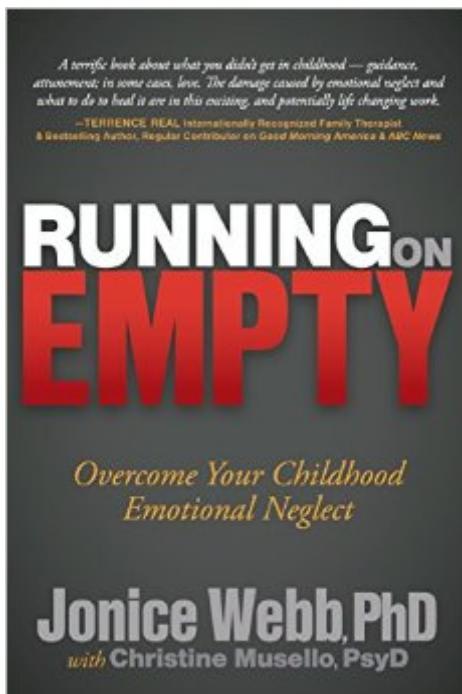


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# Running On Empty: Overcome Your Childhood Emotional Neglect



## **Synopsis**

Running on Empty is the first self-help book about Emotional Neglect: an invisible force from your childhood which you can't see, but may be affecting you profoundly to this day. It is about what didn't happen in your childhood, what wasn't said, and what cannot be remembered. Do you sometimes feel as if you're just going through the motions in life? Are you good at looking and acting as if you're fine, but secretly feel lonely and disconnected? Perhaps you have a fine life and are good at your work, but somehow it's just not enough to make you happy. If so, you are not alone. The world is full of people who have an innate sense that something is wrong with them. Who feel they live on the outside looking in, but have no explanation for their feeling and no way to put it into words. Who blame themselves for not being happier. If you are one of these people, you may fear that you are not connected enough to your spouse, or that you don't feel pleasure or love as profoundly as others do. Perhaps when you do experience strong emotions, you have difficulty understanding or tolerating them. You may drink too much, or eat too much, or risk too much, in an attempt to feel something good. In over twenty years of practicing psychology, many people have arrived in Jonice Webb's office, driven by the threat of divorce or the onset of depression, or by loneliness, and said, ""Something is missing in me."" Running on Empty will give you clear strategies for how to heal, and offers a special chapter for mental health professionals. In the world of human suffering, this book is an Emotional Smart Bomb meant to eradicate the effects of an invisible enemy.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

It took me years to finally meet with a therapist. My life was great--right? Plenty of friends, great career...so why this dark, heavy feeling I always carried around? What WAS it? Well my therapist encouraged me to pick up *Running on Empty* and I finally have the answer. The book's author, Dr. Jonice Webb, describes and coins the term, "emotional neglect" with such detail and accuracy it's almost scary. Who knew how common this is and that others feel this way too?? I literally laughed and cried throughout the book. And just when I started to think, "oh goodness, am I repeating this pattern with my own children?" Dr. Webb writes, "The effects of Emotional Neglect can be reversed. And you're about to learn how to reverse those parental patterns for yourself, and for your children. Keep reading. No self-blame allowed.". (How did she KNOW that's where I was going??). As you can see, I highly recommend this book. The topic resonated with me and the writing style was flowing, kind and easy to understand. Thank you!

As a therapist, I work with clients who feel inadequate or dissatisfied with their lives and often they are confused about how they got where they are. People frequently have trouble seeing the clues to their current difficulties as they look back through their childhoods. Dr Webb's primary insight helps to explain why it's so hard for many people to understand their own emotions - She talks about the concept of emotional neglect as what didn't take place in the interactions between parents and children and how this in turn leads to specific, predictable challenges as people develop. Because it's common for people to consider their childhoods as 'normal' - you don't miss what you didn't have- people don't know that something's amiss until these gaps become visible in adulthood. One of the many strengths of Dr. Webb's book is how she portrays the various worlds that children grow up in, showing with great immediacy and detail, how various kinds of parents (12 well- drawn types ranging from the authoritarian to the workaholic to the well-meaning- but- emotionally- neglected themselves parent) contribute to missed opportunities for healthy development. Her intelligent, empathic explanations of what is happening in the moment and over time will help people recognize how things may have gotten off track in their own lives. Offering a model of healthy parenting and a quick course on what leads to sound emotional development in children, the lapses become that much easier to recognize and emotions become more understandable. The next part of the book is devoted to identifying practical ways that people can build or strengthen those undeveloped parts of themselves. These strategies are helpful, but Dr. Webb's conceptualization of emotional neglect and its consequences, explained in non-jargony terms, will be what is most empowering for people as they strive to move ahead in their lives.

This book is AMAZING. I rarely write book reviews, but I cannot say enough good things about this book. The author succinctly conveys difficult content in a clear, compassionate voice. As a first-generation Asian-American woman, I think this book has tremendous applications for the immigrant community. This book gave me the language to reframe how I saw my childhood and parents. It changed my perception of self and others. It helped me understand what my parents' and my generation never gave or received, and why that can create such pain. It also helped validate many of the choices I've made as a parent, in balancing structure and discipline with unconditional love and nurturing. Without generalizing too much, I can also see emotional neglect as one of many explanations for some of the antisocial behaviors I see among my children's peers. This allows me to not judge or blame people, but rather feel compassion and kindness. I highly recommend this book if you grew up feeling unseen, unheard, unattached, unappreciated, overlooked, or overburdened.

This book may be helpful to those who have been racking their brains for some repressed childhood trauma to explain what feels like a lifetime of depression, isolation or anxiety - only to come up empty-handed. While emotional neglect can be vividly evident in certain childhood memories, it's more often hidden in a series of smaller, missed opportunities that accumulate over time to send a message that feelings are not something to be discussed. In accessible and empathetic prose, the author explains how this one unifying theme can connect seemingly disparate symptoms experienced in adulthood, ranging from suicidal thoughts to issues with self-discipline.

Reading this book has made me think not only about my own parenting skills and struggles, but also got me to reflect on my childhood and the emotional support I did or did not get. I think others who are introspective and reflective about these areas will appreciate the depths of this book. Dr. Webb speaks to parents, adult children and practitioners in this well researched and honestly written guide to overcoming "emotional neglect." I was hesitant to read it, thinking it might be another "parent bashing and blaming" session. But it is not! Dr. Webb has great empathy for adults as parents and adults who think back to the "white spaces" of their childhood. She has a professional, but personable and caring tone of voice in her writing that makes the reader feel that she truly wants to guide parents/adult children along the path to awareness and also healing from "Emotional Neglect." There is nothing bashing or shaming in her message in this book. I can tell that she enjoys her research and work. How honorable that she dedicated the book to her clients. She really sums it up in her introduction when she says that often it's not "what happened to you as a child, but rather

what did NOT happen" What was NOT talked about. What guidance and issues were NOT addressed. What feelings were NOT labelled and honored. She gives a refreshing new way to think about our childhood so that we can have a new perspective and approach to our own parenting. A must read for parents and practitioners !!

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