

If people can't take care of themselves, should they be allowed to take care of a child? Dysfunctional families are bad for the mental and sometimes physical well-being of their children. Children aren't always taken care of by their parents and their needs are hardly ever met due to their parents' negative behavior (Counseling). Jeannette Walls proved that even though you may live in a dysfunctional family, you can still push through and be successful. (Walls).

Jeannette Walls grew up with a dysfunctional family. Dysfunctional families are different from normal, healthy families and are bad for children's mental and sometimes physical health (Santa). Her lack of parenting was fairly obvious because she had to take on adult tasks at a young age, which included boiling hot dogs at the age of three. She was seriously injured when her dress caught on fire from the stove and she had to be rushed into the hospital. Her father thought that he knew better than the doctors did and they left before she was healed, leaving her scarred for life. Mrs. Walls did not have to deal with physical abuse, but her father was an alcoholic and she and her two sisters and brother would have to pull him off their mother when he got into one of his drunk rages. His father was obviously an alcoholic and his family did not do anything about because they were either scared or they did not care enough (Walls).

The technical terms for her mother's bad parenting would be a deficient parent. Deficient parents force their children to take on adult responsibilities and often make their children their caretakers. It is usually caused by a severe mental illness or physical injuries, mental illness in Jeannette's case, these parents tend to put their own needs in front of their child's needs causing children to become more aware of other people's

feelings more than their own feelings. These feelings and habits usually carry over into adulthood (Santa).

Her father was an alcoholic, but she thought of it more as a “little drinking problem” because she looked up to him so much and thought he was perfect. He tried to stop for her as a birthday present, but he continued anyway. He would steal money from his children in order to buy more alcohol (Walls). Kids with alcoholic parents have a higher chance of being alcoholics themselves. Symptoms of alcoholic parents include, hard times expressing themselves, not being able to trust other people, and having a hard time with intimate relationships. These feelings, just like the feelings from deficient parents, carry into their adult life (Counseling).

Other kinds of parents in a dysfunctional family are controlling parents and abusive parents. Controlling parents are the opposite of deficient parents, they don't let their kids do things that are appropriate for their age. They feel the need to latch on to their kids in order to not become obsolete. They are afraid that their kids will not need them and that makes them feel abandoned. The children feel like they are powerless and inadequate (Santa).

Abusive parents are what the name says, abusive parents. There are three different types of abusive parents, physical, verbal, and sexual. Physically abusive parents hit their children frequently and do it for their own emotional need, although they may put it off as “discipline”. Physical abuse includes any serious injuries from the parent that they did on purpose. Abusive parents don't contain their urge to hit and resulted in violence. Victims often have hard times with trust and feeling safe. Sexual

abuse is a parent is physical contact between them and their child that is done for their own enjoyment and must be kept secret. These acts are inappropriate and the child is usually too scared to say anything because of the consequences that might happen. The feeling of worthlessness and shame tends to carry on into their adult life which makes it hard for them to be in a relationship. She dealt with this kind of abuse a few times, once from a neighborhood kid when she was playing hide and seek, and another time she was abused by her uncle when she was staying at her grandmother's house when they had to move to another place to go (Santa).

Jeanette also dealt with poverty, being that her family hardly ever had money because of their dad's alcohol problem. When he had a job he would quit because he was too lazy and claimed that he had a million dollar idea that was going to make them rich. None of these ideas ever happened and he just drank his life away. They went hungry a lot of the time and never lived anywhere nice. They could not afford electricity so they were cold in the winter and their food often spoiled, but they had to eat it anyway. Not everything about her life was terrible though. She learnt a lot of life skills from her father, like how to survive in the wild and other skills (Yargers).

Mrs. Walls had to deal with a deficient mother and an alcoholic semi-abusive father. She managed to overcome these obstacles and persevere though and has a successful life. Her book can encourage and inspire people in these situations to not give up hope because she had a tough time and though all of the hard times, she made it through and ended up being happily married with a comfortable life. Just because you

are in a dysfunctional family, or you are having tough times you should not give up hope
(Atlantic).