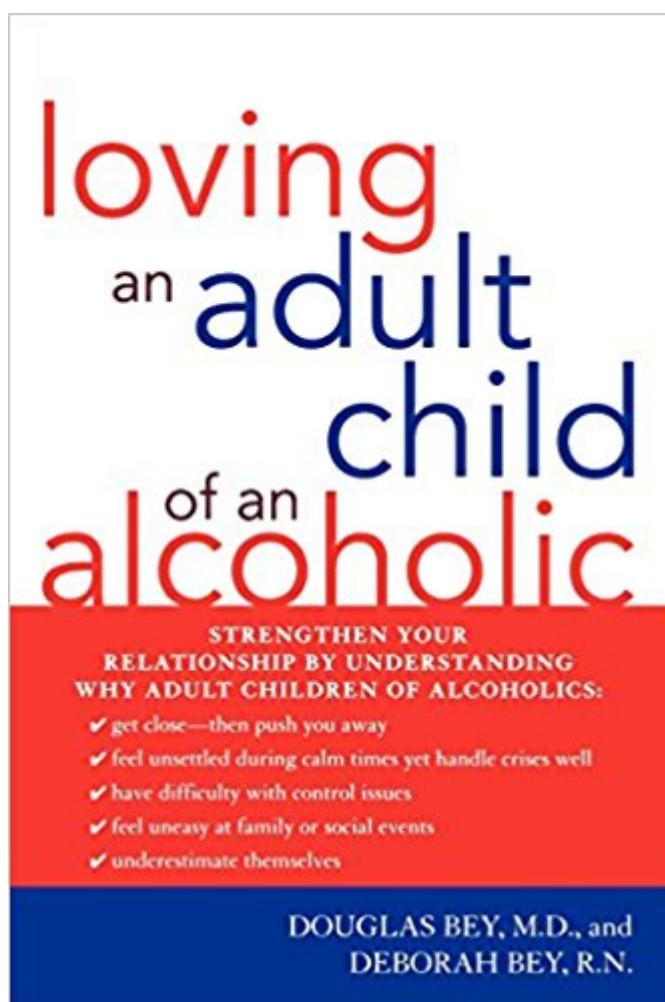


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# Loving An Adult Child Of An Alcoholic



## **Synopsis**

The child of an alcoholic develops patterns of behavior during childhood which carry over into adult life. As children they were taught to cover up the family secret and suppress their feelings. No matter what is going on, as adults, when asked how she or he is doing your partner will likely answer "fine." Distrust, fear of abandonment, and sensitivity to criticism are all major issues for your adult child. Recognizing these patterns and changing the ones that cause problems will help you and your partner enjoy a deeper relationship.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Most apparent in the reading of this book is that Doug and Deborah Bey believe in the possibility of adult children of alcoholics being able to garner and sustain healthy couple-ship. Addressing the well known issues of lack of trust, hypervigilance, difficulty with conflict, inability to play, assuming the worst, and fear of commitment are just a few of the dynamics in which they offer support and direction for both partners. With a wealth of examples, compassion, and humor this couple offers validation and hope to the possibilities of developing secure and healthy relationships. (Claudia Black, Ph. D., best-selling author of *It Will Never Happen To Me: Growing Up with Addiction as Youngsters, Adolescents, Adults*)

Dr. Douglas Bey is a Distinguished Life Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association, served as a board examiner for the American Board of Neurology and Psychiatry for many years, was past president of his county medical society, his hospital medical staff, and his county board of health.

Deborah Bey is an adult child of an alcoholic. She trained at Barnes Hospital in St. Louis and was the head nurse on a hospital chemical dependency unit for a number of years. She later worked in a multidisciplinary private psychiatric group practice with Dr. Bey where she counseled ACOAs on an individual and group basis.

After 25 years of marriage, I did not understand what I perceived as changes in my husbands behavior. Up until that point he was a very dependable, reliable father and husband. He began acting out with sporadic unexpected behavior. He announced, "I feel like I have been taking care of everyone else's needs in life, but my own ". He and I seemed to be drifting apart. Sometimes we were close, other times he would push me away. He seemed to be moving towards a more selfish life, one that did not include me or our children. The behavior forced me into therapy, by myself--he would not attend--just to figure out how to deal with it. My counselor suggested this book. My husband is an Adult Child of an Alcoholic (ACOA), and could be the poster child for this book. We were too busy rearing our own children to ever really effectively discuss his life growing up as the oldest son of an alcoholic father. Reading this book erased my ignorance about ACOAs. I became more empathic to my husbands past and came to understand why he was acting out. His negative behavior accelerated when he turned the same age his alcoholic father died. I learned a lot from reading this book, and was able to approach my husband with patience and empathy. This book points out the negative sides of ACOAs, but offers a positive approach and solutions for those of us who are involved in a relationship with ACOAs. My husband was open to discussing aspects of this book, and could see himself in many of the examples noted. The book really helped our communication. I thanks the Beys for taking the time to write this book, and highly suggest it for those who want to continue a loving relationship with an ACOA.

In my view, this book was sensitively and compassionately written. It does not take the, "here are ten sure-fire steps for fixing a relationship with an adult child of an alcoholic (ACOA)" approach. It focuses much more on trying to explain ACOA behavior, attitudes, and feelings. I found the book useful for understanding possible perspectives of adult children of alcoholics (ACOA). It also helped me identify some apparently illogical and self-destructive behavior of ACOA, as well as the reasons for them. Overall, I came away from the book with a much deeper understanding of the inner life of ACOA's, recognizing that thoughts and feelings still differ widely from person to person. I recommend the book to those seeking to better understand and love ACOA's in a way they can appreciate. It does not answer every question or give advice for every situation, but it does give a

very helpful overview. Deeper reading can follow in books dedicated to specific issues.

This book helped me realize that I was causing more harm than good to my marriage. I LOVE my beautiful wife and want the world to know this. If you are in a relationship with an ACOA this is your "Instruction Manual" to understanding and loving them. This book will help you understand the PAIN they have and still endure. This book will help you understand the unique and wonderful qualities ACOA'S bring to their relationships. I wish I would have had enough sense to read this book a long time ago. Thank you Dr. Bey and Dr. Bey!

I was looking for a book that I could use as a tool to communicate with the person I was in a relationship with, but also found it to be a tool to open communication with my siblings and discuss what happened to us and how and why we react to things. Of course, not everything pertains everyone, but that's what's great about it too. I read it, highlighted what I thought pertains to me, wrote notes on the side that said definitely me, might be me, not me. I asked the people who have relationships with me to read the book and put post its with the sections they wanted to discuss with me. It definitely helped me understand why I react to situations, made me aware of any irrational reactions that I have, and some tips on how to prevent the irrational behavior. It also made the person I'm in a relationship with understand where the irrational reaction come from and the book gave hints on how to prevent and address the issues.

This has really helped me with my fiancee. It made it much easier to understand what she was going through and allowed us both to work through it. I can say without reservation, that this book is RIGHT when it says relationships with ACAs can be the best you have ever had!

The premise is dealing with an ACOA who recognizes his/her issues and is inviting someone else in. It's not helpful in dealing with defensive ACOA's who don't accept that their past is even relevant to their adult life, or think that everyone else is either abnormal, against them, or always at fault. That's not a knock against the book and the book even points out the lack of help for such, it's FYI about the book's perspective. The use of humor to deal with issues is a good technique, though there's too much emphasis on it once the point is made. There's also too much reliance on the supernatural and mythology as a way to navigate life with an ACOA. If you're looking for a medical or proper psychological approach to ACOA issues this isn't it.

The information is valuable.

Good book with useful information. It's a hard read so have a fresh mind when you sit down to absorb it. This is not mindless reading.

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