



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

By Jessica Lahey

# Book summary & main ideas

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## Summary:

In *The Gift of Failure: How the Best Parents Learn to Let Go So Their Children Can Succeed*, author Jessica Lahey examines the ways in which parents can help their children become more independent and resilient by allowing them to experience failure. Lahey argues that by allowing children to experience failure, parents can help them develop the skills and confidence they need to succeed in life. She also argues that by allowing children to experience failure, parents can help them develop a sense of autonomy and self-efficacy. Lahey provides practical advice on how to create an environment in which children can experience failure without feeling overwhelmed or

discouraged. She also provides strategies for helping children develop the skills they need to cope with failure and to learn from it. Finally, Lahey discusses the importance of teaching children to take responsibility for their actions and to develop a sense of self-discipline. The book is an invaluable resource for parents who want to help their children become more independent and resilient.

Main ideas:

***#1. The importance of allowing children to experience failure: Failure is an essential part of learning and growth, and parents should not shield their children from it. Instead, they should provide guidance and support to help their children learn from their mistakes.***

Failure is an important part of life, and it is essential for children to experience it in

order to learn and grow. When children are allowed to experience failure, they learn how to cope with disappointment, develop resilience, and gain a better understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses. This helps them to become more independent and self-reliant, and to develop the skills they need to succeed in life.

Parents should not try to protect their children from failure, but instead provide guidance and support to help them learn from their mistakes. This can include helping them to identify the cause of their failure, encouraging them to take responsibility for their actions, and teaching them how to use failure as an opportunity to learn and grow. Parents should also provide emotional support and reassurance to help their children feel safe and secure in the face of failure.

Allowing children to experience failure is an important part of parenting, and it can help them to develop the skills and resilience they need to succeed in life. By providing guidance and support, parents can help their children to learn from their mistakes and use failure as an opportunity for growth.

***#2. The power of autonomy: Children should be given the freedom to make their own decisions and mistakes, as this helps them develop problem-solving skills and resilience.***

The power of autonomy is an important concept for parents to understand when raising their children. Autonomy is the ability to make ones own decisions and take responsibility for the consequences. When children are given the freedom to make their own decisions and mistakes, they are able to develop problem-solving

skills and resilience. This is because they are able to learn from their mistakes and develop the ability to think for themselves. Autonomy also helps children to become more independent and self-reliant, as they are able to make decisions without relying on their parents. Furthermore, autonomy can help children to develop a sense of self-confidence and self-esteem, as they are able to take ownership of their decisions and actions.

Autonomy is an important part of a child's development, and it is important for parents to provide their children with the freedom to make their own decisions and mistakes. This will help them to develop problem-solving skills, resilience, independence, and self-confidence. Parents should also be supportive and understanding when their children make mistakes, as this will help them to learn from their mistakes and become more

self-reliant. By providing their children with the power of autonomy, parents can help them to become successful and confident adults.

***#3. The dangers of over-parenting: Over-parenting can lead to a lack of self-confidence and an inability to cope with failure, as children are not given the opportunity to learn from their mistakes.***

The dangers of over-parenting are numerous and can have a lasting impact on a child's development. When parents are overly involved in their child's life, they can create an environment where the child is not given the opportunity to learn from their mistakes. This can lead to a lack of self-confidence and an inability to cope with failure, as the child is not given the chance to learn from their mistakes and develop resilience. Additionally,



over-parenting can lead to a lack of independence and an inability to make decisions on their own, as the child is not given the opportunity to explore and make decisions for themselves. Finally, over-parenting can lead to a lack of creativity and problem-solving skills, as the child is not given the opportunity to think outside the box and come up with creative solutions to problems.

In order to ensure that children are able to develop the skills they need to be successful, it is important for parents to provide a balance of support and guidance while also allowing their children to make mistakes and learn from them. This will help children to develop the confidence and resilience they need to be successful in life.

***#4. The need for structure: Structure and boundaries are important for***



***children, as they provide a sense of security and help them learn to manage their own behavior.***

Structure and boundaries are essential for children, as they provide a sense of security and help them learn to manage their own behavior. Without structure, children can become overwhelmed and confused, leading to feelings of insecurity and anxiety. Structure helps children understand what is expected of them and provides a framework for them to follow. It also helps them to develop self-discipline and self-control, as well as the ability to make decisions and take responsibility for their actions.

Having clear rules and expectations in place can help children feel safe and secure. It can also help them to develop a sense of responsibility and respect for themselves and others. Structure can also

help children learn to manage their emotions and behavior, as well as develop problem-solving skills. By providing structure and boundaries, parents can help their children learn to make good choices and become independent, responsible adults.

***#5. The importance of teaching children to take responsibility: Parents should teach their children to take responsibility for their actions and to learn from their mistakes.***

Teaching children to take responsibility for their actions is an important part of parenting. It helps children learn to make good decisions, to think through the consequences of their actions, and to understand that their choices have an impact on others. Taking responsibility also helps children develop self-discipline and resilience, as they learn to accept the

consequences of their actions and to move forward.

When children take responsibility for their actions, they learn to be accountable for their mistakes and to take ownership of their successes. This helps them develop a sense of pride and self-confidence, as they learn to trust their own judgment and to take initiative. Taking responsibility also helps children develop problem-solving skills, as they learn to identify and address issues in their lives.

Teaching children to take responsibility for their actions is an important part of helping them become successful, independent adults. By teaching children to take responsibility for their actions, parents can help them develop the skills and confidence they need to make good decisions and to lead successful lives.

**#6. *The value of intrinsic motivation: Intrinsic motivation is more effective than external rewards, as it encourages children to take ownership of their learning and to develop a sense of purpose.***

Intrinsic motivation is an important factor in a child's development, as it encourages them to take ownership of their learning and to develop a sense of purpose.

Intrinsic motivation is more effective than external rewards, as it encourages children to take ownership of their learning and to develop a sense of purpose.

Intrinsic motivation is based on the idea that children are naturally curious and motivated to learn, and that they should be encouraged to explore and discover their own interests. This type of motivation is often more powerful than external rewards, as it encourages children to take ownership of their learning and to develop

a sense of purpose. Intrinsic motivation also helps children to develop a sense of autonomy and self-efficacy, which can lead to greater academic success.

Intrinsic motivation is also beneficial for children's mental health, as it can help to reduce stress and anxiety. When children are intrinsically motivated, they are more likely to be engaged in their learning and to take ownership of their own progress. This can help to reduce feelings of helplessness and frustration, and can lead to greater self-confidence and self-esteem. Intrinsic motivation can also help to foster a sense of connection and belonging, as children are more likely to feel supported and valued when they are intrinsically motivated.

Overall, intrinsic motivation is an important factor in a child's development, as it encourages them to take ownership of

their learning and to develop a sense of purpose. Intrinsic motivation is more effective than external rewards, as it encourages children to take ownership of their learning and to develop a sense of purpose. Intrinsic motivation can also help to reduce stress and anxiety, and can foster a sense of connection and belonging. Therefore, it is important for parents to foster intrinsic motivation in their children, as it can lead to greater academic success and improved mental health.

***#7. The power of positive reinforcement: Positive reinforcement is an effective way to encourage children to take risks and to learn from their mistakes.***

Positive reinforcement is a powerful tool for parents to use when teaching their children. It is a way to encourage children

to take risks and to learn from their mistakes. Positive reinforcement can be used to reward children for trying something new, for taking a risk, or for persevering in the face of difficulty. It can also be used to reinforce good behavior and to encourage children to continue to strive for excellence. Positive reinforcement can be used to build self-esteem and to help children develop a sense of accomplishment.

Positive reinforcement can be used in a variety of ways. It can be verbal, such as praising a child for a job well done, or it can be tangible, such as providing a reward for completing a task. It is important to remember that positive reinforcement should be used in moderation and should be tailored to the individual child. Too much positive reinforcement can lead to over-dependence on rewards and can lead



to a lack of intrinsic motivation.

Positive reinforcement is an effective way to help children learn and grow. It can help children develop a sense of self-worth and can help them to take risks and to learn from their mistakes. By using positive reinforcement, parents can help their children to become confident, independent, and successful individuals.

***#8. The need for self-discipline: Self-discipline is an important skill for children to learn, as it helps them to stay focused and to manage their own behavior.***

Self-discipline is an essential life skill that helps children to stay focused and to manage their own behavior. It is important for children to learn self-discipline from an early age, as it will help them to develop the skills they need to succeed in life.

Self-discipline teaches children to be responsible for their own actions and to make decisions that are in their best interest. It also helps them to develop self-control, which is important for managing their emotions and behavior. Self-discipline also helps children to develop resilience and perseverance, which are important for overcoming obstacles and achieving their goals.

In order to help children develop self-discipline, parents should provide clear expectations and consistent consequences for their children's behavior. Parents should also provide positive reinforcement when their children demonstrate self-discipline. Additionally, parents should model self-discipline by setting a good example for their children. Finally, parents should encourage their children to take responsibility for their own actions and to make decisions that are in

their best interest. By teaching children self-discipline, parents can help them to develop the skills they need to succeed in life.

***#9. The importance of teaching children to be resilient: Resilience is an important skill for children to learn, as it helps them to cope with failure and to bounce back from setbacks.***

Teaching children to be resilient is essential for their future success.

Resilience is the ability to cope with failure and to bounce back from setbacks. It is a skill that can be learned and developed over time, and it is important for children to understand that failure is a part of life and that it is okay to make mistakes.

Resilience helps children to develop a growth mindset, which is the belief that they can learn and grow from their mistakes. It also helps them to develop

problem-solving skills and to become more independent. Teaching children to be resilient can help them to become more confident and to develop a positive attitude towards life.

When teaching children to be resilient, it is important to provide them with a supportive environment. This means providing them with encouragement and praise when they make mistakes and helping them to understand that failure is a part of learning. It is also important to provide them with opportunities to practice resilience, such as allowing them to take risks and to make mistakes without fear of punishment. Finally, it is important to model resilience yourself, as children learn best by example.

***#10. The need for balance: Parents should strive to find a balance between providing support and allowing their***

## ***children to experience failure.***

Finding the right balance between providing support and allowing children to experience failure is essential for parents. On the one hand, parents should provide their children with the necessary support to help them succeed. This could include providing emotional support, helping them with their studies, and teaching them important life skills. On the other hand, parents should also allow their children to experience failure. This could include allowing them to make mistakes, encouraging them to take risks, and teaching them how to learn from their mistakes. By allowing their children to experience failure, parents can help them develop resilience and the ability to cope with difficult situations.

Finding the right balance between providing support and allowing children to

experience failure is not easy. Parents should strive to create an environment where their children feel safe and supported, while also encouraging them to take risks and learn from their mistakes. This can be achieved by providing guidance and support, while also allowing children to make their own decisions and learn from their mistakes. By finding the right balance between providing support and allowing children to experience failure, parents can help their children develop the skills and resilience they need to succeed in life.

***#11. The power of communication: Open communication between parents and children is essential for helping children learn from their mistakes.***

The power of communication is an invaluable tool for parents and children alike. Open communication between

parents and children can help children learn from their mistakes and develop important life skills. When parents are open and honest with their children, it allows them to understand the consequences of their actions and how to make better decisions in the future. It also helps children to develop problem-solving skills and build self-confidence.

Additionally, open communication between parents and children can help to foster a strong bond between them, which can lead to a more positive relationship.

Open communication between parents and children can also help to create an environment of trust and understanding. When children feel that their parents are open and honest with them, they are more likely to be open and honest with their parents. This can help to create a safe space for children to express their feelings and ask questions without fear of



judgement. Additionally, open communication can help to create a sense of mutual respect between parents and children, which can lead to a more harmonious relationship.

The power of communication is an invaluable tool for parents and children alike. Open communication between parents and children can help to create a strong bond, foster trust and understanding, and help children learn from their mistakes. By creating an environment of open communication, parents can help their children develop important life skills and build self-confidence.

***#12. The importance of modeling: Parents should model the behavior they want to see in their children, as this helps them to understand the importance of taking responsibility for***

## ***their actions.***

Modeling is an important tool for parents to use when teaching their children how to take responsibility for their actions. By demonstrating the behavior they want to see in their children, parents can help them understand the importance of taking ownership of their decisions and actions. This can be done through setting a good example, such as by following through on commitments and taking responsibility for mistakes. Parents can also talk to their children about the consequences of their actions and how they can learn from them. By modeling the behavior they want to see in their children, parents can help them develop the skills and attitudes necessary to become responsible adults.

In addition to modeling the behavior they want to see in their children, parents should also provide guidance and support.

This can include providing clear expectations and boundaries, as well as offering praise and encouragement when children make good choices. Parents should also be willing to listen to their children and help them work through difficult situations. By providing a supportive environment, parents can help their children develop the skills and attitudes necessary to become responsible adults.

***#13. The need for empathy: Parents should show empathy and understanding when their children make mistakes, as this helps them to learn from their mistakes.***

Empathy is an essential part of parenting. When children make mistakes, it is important for parents to show understanding and compassion. This helps children to learn from their mistakes and to

develop resilience and self-confidence. By showing empathy, parents can help their children to understand that mistakes are part of life and that it is okay to make them. This can help children to develop the skills they need to make better decisions in the future.

Empathy also helps to create a strong bond between parents and children. When children feel that their parents understand and accept them, they are more likely to open up and share their feelings. This can help to create a trusting and supportive relationship between parents and children, which is essential for healthy development.

Finally, empathy can help to reduce conflict between parents and children. When parents show understanding and compassion, children are more likely to listen to their parents and to take their advice. This can help to reduce arguments

and to create a more harmonious home environment.

***#14. The value of failure: Failure is an important part of learning, and parents should not be afraid to let their children experience it.***

Failure is an essential part of learning and growth. It is through failure that we learn to persevere, to problem-solve, and to develop resilience. Parents should not be afraid to let their children experience failure, as it can be a valuable learning experience. When children are allowed to experience failure, they learn to take risks, to think outside the box, and to develop a sense of self-efficacy. They also learn to accept responsibility for their actions and to develop a sense of self-reliance. Failure can also help children develop a sense of empathy, as they learn to understand the feelings of others who have experienced

failure. Finally, failure can help children develop a sense of humility, as they learn to recognize their own limitations and to appreciate the successes of others.

In her book, *The Gift of Failure: How the Best Parents Learn to Let Go So Their Children Can Succeed*, Jessica Lahey argues that parents should not be afraid to let their children experience failure. She argues that failure can be a valuable learning experience, and that it can help children develop important skills and qualities. Lahey encourages parents to create an environment in which their children can take risks, make mistakes, and learn from their failures. She also encourages parents to provide their children with the support and guidance they need to learn from their mistakes and to develop the skills and qualities necessary for success.

**#15. *The importance of teaching children to problem-solve: Problem-solving skills are essential for helping children to learn from their mistakes and to become independent.***

Teaching children to problem-solve is an important part of helping them to become independent and successful adults.

Problem-solving skills help children to learn from their mistakes and to develop the ability to think critically and creatively.

When children are taught to problem-solve, they learn to identify the root cause of a problem and to develop strategies to address it. This helps them to become more resilient and to develop the confidence to tackle difficult tasks.

Problem-solving also helps children to develop the ability to think outside the box and to come up with innovative solutions to problems.



In addition, problem-solving skills help children to develop the ability to work collaboratively with others. By teaching children to problem-solve, they learn to listen to different perspectives and to work together to come up with solutions. This helps them to develop the skills necessary to work in teams and to collaborate with others. Problem-solving also helps children to develop the ability to think logically and to make decisions based on facts and evidence.

Overall, teaching children to problem-solve is an important part of helping them to become independent and successful adults. Problem-solving skills help children to learn from their mistakes, to think critically and creatively, and to develop the ability to work collaboratively with others. By teaching children to problem-solve, parents can help them to develop the skills necessary to become successful in the

future.

**#16. *The need for self-reflection: Self-reflection is an important skill for children to learn, as it helps them to understand their mistakes and to learn from them.***

Self-reflection is an essential skill for children to learn, as it helps them to recognize their mistakes and to learn from them. It is important for children to be able to take a step back and reflect on their actions and decisions, and to think about how they could have done things differently. Self-reflection can help children to develop a sense of responsibility and accountability for their actions, and to understand the consequences of their choices. It can also help them to develop problem-solving skills, as they learn to identify the root cause of their mistakes and to come up with solutions to prevent

them from happening again. Self-reflection can also help children to develop empathy and to understand the perspectives of others, as they learn to consider how their actions may have impacted those around them.

Self-reflection is a skill that can be taught and nurtured in children from a young age. Parents can help their children to develop this skill by encouraging them to think about their actions and decisions, and to talk about how they could have done things differently. Parents can also model self-reflection by reflecting on their own mistakes and discussing how they could have done things differently. By teaching children the importance of self-reflection, parents can help them to become more responsible and accountable for their actions, and to develop problem-solving skills that will serve them well into adulthood.

***#17. The power of positive relationships: Positive relationships between parents and children are essential for helping children to learn from their mistakes.***

Positive relationships between parents and children are essential for helping children to learn from their mistakes. When parents are supportive and encouraging, children are more likely to take risks and try new things, even if they fail. This allows them to learn from their mistakes and develop resilience. Positive relationships also help children to develop self-confidence and self-esteem, which are essential for success in life. Parents can foster positive relationships by listening to their children, showing respect, and providing guidance and support. They should also be willing to give their children the freedom to make mistakes and learn from them. By doing so, parents can help their children to

develop the skills and confidence they need to succeed in life.

Positive relationships also help children to develop strong social skills. When children feel supported and accepted by their parents, they are more likely to be open and honest with their peers. This helps them to build strong relationships with others and develop the skills they need to navigate social situations. Positive relationships also help children to develop empathy and understanding for others, which are essential for successful relationships in adulthood.

Positive relationships between parents and children are essential for helping children to learn, grow, and develop into successful adults. By providing support, guidance, and encouragement, parents can help their children to develop the skills and confidence they need to succeed in life.

***#18. The importance of teaching children to set goals: Setting goals helps children to stay motivated and to learn from their mistakes.***

Teaching children to set goals is an important part of helping them to develop into successful adults. Goals provide children with a sense of purpose and direction, and help them to stay motivated and focused on their tasks. Setting goals also helps children to learn from their mistakes and to develop resilience in the face of failure. When children set goals, they learn to take responsibility for their actions and to strive for success. Goals also help children to develop self-discipline and to stay organized. By setting goals, children learn to prioritize their tasks and to manage their time effectively.

Setting goals also helps children to develop a growth mindset, which is the

belief that they can improve their skills and abilities through hard work and dedication. When children set goals, they learn to take risks and to challenge themselves. This helps them to develop a sense of self-confidence and to become more independent. Goals also help children to develop a sense of accomplishment and pride in their achievements. By setting goals, children learn to take ownership of their actions and to strive for excellence.

Overall, teaching children to set goals is an important part of helping them to develop into successful adults. Goals provide children with a sense of purpose and direction, and help them to stay motivated and focused on their tasks. Setting goals also helps children to learn from their mistakes and to develop resilience in the face of failure. By setting goals, children learn to take responsibility for their actions and to strive for success.



***#19. The need for self-care: Self-care is important for helping children to cope with failure and to learn from their mistakes.***

Self-care is an essential part of helping children to learn from their mistakes and to cope with failure. It is important for parents to provide their children with the tools and support they need to develop resilience and to learn from their mistakes. Self-care can include providing children with a safe and supportive environment, teaching them problem-solving skills, and helping them to develop a positive attitude towards failure. It is also important for parents to model self-care by taking care of their own needs and setting a good example for their children. By providing children with the tools and support they need to cope with failure, parents can help their children to develop the skills and confidence they need to succeed in life.

Self-care is also important for helping children to develop a healthy relationship with failure. It is important for parents to help their children to understand that failure is a part of life and that it can be a valuable learning experience. Parents can help their children to develop a growth mindset by teaching them to view failure as an opportunity to learn and grow. By helping children to understand that failure is a part of life, parents can help their children to develop the resilience and confidence they need to succeed.

Self-care is an essential part of helping children to learn from their mistakes and to cope with failure. By providing children with the tools and support they need to develop resilience and to learn from their mistakes, parents can help their children to develop the skills and confidence they need to succeed in life. By helping children

to understand that failure is a part of life and that it can be a valuable learning experience, parents can help their children to develop a healthy relationship with failure and to develop the resilience and confidence they need to succeed.

***#20. The value of failure: Failure is an essential part of learning and growth, and parents should not be afraid to let their children experience it.***

Failure is an important part of life, and it can be a valuable learning experience for children. When children are allowed to experience failure, they learn how to cope with disappointment, develop resilience, and gain the confidence to try again.

Parents should not be afraid to let their children experience failure, as it can be a powerful tool for growth. Failure teaches children how to problem-solve, take responsibility for their actions, and develop

a sense of self-efficacy. It also helps them to understand that mistakes are part of the learning process and that it is okay to make them. By allowing children to experience failure, parents can help them to develop the skills and confidence they need to succeed in life.

Failure can also be a great motivator. When children experience failure, they are more likely to work harder and strive for success. They learn that hard work and dedication can lead to success, and that failure is not the end of the world. This can help them to develop a strong work ethic and a positive attitude towards learning. By allowing children to experience failure, parents can help them to develop the skills and confidence they need to succeed in life.

Ultimately, failure is an essential part of learning and growth. Parents should not

be afraid to let their children experience it, as it can be a powerful tool for growth. By allowing children to experience failure, parents can help them to develop the skills and confidence they need to succeed in life.

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