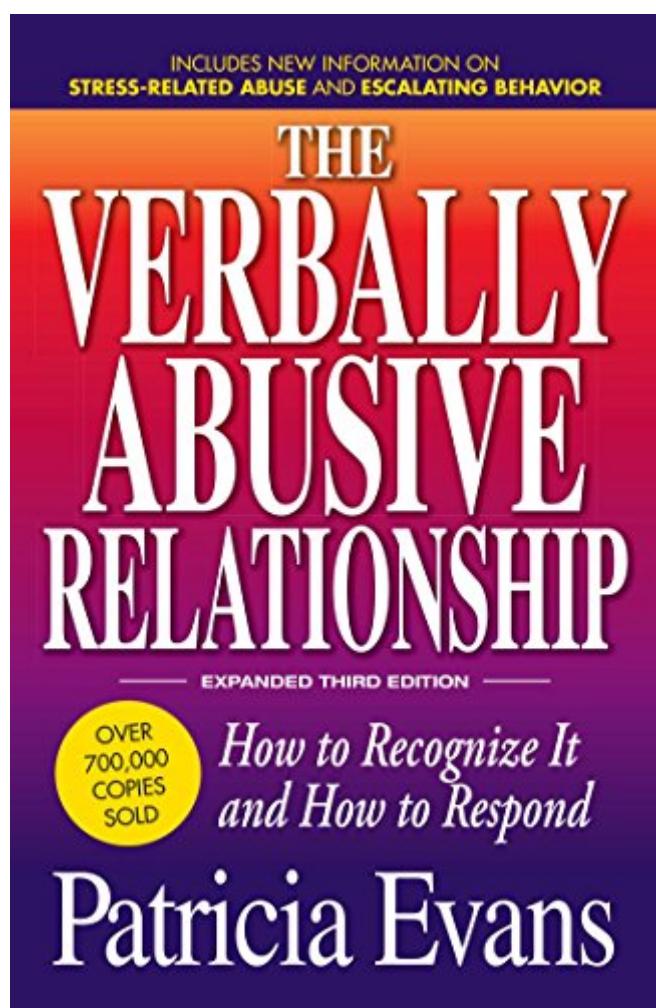


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# The Verbally Abusive Relationship, Expanded Third Edition: How To Recognize It And How To Respond



## **Synopsis**

In this fully expanded and updated third edition of the bestselling classic, you learn why verbal abuse is more widespread than ever, and how you can deal with it. You'll get more of the answers you need to recognize abuse when it happens, respond to abusers safely and appropriately, and most important, lead a happier, healthier life. In two all-new chapters, Evans reveals the Outside Stresses driving the rise in verbal abuse - and shows you how you can mitigate the devastating effects on your relationships. She also outlines the Levels of Abuse that characterize this kind of behavior - from subtle, insidious put-downs that can erode your self-esteem to full-out tantrums of name-calling, screaming, and threatening that can escalate into physical abuse. Drawing from hundreds of real situations suffered by real people just like you, Evans offers strategies, sample scripts, and action plans designed to help you deal with the abuse - and the abuser. This timely new edition of *The Verbally Abusive Relationship* puts you on the road to recognizing and responding to verbal abuse, one crucial step at a time!

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Several weeks before leaving my abusive husband after 42 years of marriage, I read "The Verbally Abusive Relationship" by Patricia Evans. I noted many passages that clearly described the abusive tactics he was using on me. The information, however, was just so irrefutable, so undeniably true, it was far too painful for me to fully realize and assimilate at the time. Sixteen months after leaving him, I picked the book off the closet shelf and re-read it, this time noticing many more abusive characteristics of his and experiences I went through in the past. Numerous passages were boldly marked this time, and many more notes were made. Virtually every page held so many similarities to what I had been experiencing in this abusive relationship. After decades of being unaware of this type of abuse, I finally arrived at the realization that he was indeed extremely verbally abusive during our marriage. This was a tremendous revelation to me, as I had unconsciously hidden and "forgotten" even the physical assault that occurred early in the marriage. Before we married, however, he was attentive and I thought he loved me as I loved him. I thought that verbal abuse was mainly name calling and hurling outright insults. My to be ex husband did not often call me names and obvious insults were rather rare, although he did call me stupid and crazy a few times. Yes, he did beat me severely early in our marriage, but he was mainly a covert abuser. His methods were insidious and had me feel that I was to blame for just about everything that went wrong. He would often criticize men and women on TV, their physical faults, mouth too large, crooked nose, too fat, too thin, etc. He was particularly critical of confident women broadcasters, and would be very insulting of them. I finally stood up to him and let him know that he was being very cruel. In hindsight I realize I felt more protective of other people than myself. One of the most painful and damaging aspects of his abusive ways was his obvious delight in seeing my hurt responses to his insidiously cruel remarks... the smirk, the laugh, the hate-filled look. As time went on, I learned to hide my feelings and to refrain from reasoning or arguing with him. I could never "win" anyway. It hurts to realize that the one who promised to love and cherish you didn't really care for you. He seemed to get a lot of pleasure in seeing me suffer physically as well. It was a freezing cold day and I went out to the garage to bring in an item from the car. I somehow locked myself out of the house. I was dressed only in my indoor clothing, and frantically knocked on the doors and windows for him to let me inside. I was becoming very cold, and being in my 60's, was concerned that I would quickly become hypothermic. He did not answer my cries. I went in side the car, but it wasn't any warmer, as I didn't have the keys to start it. I was too embarrassed to ask for help from a neighbour. Finally after about 30 minutes or so and repeated knocks and cries he answered the door. He said he didn't hear me earlier. He appeared very unconcerned about me and the whole incident. I just let it go as I knew better than to argue with him...he would just yell irrational insults at me. I just couldn't

handle his insults any longer. Shortly afterwards, when our son and his wife and children were visiting, he recounted his story, about my locking myself out of the house. He made me sound stupid. I was hurt, and quietly remarked that I became very cold and wondered when he would answer the door. Before we married, I happily looked forward to being his wife. I was a loving and attentive wife to him, and was faithful to him throughout our marriage, working very hard in raising our children, cooking good nutritious meals and maintaining the home and businesses we owned. He basically ignored our children, even though I tried to speak with him, telling him that they would be harmed by his emotional distance. He did not care to listen and brushed me off. Almost all of my efforts seemed to be wasted on him. This happens very often in abusive relationships...the abuser is never really satisfied. He would criticize and downgrade me often, and I began to feel worthless. I had no self-esteem as a result. Like so many abusers, he was very polite and good-mannered to others. Family, business associates, friends at church... they were completely oblivious to his abusive ways. He had developed a charming persona that he could control at will, that he could switch on and off like a light bulb, and he especially liked to play up this persona in church. He had a dark and angry side that he did not display to others. For brief periods over that long marriage I went to several counsellors for "depression" but I didn't mention my husband's abuse, so the counsellors were not able to help me. This shows how blinded I was to his abuse. I descended ever more deeply into the abyss of despair and self-blame. Several years ago, I finally mentioned his physical abuse to a new counsellor. At the time I had not yet acknowledged his verbal and emotional abuse. The counsellor suggested I close my eyes and pretend I was on a beach somewhere with my abusive husband. I didn't retain that counsellor for long, either. The author mentions the description of the Covert Abuser as "also being angry and hostile. However, they don't express anger in the pattern of the anger addict... they may be more inclined to develop long-range plans to control and manipulate their partners." How terribly true this was in my case. The author also describes Denial as being "one of the most insidious categories of verbal abuse because it denies the reality of the partner." Again, completely true in my experience and I could not agree more. In the months leading to the separation, he would become angry and ask why I married him. I would reply because I loved him very much. He would sneer and make a denigrating sound. This, I felt, was his covert way of turning around the usual "Why did I marry you" remark. I didn't ask him the same question. I was afraid of his response. Another illustration of his type of abuse: Several years ago, he and I were having lunch at a restaurant. There was no argument involved, either beforehand or at the time (as if that should matter). I started choking on food stuck in my throat. He was sitting next to me, and made absolutely no effort to help me. He simply sat there while I was desperately trying to cough up

the food, feeling I would die. Finally I managed to do so with no help from him. After arriving home, I calmly asked him why he didn't help me. He muttered something like "I dunno," and appeared completely unconcerned about this incident. I felt he hated me so much that he wished I would die. In the months before leaving, I had tried to talk with him, asking him to offer a heartfelt apology and seek help. He would become very angry and would refuse, blaming me instead. "The Verbally Abusive Relationship" helped me to become aware of verbal abuse and the damage that it causes in terms of destroying self-esteem, spiritual, emotional and physical health. The perpetrator of abuse ravages the soul, crushes the spirit and can ultimately murder the partner that is held in the abuser's grip. I highly recommend this book to anyone who is going through abuse and as a warning to others. This book will provide valuable and enlightening information to anyone who wants to become more informed about the tactics of the abuser.

This book would have merited 5 stars except for one major issue. The author does an OUTSTANDING job picking apart the confusing, tangled web that chronic verbal abuse creates. Being the partner of an abusive spouse, and having no prior experience to abuse, I had absolutely no idea that my plummeting self esteem, my feelings of total overwhelming confusion, were the result of verbal abuse. I, like most people, I imagine, assumed that "verbal abuse" was someone calling you a terrible name. I did not know about gaslighting. Had I known, and recognized the verbal abuse for what it was, I would have also understood that abuse tends to escalate. I might have been long gone before my spouse ever got the chance to put his hands on me. So to that end, I wish I would have read this book many months ago. My 3 star rating stems from the last quarter of the book, in which the author discusses how one ought to respond to the verbal abuse once she's recognized it: "Stop it! Don't talk to me like that! Look at me! Nonsense! Why did you say?" This is dangerous. Dangerous and ill advised. The author lost me completely with that. Apparently, she recommends that approach as kind of a way to test the severity of the problem: answering back in this way might surprise the abusive partner into "snapping out of it". Another suggestion the author makes is to tape record the abusive partner, the idea being that if he/she objects, he/she knows that what they are doing is wrong. I don't want to assume that all verbal abusers are going to some point escalate into physical abusers. But the strong possibility exists. There is an undeniable likelihood that to an angry and controlling partner, any or all of the above responses will be viewed as complete outrageous defiance. And they will feel perfectly entitled to their reaction to this defiant new you, which will involve punishment. Patricia Evans, thank you. But readers, do yourself a favor. When the realization of what your partner is doing to you dawns, don't risk your personal safety by confronting

them. Get your exit strategy in order. Don't wait.

This is the finest book I have yet read on understanding and developing good boundaries and creating a courageous authenticity with one's self, and in one's relationship with others. Puts a stake in the heart of childhood and adult relational trauma, and blazes the pathway out of the pain, confusion, dysfunction and life-damage that interpersonal abuses have left in their wake. Cannot recommend highly enough!

This book changed my life in the 1990s. This book is my biography and helped me so much, I have given away every copy I bought. This is my third or fourth copy. Sadly, there are so many of us who are verbally abused and don't even know the pathology. Every page is highlighted and relevant in my, now divorced, life. It saved my life, since verbal abuse can change to physical abuse on a dime. Thank you, Patricia Evans, for ending abuse in my life.

Very good book I read it and it show me what was going on in my relationship. I thought something was wrong . I just couldn't identify what is was he did everything in this book to me the blaming ,withholding,accusing,dumping his anger on me. I very insidious, and . I have mean and evil. To beat the person down with nasty words and comments, the person your supposed to love. It will do horrible thinks to you . What's worse is when they deny it. You need to read all of her books to understand what being done to you . It was very shocking to me and very devastating. The overt and covert abuse,to make his self feel better.

Ms. Evans, thank you so much. I truly thought that I was the only one to ever go through this experience. That if I could just be nice enough, give enough, prove that I was on his side.... It still makes me so sad, but your book helped so much to make me realize that there's nothing that I can do--he had to want to change, and he didn't.

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