



The Gift of Failure: How the Best Parents Learn to Let Go So Their Children Can Succeed

By Jessica Lahey

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NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

In the tradition of Paul Tough's *How Children Succeed* and Wendy Mogel's *The Blessing of a Skinned Knee*, this groundbreaking manifesto focuses on the critical school years when parents must learn to allow their children to experience the disappointment and frustration that occur from life's inevitable problems so that they can grow up to be successful, resilient, and self-reliant adults.

Modern parenting is defined by an unprecedented level of overprotectiveness: parents who rush to school at the whim of a phone call to deliver forgotten assignments, who challenge teachers on report card disappointments, mastermind children's friendships, and interfere on the playing field. As teacher and writer Jessica Lahey explains, even though these parents see themselves as being highly responsive to their children's well being, they aren't giving them the chance to experience failure—or the opportunity to learn to solve their own problems.

Overparenting has the potential to ruin a child's confidence and undermine their education, Lahey reminds us. Teachers don't just teach reading, writing, and arithmetic. They teach responsibility, organization, manners, restraint, and foresight—important life skills children carry with them long after they leave the classroom.

Providing a path toward solutions, Lahey lays out a blueprint with targeted advice for handling homework, report cards, social dynamics, and sports. Most importantly, she sets forth a plan to help parents learn to step back and embrace their children's failures. Hard-hitting yet warm and wise, *The Gift of Failure* is essential reading for parents, educators, and psychologists nationwide who want to help children succeed.

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Editorial Review

Review

“Instead of lecturing us about what we’re doing wrong, Jessica Lahey reveals what she did wrong with her own children and students—and how she systematically reformed her ways. A refreshing, practical book for parents who want to raise resilient kids but aren’t sure how to start.” (Amanda Ripley, author of *The Smartest Kids in the World*)

“This fascinating, thought-provoking book shows that to help children succeed, we must allow them to fail. Essential reading for parents, teachers, coaches, psychologists, and anyone else who wants to guide children towards lives of independence, creativity, and courage.” (Gretchen Rubin, author of *The Happiness Project*)

“It’s hard to overstate the importance of this book. *The Gift of Failure* is beautifully written; it’s deeply researched; but most of all it’s the one book we all need to read if we want to instill the next generation with confidence and joy.” (Susan Cain, author of *Quiet*)

“Lahey offers one of the most important parenting messages of our times: Unless we allow our children to learn how to take on challenges, they won’t thrive in school and in life. Her extremely helpful book tells her story, compiles research, and provides hundreds of doable suggestions.” (Ellen Galinsky, author of *Mind in the Making*)

“How can we help our children grow to be resourceful, happy adults? Lahey shows in practical terms how to know what your child is ready for and how to offer support even as you encourage autonomy. A wise, engaging book, steeped in scientific research and tempered with common sense.” (Daniel T. Willingham, PhD, author of *Why Don't Students Like School?*)

“Through an artful combination of anecdote and research, Lahey delivers a lesson that moms and dads badly need to learn: that failure is vital to children’s success. Any parent who pines for a saner, more informed approach to child-rearing should read this book.” (Jennifer Senior, author of *All Joy and No Fun*)

“Lahey has many wise and helpful words...ones that any parent can and should embrace.” (Publishers Weekly)

From the Back Cover

Modern parenting is defined by an unprecedented level of overprotectiveness: parents now rush to school to deliver forgotten assignments, challenge teachers on report card disappointments, mastermind children’s friendships, and interfere on the playing field. As teacher, journalist, and parent Jessica Lahey explains, even though these parents see themselves as being highly responsive to their children’s well-being, they aren’t giving them the chance to experience failure—or the opportunity to learn to solve their own problems.

Everywhere she turned, Lahey saw an obvious and startling fear of failure—in both her students and her own children. This fear has the potential to undermine children’s autonomy, competence, motivation, and their relationships with the adults in their lives. Providing a clear path toward solutions, Lahey lays out a blueprint with targeted advice for handling homework, report cards, social dynamics, and sports. Most important, she sets forth a plan to help parents learn to step back and embrace their children’s setbacks along with their

success.

About the Author

Jessica Lahey is an educator, speaker, and writer. She has been an English, Latin, and writing teacher in middle and high school for over a decade, writes the biweekly Parent-Teacher Conference advice column for the New York Times, is a contributing writer at the *Atlantic*, and appears as a commentator on Vermont Public Radio. Jessica earned a JD from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a concentration in juvenile and education law. She lives in New Hampshire with her husband and two sons.

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From reader reviews:

Marcos Anderson:

Book will be written, printed, or outlined for everything. You can know everything you want by a reserve. Book has a different type. As it is known to us that book is important factor to bring us around the world. Next to that you can your reading expertise was fluently. A book *The Gift of Failure: How the Best Parents Learn to Let Go So Their Children Can Succeed* will make you to be smarter. You can feel a lot more confidence if you can know about almost everything. But some of you think that will open or reading some sort of book make you bored. It is far from make you fun. Why they may be thought like that? Have you seeking best book or suitable book with you?

Marlin Peterson:

This *The Gift of Failure: How the Best Parents Learn to Let Go So Their Children Can Succeed* book is simply not ordinary book, you have after that it the world is in your hands. The benefit you get by reading this book is usually information inside this book incredible fresh, you will get facts which is getting deeper you read a lot of information you will get. That *The Gift of Failure: How the Best Parents Learn to Let Go So Their Children Can Succeed* without we realize teach the one who looking at it become critical in imagining and analyzing. Don't possibly be worry *The Gift of Failure: How the Best Parents Learn to Let Go So Their Children Can Succeed* can bring when you are and not make your tote space or bookshelves' grow to be full because you can have it inside your lovely laptop even phone. This *The Gift of Failure: How the Best Parents Learn to Let Go So Their Children Can Succeed* having good arrangement in word and also layout, so you will not experience uninterested in reading.

Tony Sanford:

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