents we all get things wrong - I know I do, we all do things that perhaps we regret - this isn't being toxic, it's called being human. These mistakes very rarely do harm. A toxic parent on the other hand is an individual whose behaviour scars and harms their child/ren to such a

degree that often it can seem like there can be no resolution to the damage caused. As a result the children grow into adulthood feeling inadequate, unloved and worthless. This book is about and at the same time is for those adult children. As children, our parents give us a script, a way of being that we use to filter all that we experience. If that script is one that says ` you are worthless, to be abused - sexually, physically, emotionally ` then all I do in my life, all my actions, my reactions and interactions will be through the filter of my lack of worth. This is a book for those adults whose sense of worthlessness underpins all they do. I work as a counsellor and often those I work with tell me that they are responsible for what their parents did. "If I hadn't cuddled Daddy he wouldn't have got in to bed with me", "If I'd done better at school I wouldn't have got punished". A valuable message in this book is that the child is a child not a mini adult. The real adults are the responsible ones and it is they that are accountable for the abuse inflicted on their children.

After reading the one-star review by the reader from NY on March 14, 2000, I had to respond. It seems to me this person is awfully defensive and, I suspect, is guilty of some of the behavior that is described as abusive in the book...No parent is perfect. We all know that. This book is not about demonizing parents. It is about learning to recognize incidents in our lives that adversely affect our behavior and our emotional well-being. I bought this book because of problems my husband and I were having with his parents. Since he was a child, he had been put into a role of emotional partner to his mother. When he decided to start doing some things on his own, she got very upset and started pouring on the guilt. I arrived on the scene at about the same time and became a convenient scapegoat, accused of manipulating him and stealing him away from them. Unfortunately (before I found this book and other helpful ones) things got really bad, and now we have virtually no relationship with my in-laws. It's a very sad situation. However, my husband and I now recognize the games for what they are and no longer buy into the idea that it's our fault for "upsetting" them so much that they just can't be around us. (If I hadn't experienced it myself, I wouldn't have believed that adults could behave in such an irrational manner! ) Reading books like this one and speaking with counselors has provided us with useful insights that will help us interact with them in a healthy manner, if we ever get the chance again. If you're going through this too, you are NOT alone! Get this book and read it. It helps you recognize behaviors that are harmful to you. It helps you learn to overcome problems in the past and avoid inappropriate treatment in the future.

I first read this book six years ago. I found it confronting and very supportive. I believe this book has the power to encourage a lot of personal growth for people who have experienced abuse of all types

in their childhood. What I found particularly effective about this book was that it covered a range of abuse patterns, which I believe many abusive parents use. Other books I have read tend to focus on one form of abuse exclusively, whereas if you have experienced physical abuse or sexual abuse, you may be likely to have experienced verbal and psychological abuse also. I read through this book with a pencil in hand, I found so many parts that rang true for me. The checklists in the book are a way of gauging honestly where you in dealing with your life and your relationship with your parents. Now six years later, I have just reread this book and I see how much I have grown in this time. No longer is this book so confronting for me, I was more able to appreciate the suggestions and exercises made. I have been thrilled to see that this book had planted seeds of thought and realisation within me, and that over the years I have been able to instigate real change within me and in my relationship with my parents. These relationships are far more real and true to me. I now speak with more personal authority and honesty to my family. One criticism I have is the way that confrontation is seen as a necessary goal. It is certainly helpful if it feels right and necessary to the reader, but i feel that the most effective form of healing is to reach a point in ourselves where we know our own truth and set out our own rules, whether we need to confront our family with our truths or not.

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