



The Truth Will Set You Free: Overcoming Emotional Blindness and Finding Your True Adult Self

Alice Miller , Andrew Edwin Jenkins (Translator)

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More than twenty years ago, a little-known Swiss psychoanalyst wrote a book that changed the way many people viewed themselves and their world. In simple but powerful prose, the deeply moving Drama of the Gifted Child showed how parents unconsciously form and deform the emotional lives of their children. Alice Miller's stories about the roots of suffering in childhood resonated with readers, and her book soon became a backlist best seller. In The Truth Will Set You Free Miller returns to the intensely personal tone and themes of her best-loved work. Only by embracing the truth of our past histories can any of us hope to be free of pain in the present, she argues. Miller uses vivid true stories to reveal the perils of early-childhood mistreatment and the dangers of mindless obedience to parental will. Drawing on the latest research on brain development, she shows how spanking and humiliation produce dangerous levels of denial, which leads in turn to emotional blindness and to mental barriers that cut off awareness and the ability to learn new ways of acting. If this cycle repeats itself, the grown child will perpetrate the same abuse on later generations--a message vitally important, especially given the increasing popularity of programs like Tough Love and of "child disciplinarians" like James Dobson. The Truth Will Set You Free will provoke and inform all readers who want to know Alice Miller's latest thinking on this important subject.

The Truth Will Set You Free: Overcoming Emotional Blindness and Finding Your True Adult Self Details

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From Reader Review The Truth Will Set You Free: Overcoming Emotional Blindness and Finding Your True Adult Self for online ebook

Kristen says

I think the theories presented here have some merit, but it wasn't as applicable as I would have liked. The key to overcoming emotional blindness and finding your true adult self is getting in touch with your infancy through really good therapy? Really?

Hallie Rose says

I'd recommend reading *The Drama of the Gifted Child* first, if you want something like this title suggests (practical ways of thinking to help overcome childhood injuries, becoming fully "adult"). This book is more a very theoretical supplement to that book and I honestly just think the titles should be switched. Miller applies micro psychological theories to macro historical events, and vice versa, which is hard for many to swallow.

I see where she's going and must say I'm inclined to agree on most points, but this book is far from proving itself as scientifically sound (quite intentionally it seems), and I still see some areas of the human experience where it's obvious that Miller's own history is standing in the way of her seeing the truth.

Jonathan Heeb says

It promised much but in actual fact the majority of the book was made up of unsubstantiated claims and sweeping personal statements about the correctness of her view over everybody else. While there might be some grains of truth in her arguments it is mostly emotionally based and little true scientific evidence is provided. This is a shame as if this had been written in a different way it could have been a powerful statement rather than the slightly awkward and self focused book that is it.

While nobody would argue of the wrongness of smacking a child, the cases offered were extreme and it is little wonder that the individuals turned out strange. There was little advice on how to deal with strong willed children or children at all because the assumption made is that they are all naturally good. After a while this became increasingly irritating as you wanted to scream what are the alternatives that you are offering us that work.

The historical examples really did leave a lot to be desired. When questioned with historical data Alice responded with 'they did not know anything but I do' and then gives no evidence to base her claims on. In fact there are no foot notes in the entire book, everything is based on her interpretation. She is not interested in explaining what she is basing her arguments on because it gets in the way of her theory.

Only in the final chapter did things start to come together and make sense but this was too little too late. A disappointing book and not an author I will look out for.

Charles Goetz says

This book should be read by everyone.

Valerie Brett says

This book had a lot of nuggets of insight & wisdom but was too heavy-handed on biblical references for me, and also I didn't think it was well-organized or balanced; it jumped around & at times seemed to summarize her other books which I found unnecessary. Also, it's not too much of a manual for becoming an adult... it's more about child abuse and how grown people should examine any of their own trauma so as not to pass it on to the next generation. A worthwhile cause, for sure, but the title I found a bit misleading.

John says

I'm unsure if this is the best book, to begin with when it comes to Alice Miller, but it sure gives a glimpse into some of her brilliance. She is fond of referring her earlier works and that may be the best reason for reading them in order, not that it changes much of the qualities of this book. Because she can refer to her earlier books it also means that the topics discussed are similar, and in Alice Miller's case it is all about childhood abuse by parents and how those traits and habits are passed from parents to child, unless you confront them, talk about it and figure a way through and out. I like Miller best when she goes into theory and least when she goes into the case material - and I would say this contains both about the same. The book was not as much help as it was informative, but still, a solid read on researching childhood trauma that is focused on physical violence and punishments(or chastisement) by parents.

Travel Writing says

"...the main purpose of my book is to stimulate reflection-reflection on our own lives and those important stories and histories hidden away in our families."

Mission accomplished Dr. Miller.

"...our bodies store information about what we have experienced in our lives, it is frequently at a loss to decipher those experiences."

"Of course I needed someone to say they understood me because I couldn't understand myself."

"I spent years tormenting my own body, destroying my zest for life, spoiling every pleasure I might have had, and insisted on clinging to the idea that my parents loved me. Therapy exploded those illusions, and now I know what price I paid."

Emma says

Unfocused, rambling and prone to some outrageous generalisations and assumptions about the childhoods of world leaders like Gorbachev and Hitler, and also Jesus. (?!).

An example generalisation: "today there are over 100 million women [who have had FGM] and most of them actively endorse this practice" (p.78). No sources cited by Miller, though she does often cite her other works.

Larry Taylor says

excellent and powerful book for all of us, especially good for information for parents

Joss says

Alice Miller teaches that emotional and physical abuse during childhood leave permanent scars on a person, and it is part of their journey as adults to both understand and forgive what happened to them as a child, and refrain from inflicting the damage onto the next generation. She gets into a lot of theoreticals in this book, maybe too many (Hitler and Stalin became dictators and mass murderers because of bad childhoods), but her experience as an analyst, and research and work into the negative effects of physical discipline provide most of the content of this book.

The shining moment in this book, for me, anyway, isn't conjecture into the lives of history's monsters but the case history of a mother and son. The mother had been through a rough childhood, and although she did accomplish her goal of not being physically abusive, she was unable to be emotionally close and had an issue with heavily projecting on her child throughout her life. She sought therapy as an older adult- when the son was grown, and despite mutual attempts to rekindle the relationship, it ultimately failed, as disconnection was both easier and safer for the child.

Her description is empathetic to both parties, neither party is made out to be a monster, which is a gift of hers...

Lena says

I completely and utterly enjoyed this book and really enjoy Alice Miller. The only complaint I have about her books is that they can be a little repetitive but hey at-least then younger forget it!

Absolutely LOVED this book!

Chris says

I liked it. From the widely regarded author of *The Drama of the Gifted Child* (which I also liked a lot), Alice Miller expounds here on, among other things, the harm done by physical discipline and mistreatment of children generally, historical and contemporary vignettes featuring the impact of mistreatment, examples in context across a number of domains, and a general approach to 'working through' this sort of trauma. I found the vignettes impactful and largely valid, albeit without 'proof', per se...though, in my experience a lot of psychotherapy is done by feel, so proof isn't always readily available. The approach presented is pretty standard psychoanalytic fare, and given its more general nature, is likely to be more useful to those with some background than to those who just feel stuck and are looking for a way through.

In short, definitely worth a read, though will likely be more applicable for those with either training or experience in the realm of psychoanalysis/therapy, as it isn't data or proof-driven and doesn't offer any kind of step by step entre for those without basis.

Tamara says

Although I agree with the principles and ideals set forth in this book, the tone is noxious. It spews forth like the diatribe of a zealot and leaves casual readers like myself feeling like if you are not with her you are against her. I would not recommend as an introductory book into the ramifications of corporal punishment.

jo says

Αυτη πιστευω πως ειναι η πρωτη φορα που διαβαζω ενα βιβλιο ψυχολογιας,απο την αρχη μεχρι το τελος,και το λατρεψα.Μπορω να σου πω με ελαχιστα λογια τι θελει να σου πει το βιβλιο:ΜΗΝ ΧΤΥΠΙΑΤΕ ΤΑ ΠΑΙΔΙΑ ΣΑΣ.

Η Alice Miller ειναι κατα της σωματικης τιμωριας,αλλα και του εξευτελισμου του παιδιου και αυτο που ειναι ακρετα τρομαχτικο ειναι οτι δεν αναφερεται στην μορφη βιας που ειναι κατακριτα απο ολους,αλλα σε αυτη που χρησιμοποιουν ολοι οι γονεις.Ελαφρια μπατσασκια για να μην κλαιει ? μια σφαλιαρα αν αρχισει και κανει σκηνη στο μαγαζι με τα παιχνιδια.Σου εξηγει πως αυτες οι μορφες βιες δημιουργουν τραυματα στα παιδια και πως αυτα τους εμποδιζουν απο το να γινουν και αυτοι καλοι γονεις,μιας και γιατι δικαιολογουν τους γονεις τους για τουτη τους την βια επειδη τους αγαπουν.Αλλα η αληθεια ειναι οτι πολλοι ανθρωποι εχουν μεινει για παντα μεσα τους εκεινο το πληγωμενο παιδι και δεν μπορουν να μεγαλωσουν.

Μεσα απο τα εργα της προσπαθησε να ξυπνησει τον κοσμο γυρω της,αναμεσα σε αυτον και η εκκλησια,για τις βλαβερεις συνεπειας αυτης της παιδαγωγικης που εκεινη ονομαζει "μαυρη" αλλα ειδε οτι ο κοσμος εχει βαθεια μεσα του ριζωμενη την αποψη πως λιγο ξυλο "στρωνει χαρακτηρα".Σου εξηγει πολυ ομορφα γιατι ενας καλος ψυχοθεραπευτης μπορει να βοηθησει οποιονδηποτε να βγει απο την φυλακη που τον εχουν καταδικασει τα παιδικα του τραυματα,μονο αν το θελησει πραγματικα.Και πως το σωμα θυματα τα τραυματα,ασχετα εαν το μυαλο προσπαθει να τα κρυψει hence ψυχοσωματικες ασθενειες!

Η γραφη του βιβλιου ειναι εξαιρετικη,η συγγραφεας σου δινει πολυ σαφες περιγραφες των συναισθηματων και στα δινει ολα με τετοιο τροπο που σε βαζει σε σκεψεις.Σου ξυπναει μεσα σου την επιθυμια να κοιταξεις και εσυ εκεινο το παιδι μεσα σου στα ματια.

Το συστήνω σε όσους ενδιαφέρονται για την ψυχολογία και σε όσους είναι γονείς. A definite must read.

<https://cherrybookreviews.wordpress.com/>

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Sue says

Intriguing, sometimes disturbing, frequently thought-provoking. A book for the layman about the effects of childhood traumas and neglect, the denial that can result, and the continual cycle of repeated violence. One or two inconsistencies and illogical leaps, but very readable; should be read by anyone who is a parent!
