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Emotional Assault: Recognizing An Abusive Partner's Bag Of Tricks

Lisa Kroulik

Emotional Assault:

Recognizing the Abusive Partner's Bag of Tricks



Synopsis

When most people think of abuse, images of domestic violence come to mind. However, emotional abuse is a form of indirect violence that also deserves recognition. It is difficult to overcome because it is often impossible to identify. While domestic abuse is tragic, it is impossible to ignore the evidence of it. The impact of emotional abuse, on the other hand, is often invisible. Since others don't see any physical scars, they have no idea how much the victim is suffering. When the emotionally abused spouse speaks up, people are often dismissive of her pain. This leaves the victim in a constant state of confusion and self-blame. In this book, author Lisa Kroulik identifies several common tactics that emotionally abusive people use to control their partners, such as giving the silent treatment or playing the victim. She uses examples from her relationship with her former husband to help readers name abusive tactics in their own relationships. After identifying a trait of emotionally abusive partners, the author goes on to offer suggestions on how to confront it. She makes it clear that calling an abuser out on his behavior may not make it stop and that each woman needs to decide for herself if her relationship is worth saving. The second section of "Emotional Assault" helps the reader assess her current relationship and provides resources should she decide to end it. This book is hopeful and engaging while empowering emotionally abused women to change their lives. In the final section, Lisa Kroulik details how she got out of her emotionally abusive first marriage.

Book Information

File Size: 773 KB

Print Length: 74 pages

Simultaneous Device Usage: Unlimited

Publication Date: June 22, 2013

Sold by: Amazon Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00DJE9YTM

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #108,859 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #57 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Counseling & Psychology > Mental Health > Codependency #102 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Counseling & Psychology > Mental Health > Sexual Abuse #147 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Mental Health > Codependency

Customer Reviews

Reading this short book is like sitting down with the kindest friend in the world and not having to explain anything because she already understands. This was so healing for me.

I appreciated the author's courage in sharing her experience. I felt as though I was reading my own story. Every chapter had me nodding in agreement or shedding tears to a very relatable experience. There is much I could discuss about the merits of this book. One chapter that stands out is Ms. Kroulik collapsing during a vacation. At the time, she was in denial about the abuse and medical doctors couldn't give her a diagnosis. She pointed out that living in a chronic state of anxiety and defense takes its toll on your psyche, and could very well manifest itself in physical symptoms, as was her experience. In the years I've lived in an abusive relationship, I developed TMJ, mysterious aches and pains, skin eruptions, bleeding gums, IBS, blood pressure issues, recurring canker sores, panic attacks and hair loss including bald patches. For being someone who took meticulous care of herself and was a former model, I had lost much of my vitality and at times resembled a death camp prisoner. I also had medical exam after medical exam, only for the doctors to conclude that my body was having auto-immune issues due to high levels of stress. I am out of the relationship and I'm happy to reveal that these physical symptoms are subsiding but it will take time to fully recover. I wish to thank Ms. Kroulik for reaching out to other survivors. Her kindness and compassion are reassuring and reading the book made me feel like I was listening to a friend who undeniably gets it.

While this book was about a marriage, I found a lot of carry over to parents and other relationships. In this honest and caring short book, the author opens her life and her heart. People who have lived or are living with a narcissist will recognize most, if not all of the behaviors, and it is an enormous relief to know that we are not alone. (A narcissistic partner is often very good at alienating your friends and family, and the sense of isolation can be devastating.) My take away was this: when the other person is going into whatever their abusive behaviors are, I become an object. I could as

easily be a pillow or a doll. It is ABSOLUTELY not about me, which of course creates a lot of the confusion. I am considering a tattoo that says: 'It's Not About Me!' for the inside of my left wrist, so when the behaviors started, I can remind myself! This gives me a lot of control in the situation- Thanks, Lisa! The book can be a life changer.

For years, the author didn't understand why she was on pins and needles, trying desperately to please her husband. She was taught to submit to him, to put him first, to do all of the things a wife should do. Instead, her husband made her jump through higher and higher hoops and played a barrage of emotional tricks on her to keep her in her place. I found this book very eyeopening because once you recognize the tricks, you can objectively deal with it without getting your emotions embroiled. Yes, it may be difficult, but the end result is you realize that you can never get the approval of a narcissistic personality. NEVER. The bag of tricks points to an insecure person who only cares about himself or herself and his/her image. Everything he/she does is designed to protect his/her own ego and truly, you are only there to the effect that you enhance his/her image and ego. What's even worse is this narcissistic person appears on the surface to be "such a nice guy" or "what a wonderful gal" to outsiders. They are oftentimes charming, sociable, reasonable and jolly with outsiders, behaving like attentive spouses and charming partners in front of others. The effect of this is to isolate you, the victim, even further. Not only are you to blame for everything that goes wrong in the narcissistic person's life, you are also to blame for asserting your own needs and for the relationship failing. Perhaps the most lasting insight of all is that the narcissistic person is NOT in love with YOU. He/she is only in love with his/her CONTROL of YOU. There are basically two things you can do. a) accept the limitations of this personality and call him/her out every time the trick is played on you. If the person has even a smidgen of conscience (i.e. not 100% narcissistic, this might work) Let them know you WON'T tolerate blame, denigration, silent treatment and other forms of emotional control. b) leave knowing the consequences will be a concerted effort of the narcissistic individual to pool every family and mutual friend against you. The author doesn't tell you what to do. This book is a quick read and makes you aware of the problem so you can deal with it head on.

Covers the topic that so many people don't deem to be abusive. Also addresses the shunning and stigma of divorce that may happen within the walls of the church. Yes, God is sad to see a divorce but He does not want women to be their husbands' doormat either. Well-written and easy to read. Covers different challenges one will experience/can expect as side-effects when a woman finally

gets the courage to get away from a verbally toxic marriage. Good book!

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