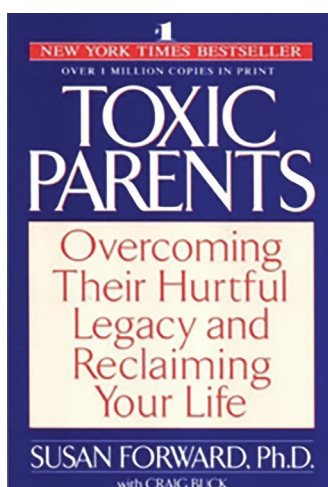


BOOK REVIEW

Toxic Parents: Overcoming Their Hurtful Legacy and Reclaiming Your Life

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Toxic Parents: Overcoming Their Hurtful Legacy and Reclaiming Your Life delves into the complicated intricacies of parenting, its long-term consequences and management strategies for the victims. This book written by Susan Forward and Craig Buck offers valuable insights into comprehending and overcoming the short and long-term consequences of toxic parenting. Toxic parenting negatively influences the life of a child in all aspects. It can make a child depressed and stressed, result in a lack of self-confidence and can adversely affect the child's development. The authors of the book state that it is very challenging for adult offsprings of toxic parents to form a healthy self-image, since they continue to carry the weight of guilt and inadequacy, and this loss of self-worth and confidence can affect every part of their lives.

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Susan Forward was an internationally renowned author and lecturer. She worked as a therapist, teacher and consultant in several medical and mental health facilities in addition to her private practice. Her co-author Craig Buck was a writer, journalist and screenwriter. In the book *Toxic Parents: Overcoming Their Hurtful Legacy Reclaiming Your Life*, Susan Forward mentions that Craig Buck gave form to the narrative that she wanted to tell. As a therapist, Susan Forward has quoted verbatim details of the cases (after obtaining permission), along with her findings in the book. The authors elaborate on the cases of clients who had experienced toxic parenting and were consequently suffering throughout their lives. While the first part of the book explains different types of toxic parenting and its effects on adulthood, the second part is exclusively devoted to the victims.

The first part includes chapters one to seven, where Chapter one explains the idea of parenting and introduces toxic parents. Chapters two to seven explain different types of toxic parents, such as inadequate parents, controllers, alcoholics, verbal abusers, physical abusers and sexual abusers. Chapter eight is conclusory and describes toxic family systems. The second part of the book is 'Reclaiming Your Life' and includes Chapters nine to fifteen. The headings of the chapters, such as 'Letting Go of the Struggle', 'The Road to Independence' and 'Breaking

the Cycle' invite readers to explore further. This part of the book provides not only steps for self-healing but also clear barometers of healing.

On the whole, the book helps the children of toxic parents to heal and understand that their suffering is not their fault.

In general, there are limited studies on toxic parenting, and Susan Forward's book, which helps identify and raise awareness towards toxic parenting, is a primary reference for all the studies that have been carried out to date. The book academically confronts a painful legacy and shows why it is so difficult to get past it. Even though the book's last edition was written a decade ago, it is still relevant today and will be so in the coming years. The findings of recent empirical studies on toxic parenting also align with what Susan Forward has mentioned in her book based on the case studies. This makes the book more relevant in the contemporary society.

Insights from Forward's examination of toxic parenting, and its significant effects on a child's emotional and psychological development can help parents and teachers create environments that are healthier and more nurturing. Understanding the negative impacts of toxic parenting is crucial for raising awareness among parents, educating educators and helping kids, who could experience these difficulties in India, where family ties are highly valued. By bridging

the gap between theoretical understanding and real-world applications, this review promotes the adoption of loving behaviours that improve the general well-being of Indian families and children. The book continues to serve as a lifebuoy for numerous individuals trying to break the cycle and overcome the effects of toxic parenting, due to its enduring wisdom and practicality in management strategies. This book will help in the process of healing and self-awareness for anyone crossing the tumultuous current of toxic parenting. It is relevant in a society, where parenting is always glorified,

and negative patterns in parenting are often unseen, which could serve as literature for further research. The book is a good read for parents, parents-to-be, children, teachers, principals and all stakeholders in education, to enable them to provide support to anyone facing difficulties in life and hoping for a better future. The problem is not one of facing one's parents in the present, but instead is one of confronting one's repressed memories within oneself. It has since become a popular resource for individuals, seeking to understand and cope with complex relationships with their parents.