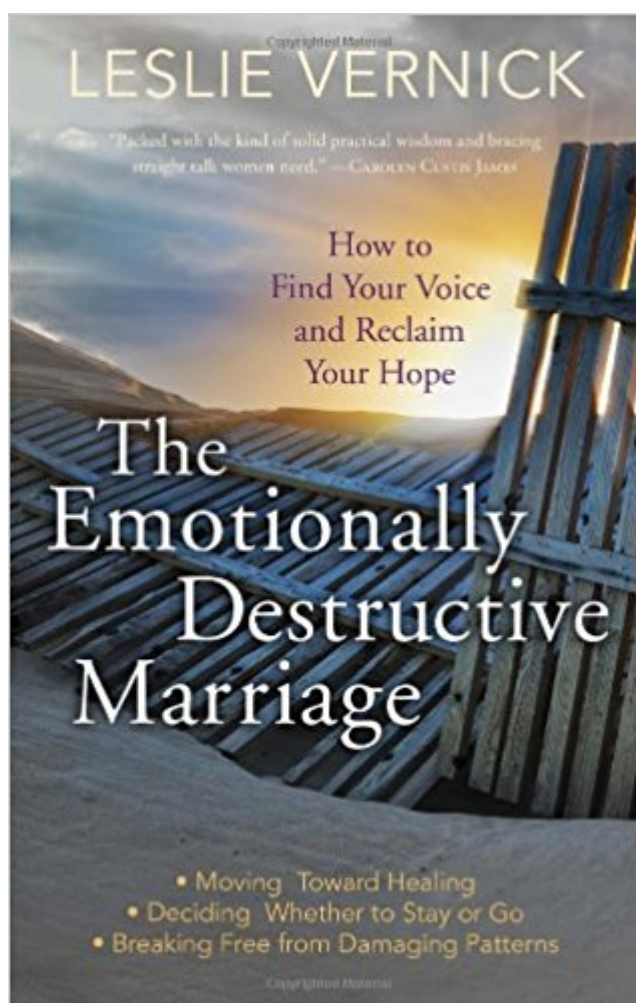


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# The Emotionally Destructive Marriage: How To Find Your Voice And Reclaim Your Hope



## Synopsis

Something Has to Change You can't put it into words, but something is happening to you. Your stomach churns, your heart aches, and the tension in your marriage is making you feel weary and a little crazy. The constant criticism, disrespect, cruelty, deceit, and gross indifference are eroding your confidence and breaking your spirit. For any woman caught in an emotionally destructive marriage, Leslie Vernick offers a personalized path forward. Based on decades of counseling experience, her intensely practical, biblical advice will show you how to establish boundaries and break free from emotional abuse. Learn to:

- identify damaging behaviors
- gain the skills to respond wisely
- promote healthy change
- stay safe
- understand when, why, and even how to leave
- recognize that God sees and hates what is happening to you
- Trying harder to be a perfect fantasy wife won't help fix what's wrong your marriage. Discover instead how you can initiate effective changes to stop the cycle of destruction and restore hope for the future.

"Women in an emotionally abusive marriage do not need another book on how to have a good marriage; those books rub salt in raw wounds. No, they desperately need this book so that they can diagnose just how bad their marriage is and then, with Leslie's clear expertise, develop a plan that will either begin to turn their marriage around...or give them a wise route of escape."

•Dee Brestin, author of *Idol Lies* and *The Friendships of Women*

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Praise for *The Emotionally Destructive Marriage* – “This book is a lifeline for women who long to live a Christ-honoring life but are caught in the downward spiral of a destructive relationship. Leslie draws from a deep well of biblical insight, practical experience, and courageous advocacy to give individuals and the church the tools necessary to set captives free – one woman at a time.” – Joe Henseler, senior pastor of Faith Evangelical Free Church, Allentown, Pennsylvania – “As a radio host, I regularly hear from women who feel trapped in destructive marriages. Because they hear God hates divorce, they don’t know what they can do. Leslie shows them exactly what they can do in this book. It’s packed with solid, practical, and biblical steps to get sane, get safe, and get strong.” – Anita Lustrea, author, speaker, and host of Moody Radio’s Midday Connection – “Though marriage is God’s idea, many marriages are not being lived out according to God’s plan. Leslie skillfully takes the reader through specific check points, uncovering relationships that are destructive while giving valuable tools for genuine healing. This book will point many couples in the direction of change and discovery of God’s ultimate plan of mutual respect and love.” – Ray and Debbie Alsdorf, authors of *Beyond the Brady Bunch* – “The *Emotionally Destructive Marriage* blows the lid off the silence surrounding this serious epidemic in the church. It’s packed with the kind of solid practical wisdom and bracing straight talk women need to face reality and engage safely the crisis in their marriage. Every Christian leader should read this eyeopening corrective to damaging advice often coming from the church to women in abusive marriages. Women who are at the end of their rope will find this book to be an invaluable lifeline.” – Carolyn Custis James, author of *The Gospel of Ruth* and *Half the Church* – “This book provides answers and action for women who are caught in the vicious cycle of emotional abuse. Kudos to Leslie Vernick for addressing and exposing this prevalent problem head on and offering her wise counsel to hurting women.” – Suellen Roberts, founder and president of Christian Women in Media – “The *Emotionally Destructive Marriage* is the perfect tool for pastors, counselors, and marriage leaders to help women caught in destructive marriages. Written with a softness that only Leslie Vernick could deliver but with a tenacity to motivate and help women recognize their plight, this book provides the practical insights they need to step into the emotional and relational freedom they deserve.” – Joshua Straub, PhD, coauthor of

God Attachment

“Women in an emotionally abusive marriage do not need another book on how to have a good marriage; those books rub salt in raw wounds. No, they desperately need this book so that they can diagnosis just how bad their marriage is and then, with Leslie’s clear expertise, develop a plan that will either begin to turn their marriage around, strengthen them to stay and survive, or give them a wise route of escape. I was riveted from the first chapter and thanked God repeatedly for this clear manual for those who are in such need of a lifeline.”

•Dee Brestin, author of *Idol Lies* and *The Friendships of Women*

“The Emotionally Destructive Marriage extends a lifeline of well-tested, biblically sound, practical, real help to women who are often at the end of their rope, end of their ability to cope, and end of their hope. Leslie’s common-sense wisdom and tender encouragement might help save your marriage, your family, and your future—and it will for sure save your sanity, your life, and your heart. Every leader, and every woman, needs copies to hand out.”

•Pam Farrel, author of *The 10 Best Decisions a Woman Can Make* and *Men Are Like Waffles; Women Are Like Spaghetti*

“This book is a significant contribution to Christian literature on the subject of abuse in marriage. Into church cultures so often clouded by a fog of confusion and unbiblical tradition, Leslie’s words shine a welcome light. She understands the mentality and nature of abuse that drives these emotionally destructive marriages. I intend to put her book to use in our church in both women’s and men’s groups, and I would encourage Bible colleges and seminaries to do the same.”

•Jeff Crippen, pastor and author of *A Cry for Justice: How the Evil of Domestic Abuse Hides in Your Church*

“Leslie’s book tackles a hidden epidemic behind the closed doors of many Christian homes. Leslie provides help—winsome yet tough, practical yet immensely biblical help—for those in destructive marriages. Counselors, pastors, and Christian ministry leaders are given a clear compass to know how to take a marriage from broken to whole, if both individuals are willing to work.”

•Tim Clinton, PhD, president of the American Association of Christian Counselors and executive director of the Center for Counseling and Family Studies at Liberty University

“Heart-to-heart reality checkup. Destructive myths and assumptions exposed. Marriages advanced. Women valued. Hopeful steps for real change. That’s how Leslie Vernick writes to women who are under attack in marriage. She provides fresh God-honoring solutions as she speaks life-changing truth for women. Her honesty and mandates for frustrated or failed marriage relationships are invigorating, incredible, practical, and based on the Bible.”

•Roger Ball, senior pastor of First Baptist of Tempe

“Finally, a voice being put to the very real problem of emotional abuse within a marriage and the invisible wounds it

inflicts on the spirit, heart, and mind. Leslie Vernick brings light to the breakdown that happens in a relationship marked by toxic behavior. Her years of wisdom and expertise in this area, along with her biblical insight, are to be applauded. Thank you, Leslie, for being an advocate for freedom.

•Michelle Borquez, president of God Crazy Freedom, author of *Overcoming the Seven Deadly Emotions*

“We like to think that every marriage can be repaired and fully restored, but that’s not reality in this fallen world. Kudos to Leslie Vernick for being one of the first to address this reality. I’ll be recommending this book to many coaching clients in the coming years, because within these pages they’ll discover so many valuable assets. I particularly love how she teaches women four steps to develop CORE strength, which helps them deal with their destructive partner in truth and with grace.”

•Shannon Ethridge, MA, relationship coach, speaker, and best-selling author of *Every Woman’s Battle*

Leslie Vernick is licensed clinical social worker and relationship coach. For more than thirty years, she has helped individuals, couples, and families heal, rebuild, or grow their relationships. A popular author and speaker, she has written several books, including *How to Act Right When Your Spouse Acts Wrong* and the bestseller, *The Emotionally Destructive Relationship*.

I found this book literally after crying out to God one day to just lead me to the truth about my marriage. I was so emotionally torn after receiving advice from Christian friends to just hang in there, keep forgiving and keep trying to be the wife my husband wants, vs. a Christian therapist telling me I needed to make my husband face consequences for his abuse. I thought for 14 years God wanted me to turn the other cheek, submit, and love without conditions. This not only enabled my husband to continue with his abusive behavior, but it also made me start to turn away from God. I felt like God loved my husband and his needs far more than He loved me, to the point that He expected me to put up with disrespect, berating, name calling, being ignored all the time, being treated like nothing more than an object, some physical abuse, the list goes on. So I found this book after doing just one Google search and I read what I could of what was inside of it through it’s Look Inside feature. I literally wept the hardest I have in my life when I read the first two chapters stating that God loves me and didn’t want this kind of marriage for me or any other woman. That what I was dealing with was not what a marriage should be and God didn’t expect me to put up with it. It was the first time I had ever heard this and it was like being freed from a prison cell. I bought this book and had it overnighted. Once I got it I could not put it down. I had no idea what the extent was of the

abuse I was dealing with until I read this book. I felt so understood-- for once! -- and received much more love and encouragement from Leslie's words than I ever received from the church's many teachings that women must love and forgive their husbands no matter what. Leslie not only helps you identify what is going on in your marriage, but she helps you to figure out how to deal with it in a Godly way. She tells you that allowing someone to hurt you over and over without being accountable is not loving them, that it's living by fear instead of faith, and that it keeps the abuser from becoming the person God created them to be. If you will not speak the truth to them about their behavior, you are not loving them well. She shows you how to apply consequences in a healthy way, and what to do if setting boundaries with your abusive spouse do not work. If his heart won't change, what you can do next. This book saved my life. I think if I had not found it I would have continued putting up with abuse until the day I died, and thinking God didn't give a rip about me. I would have lost the one love I did have in my life, Jesus, because of the wrong picture the church paints of Him and how He views married women. If you are in an abusive marriage, please read this book, and draw closer to Jesus as you find out how He really feels about you and what you've been going through. Seek Godly counsel to help you apply what Leslie teaches you, which is totally in line with the Bible. She does not twist scripture around. She cites verses in their true context. If you are a Christian counselor, pastor or friend, please do not tell women who are with husbands who consistently talk down to them, break their hearts, disrespect them and treat them like an object that all they have to do is try harder and he'll come around. Read this book and become educated about something that is very misunderstood in the Church, and has been hurting Christian wives for far too long. I thank God for answering my prayer, for leading me to the truth found in this book, and for loving me enough to do so.

Where to start....I think this is my first book review. I just finished reading this book. I am an atheist, I am a man who has wronged his marriage and his wife. I am trying to gain an understanding about myself so I can better myself and better my marriage. I have been searching for many answers from various philosophies of life. I found Christianity to be the most forgiving, compassionate and hopeful (if you are willing and able to be honest with yourself) . This book in contrast to the Lundy Bancroft book was more encouraging for me. Bancroft, in my opinion, portrays the worst and offers little hope for men who have been abusive. Maybe it was meant to shock and awe women who suffer from abusive men to rightfully act, if so, then the Bancroft book is great for that. In fact I gave the Bancroft book to a friend of mine who is tormented daily by a man who checks off "all the boxes" in the Bancroft book. Hope for redemption of myself and potentially my marriage came from the Vernick

book. Bancroft reminded me of Dante entering Hell and reading the sign "abandon all hope, you who enter here." Vernick gave me hope, if I was willing to see my truths and listen. Vernick's book provides some useful "self checklists" (CORE in the book) for both men and women to employ. It also gives guidance on how to continue to provide constructive feedback to your spouse. There is forgiveness and redemption in truth. The book is written for the women who are or have suffered from abuse, but it still helped me understand myself and to understand what my wife has been going through. Before any of these books can help, you need to let honesty and truth in. If you cannot examine yourself, the good and the bad, then none of these books will ever help. Of course this book was written for believers of Christianity, but I think the message within this book transcends that and can be applied by all people. Overall, a book of hope, truth and forgiveness for those that want to better themselves and potentially their marriage.

This book does four important things: 1. Wakes a woman up to the reality of her marriage (it's not healthy vs. her dream of what it could/should be) - an important first step in getting help. 2. Validates what she is going through (she isn't making it up in her head) and offers compassionate understanding and assessment. 3. Shows her what she is doing to enable the toxic cycles of abuse to continue. 4. Exposes the lies she is believing that keep her in the cycle. 5. Gives her the essential and practical tools to break out of the cycles. The test at the beginning of the book helps you discern whether or not you are living in an emotionally destructive marriage - and what TYPE of ED marriage it is. (There are several.) I also love the teaching about building your CORE. (Get the book and find out what that acronym stands for!!) Having a strong CORE is what will enable you to break free by the Grace of God at the Center of who you are. I read this book within 24 hours and am coming back to buy a bunch to give away. If you or someone you know lives with a passive-aggressive type person, I highly recommend this book along with "Who's Pushing Your Buttons?: Handling the Difficult People in Your Life" by Dr. John Townsend. Both are eye-opening, hope-drenched, and VERY practical.

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