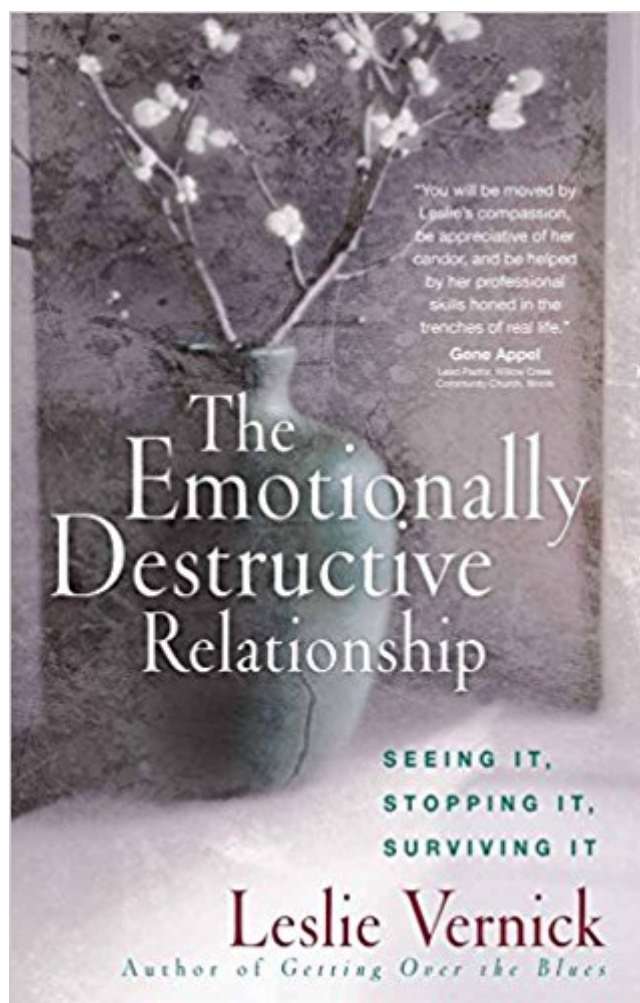


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# The Emotionally Destructive Relationship: Seeing It, Stopping It, Surviving It



## Synopsis

Leslie Vernick, counselor and social worker, has witnessed the devastating effects of emotional abuse. Many, including many in the church, have not addressed this form of destruction in families and relationships because it is difficult to talk about. With godly guidance and practical experience, Vernick offers an empathetic approach to recognizing an emotionally destructive relationship and addresses the symptoms and the damage with biblical tools. Readers will understand how to:

- Reveal behaviors that are meant to control, punish, and hurt
- Confront and speak truth when the timing is right
- Determine when to keep trying, when to get out
- Get safe and stay safe
- Build an identity in Christ

This practical and thorough resource will help countless individuals, families, and churches view abuse from God's perspective and understand how vital it is for victims to embrace His freedom from the physical, emotional, spiritual, and generational effects of emotionally destructive relationships.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Leslie Vernick powerfully communicates essential truths for anyone even questioning whether they are the victim of abuse. This book is a must-read not only will it educate the reader to take the necessary steps to freedom, but it will also prevent future destructive relationships. Thank you, Leslie, for having the courage to write this much needed book!”  
—Michelle Borquez, author of *God Crazy* and host of *Life Television's Shine*  
The *Emotionally Destructive Relationship* provides a critical first step down the path of healing and growth for those who find themselves stuck

in abusive relationships...with no idea how they got there and no idea how to get out. Those who suffer in these relationships and those who want to help them will find a humble fellow "traveler in Leslie. As always, Leslie meets the sufferer and the sinner with compassion, truth, concrete direction, and lots of hope. I look forward to using this book with my counselees" •â •Winston Smith, MDiv, director of counseling services and faculty member at Christian Counseling and Educational Foundation

"Emotional abuse is often overlooked, but it is toxic to spirit, mind and brain chemistry. The church rarely tackles it even though the Bible significantly covers it. Leslie wonderfully and practically addresses this tough topic that cripples the body of Christ and our witness to the world."The Emotionally Destructive Relationship will be a catalyst to help you see your own story as abuser and victim" •and a catalyst to help you let the Holy Spirit empower you to renew your mind and transform relational skills so you will be a lighthouse of hope, shining God's glory for all to know His love and grace.â •â •Karl Benzio, MD, psychiatrist; founder and executive director of Lighthouse Network

"Periodically books come along that fill a significant need in the world of Christian counseling. This is one of those books. Leslie Vernick's new work helps persons caught up in harmful relationships gain perspective on what has gone wrong and what needs to be made right.â "The Emotionally Destructive Relationship avoids confusing psychological lingo and places the emphasis where it belongs, on the heart of men and women who must seek Christ in order to make changes in themselves in order to make changes in their relationships. Readers will first find themselves in these pages as a victim of harmful or abusive relationships; as enablers of harmful relationships; and perpetrators of harmful relationships.â "Vernick's treatment of each situation is evenhanded, full of clinical insight, practical and concrete, and most important, biblical. Readers will walk away with a plan of action on how to change themselves and how to change the patterns of their relationship. I intend to use this book both for the persons I counsel and the graduate students learning how to counsel others.â •â •Jeffery Black, PhD, associate pastor of Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia, licensed psychologist, chair and professor of the masters in Christian counseling at Philadelphia Biblical University

Leslie Vernick, a licensed clinical social worker with a private counseling practice, has authored numerous books, including *The Emotionally Destructive Relationship* and *Lord, I Just Want to Be Happy*. She completed postgraduate work in biblical counseling and cognitive therapy. Leslie and her husband, Howard, have been married more than 30 years and have two grown children.

This book is about Emotionally abusive Relationships and how to recognize that you are in one, stopping this type of relationship and surviving it. I would say that this is an excellent book for those seeking healing from emotionally abusive backgrounds. It approaches these types of situations from a Christian perspective which is very important. We as Christians should place Christ at the center of all of our relationships. The book is divided into three parts and these parts are divided into sub chapters which in all total to about twelve chapters. The book is a bit lengthy but nothing you can tackle at 241 pages long. In terms of content the first part addresses how to recognize an emotionally abusive relationship, the consequences of being in one and the destructive attitudes that are at the center of these relationships. The second part addresses how to stop the emotionally destructive relationship. There are encouraging chapters to help a person in need get through this type of situation and examining their choices. The third part addresses survival and recuperation from this type of situation. The author addresses different types of healthy actions to take in order to get on the path to becoming emotionally healthy. I really liked and enjoyed this book and would recommend it to a friend. It was also an easy to understand but lengthy dense read given the subject matter.

I absolutely devoured this book, Leslie is full of infinite wisdom and understanding. In trying to come to grips with difficult people and crazy-people and somehow understand them in order to help my own self-concepts in a proper light. I received so much enlightenment into the spirit of what transpired in many relationships I know that have gone bad. Many mistakes were made but even if the mistakes had not happened, I see those relationships were unhealthy and never had a chance of being healthy because of the closed spirits and hearts of those involved. Either love exists or it doesn't. If those who claim they love you are godless in their words and actions, playing vicious mind games of deception and control it becomes plain they do not possess any love. Without love, without honesty you can never have a healthy relationship, it is impossible. There is no relationship! As described in her book the following shares this very concept. Page 13 Proverbs says, With their words, the godless destroy their friends, and, "Telling lies about others is as harmful as hitting them with an ax, wounding them with a sword, or shooting them with a sharp arrow" (Proverbs 11:9; 25:18). Jesus takes the matter of verbal abuse quite seriously when he likens it to murder. (Matthew 5:21) Many people suffer in relationships where offensive words and threatening gestures are the weapons of choice, used to manipulate, control, punish, and wound without leaving any physical evidence. Page 16 In the last part of this book I want you to know, really know, that God sees you and deeply loves you. When we have been beaten down by the words or actions of

another, we feel broken and helpless, unlovely and unloveable. How wonderful that our healing does not depend upon the love or affirmation or apology of another person. We may never get those things. But our strength and healing will come as we are able to receive and believe God's love. I will end with this valuable message that God's love is the best healer for all that transpires and He has given us freely that love unconditionally that we can share it with those who we genuinely love! This book is phenomenal! Great teachings... A must have...

This book was so helpful to me when I was going through a trying time in my marriage. Leslie Vernick is a Christian and is very pro-marriage and both of those were incredibly important qualities to me when I was looking for a book to help me learn how to handle my marital conflicts. She draws her wisdom both from extensive experience working with married couples and from a thorough understanding of Scripture, which she cites throughout the book. I was so encouraged to read others' stories and know I was not alone, and her wisdom helped me sort through hurt feelings to see the heart of what was going wrong in my relationship and what I could do to help fix it. I could not have been more impressed with this book. It was exactly what I needed. I highly recommend this book to any Christian counselor as well as any Christian struggling in a difficult relationship, whether marriage or otherwise (friendship, family relationship, employer/employee relationship, etc.). Though non-Christians may not appreciate the Scripture references as much, I believe they would find it incredibly helpful as well.

This may be a good book to some people. The majority if not all of the book refers married couples except the friends mentioned in Chapter 8. I think this book is geared more toward married, middle-aged individuals. I am not saying anything is wrong with that, but if you are younger or have been in troubling relationships (never married) in the past and praying for marriage, I would not recommend this book. Also, I believe the author uses too many different people (be they references or examples married couples) when trying to get the point across in chapters throughout the book. For example Chapter 5. One minute it's this couple, that couple, one minute it's this person, then that person, this example that example and things Jesus said or did is thrown in there somewhere, but not sound counsel on the relational need for Christ at heart and spiritual unity (i.e. Amos 3:3) that is necessary for couples to disband emotional destructiveness.

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