

DR
AVERY
NEAL

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LOVING YOU SHOULDN'T BE HURTING ME

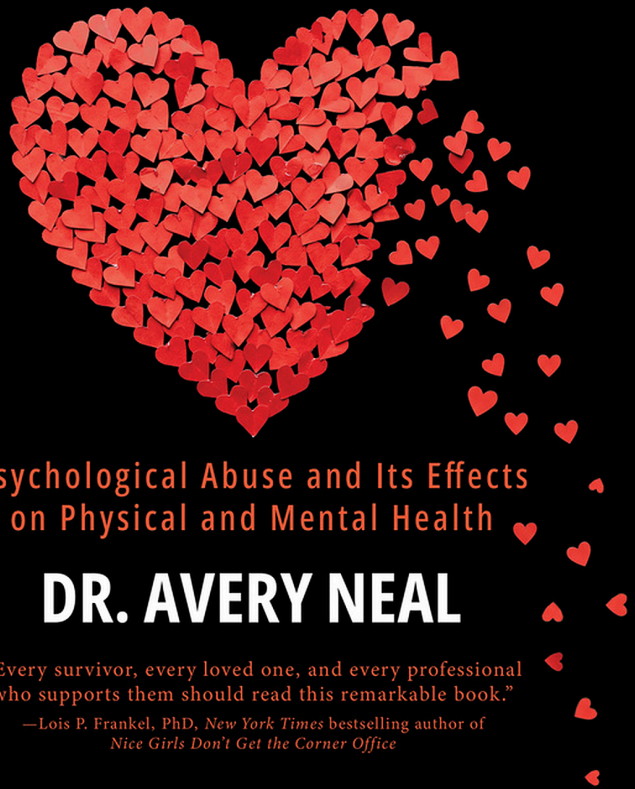
*Psychological Abuse and Its Effects
on Physical and Mental Health*

DR. AVERY NEAL

PhD, LPC · Psychotherapist, Researcher,
International Author

Foreword by Dr. Alex Howard

LOVING YOU SHOULDN'T BE HURTING ME



*Psychological Abuse and Its Effects
on Physical and Mental Health*

DR. AVERY NEAL

"Every survivor, every loved one, and every professional
who supports them should read this remarkable book."

—Lois P. Frankel, PhD, *New York Times* bestselling author of
Nice Girls Don't Get the Corner Office

A clinician's account of the abuse that leaves no visible mark, what it does to the body and the mind, and a structured path to recovery.

Founder

of psychologicalabuse.com and The
Neal Method courses

12 languages

in which Dr. Neal's first book, *If He's So
Great, Why Do I Feel So Bad?*, is
published

20,000+

people worldwide have taken her
courses on recognizing and recovering
from abuse

The most common form of intimate partner violence is the one that leaves no bruise. This book gives it a name, a mechanism, and a way out.

Nearly half of women in the United States have experienced psychological aggression from an intimate partner. Most never call it abuse. There are no bruises to photograph and no incident to report, only a slow erosion of confidence, memory, and health that the person living through it learns to explain away.

Loving You Shouldn't Be Hurting Me treats that erosion as the medical and psychological event it is. Drawing on years of clinical practice and the research literature on intimate partner violence, Dr. Avery Neal shows that psychological abuse underpins every other form of mistreatment, that its effects on the body and mind rival those of physical violence, and that subtle, chronic manipulation often does the deepest harm.

The book moves from recognition to recovery. Readers learn the characteristics of someone who abuses, the profile of the person most often targeted, and the dynamics that hold the relationship in place. They then follow what happens inside the body, including the nervous system, and why so many survivors carry unexplained anxiety, exhaustion, and illness for years. The final section introduces the Neal Method and the CLEAR Framework, a structured path built on clarity, liberation, empowerment, autonomy, and resilience.

Whether the relationship is ongoing, long over, or rooted in childhood, readers find immediate validation and a clear plan for healing the mind, body, and spirit.

Every survivor, every loved one, and every professional who supports them should read this remarkable book.

LOIS P. FRANKEL, PHD

New York Times bestselling author of *Nice Girls Don't Get the Corner Office*

WHAT THE BOOK ESTABLISHES

- 01** Psychological abuse is the underpinning of every other form of abuse.
- 02** Its effects on physical and mental health are as damaging as those of physical abuse.
- 03** Recovery is a structured process. The Neal Method and CLEAR Framework map it step by step.

WHO IT IS FOR

- Anyone questioning whether a current or past relationship is abusive
- Therapists, counselors, physicians, and advocates who support them
- Hospitals, behavioral health centers, and community organizations building trauma-informed programs

THE SCOPE

Psychological abuse is the most common form of intimate partner violence and the least often recognized.

57.6 million

Women in the United States who have experienced psychological aggression by an intimate partner

BLACK ET AL., 2011

1 in 2

Americans who report experiencing psychological abuse by a partner during their lifetime

CDC, 2010

840 million

Women worldwide, one in three, who have experienced partner or sexual violence in their lifetime

WHO, 2023

EQUAL IN HARM

Clinical research finds the effects of psychological abuse to be as detrimental as those of physical abuse, and subtle psychological abuse inflicts the most devastating damage.

KARAKURT AND SILVER, 2013

WHAT IT IS

A repeated pattern of criticism, manipulation, isolation, intimidation, and control used to erode another person's sense of reality, worth, and independence.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

- 1 Words, memories, or intentions are routinely twisted or denied
- 2 Constant apologizing, or rehearsing conversations before they happen
- 3 Criticism disguised as jokes, concern, or honesty
- 4 Money, time, friendships, or family contact are monitored or restricted

- 5 Affection and approval are withdrawn as punishment
- 6 Unexplained anxiety, exhaustion, or physical illness
- 7 Loss of confidence in one's own judgment

Seven signs drawn from the book.

Four parts, moving from the research to the relationship, to the body, and finally to recovery.

01

INTRODUCTION

A Brief Word

What Research on Psychological Abuse Tells Us

02

CHARACTERISTICS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE

Psychological Abuse as the Underpinning of All Forms of Abuse

Characteristics of Someone Who Abuses

Profile of a Victim of Abuse

Dynamics of an Abusive Relationship

03

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE BODY AND THE MIND

Intimate Partner Violence and Physical Health

Intimate Partner Violence and Mental Health

Psychological Abuse and the Nervous System

04

LET THE HEALING BEGIN

The Path Forward. The Neal Method and the CLEAR Framework

Creating Healthier Relationships with Others and Ourselves

Your Self-Esteem. Trust, Intuition, Worth, and Dignity

Supporting Your Body

FROM THE FOREWORD

“Dr. Neal leads the way academically, not simply synthesizing what is already understood, but contributing to it and moving it forward.”

DR. ALEX HOWARD

THE CLEAR FRAMEWORK

Clarity

Liberation

Empowerment

Autonomy

Resilience



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

DR. AVERY NEAL

PhD, LPC

Avery Neal, PhD, LPC, is a practicing psychotherapist, researcher, and international author whose work has become a reference point for recognizing subtle abuse. In 2012 she founded Women's Therapy Clinic in Houston, which provides therapy and counseling for women across the lifespan, with a focus on depression, anxiety, prenatal and postpartum mental health, divorce recovery, and healing from psychological abuse.

Her first book, *If He's So Great, Why Do I Feel So Bad?* (Kensington Books), has been translated and published in twelve languages and gave readers around the world the language to name what they were living through. Her online courses have been taken by more than 20,000 people, and her curriculum is used by individuals, professionals, universities, and organizations. She hosts a podcast of the same name.

Dr. Neal has spoken at conferences worldwide alongside leading experts in psychology, and the International Association of HealthCare Professionals nominated her as one of Houston's top psychologists. Her work combines clinical research, psychoeducation, and trauma-focused practice into the Neal Method.

AT A GLANCE

Founder

Women's Therapy Clinic, est.
2012

Educator

20,000+ course participants
worldwide

Author

Two books. First published in
twelve languages

Host

*If He's So Great, Why Do I Feel
So Bad?* podcast

FEATURED IN

OPRAH.COM • COUNSELING TODAY •
AMERICAN COUNSELING ASSOCIATION • DAILYOM •
BUSTLE • POPSUGAR • BEST SELF MAGAZINE •
HITCHED MAGAZINE • BOOKTRIB •
CONSCIOUS LIFE • PKWY MAGAZINE

DR.
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INTERNATIONAL AUTHOR,
RESEARCHER AND
PSYCHOTHERAPIST

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PRAISE

Early endorsements for the book, and what readers said about the one that came before it.

“Every survivor, every loved one, and every professional who supports them should read this remarkable book.

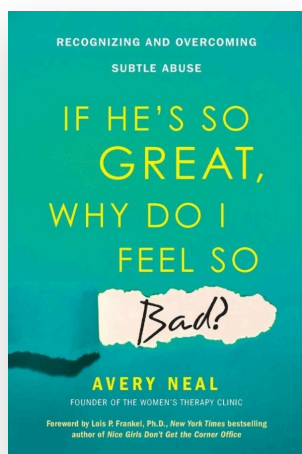
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“Dr. Neal leads the way academically, not simply synthesizing what is already understood, but contributing to it and moving it forward.

DR. ALEX HOWARD

From the foreword



If He's So Great, Why Do I Feel So Bad? (Kensington Books), translated and published in twelve languages.

READER RESPONSE TO DR. NEAL'S FIRST BOOK

4.6 OUT OF 5 STARS · 260+ AMAZON REVIEWS

Until recently, I was completely in denial of my abusive relationship. This one helped me name what was happening.

AMAZON READER

Dr. Neal writes with perfect balance of clinical insight and genuine compassion.

AMAZON READER

This book gave me the language I needed to understand my experience.

AMAZON READER

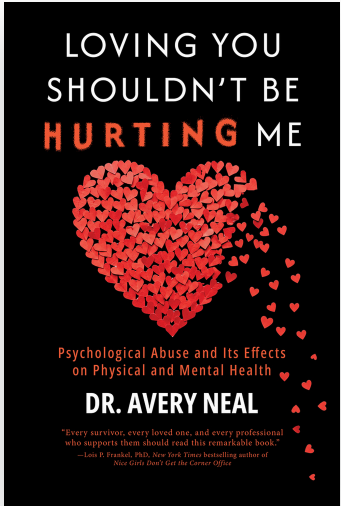
I have recommended this book to every friend who has ever questioned their relationship.

AMAZON READER

BOOK DETAILS

Publication information and media contacts.

PUBLICATION DETAILS	
TITLE	Loving You Shouldn't Be Hurting Me
SUBTITLE	Psychological Abuse and Its Effects on Physical and Mental Health
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FOREWORD	Dr. Alex Howard
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CATEGORY	Psychology / Self-Help / Abuse and Recovery



High-resolution cover art, author photography, and the Dr. Avery Neal logo are available on request.

REVIEW COPIES, GALLEYS, AND EXCERPTS

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INTERVIEWS, APPEARANCES, AND SPEAKING

Dr. Avery Neal
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averyneal.com

AVAILABLE FOR

Broadcast, podcast, and print interviews. Expert commentary on psychological abuse, intimate partner violence, women's mental health, and trauma recovery. Keynotes and trainings for clinical, corporate, and community audiences, in person and remote.

FOR ORGANIZATIONS

Hospitals, behavioral health centers, employers, and community organizations can pair bulk orders with programming, from a 90-minute strategy session with Dr. Neal (100 copies) to a live team training with leadership toolkit (500 copies) and a custom branded edition with an on-site keynote (1,500 copies).

A NOTE FOR COVERAGE

When reporting on intimate partner violence, please consider including the National Domestic Violence Hotline, 1-800-799-7233, available 24 hours a day. Dr. Neal is glad to provide guidance on safe, trauma-informed framing for any segment or story.