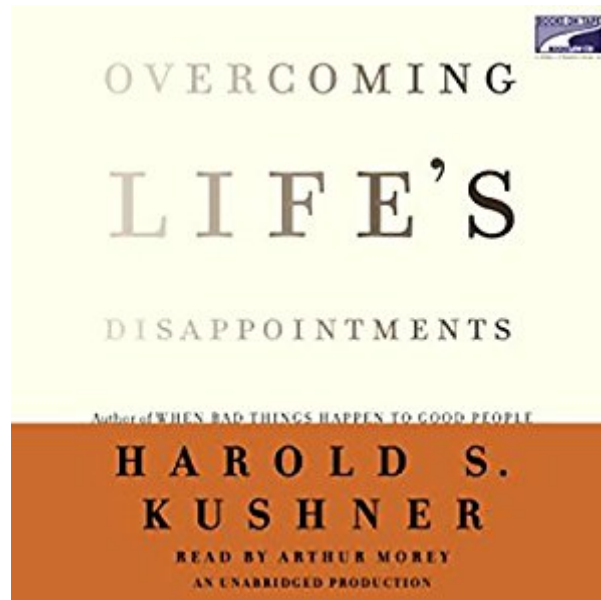




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# Overcoming Life's Disappointments



## Synopsis

From Harold S. Kushner, the author of *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*, a book that shows us how to be our best selves even when things don't turn out as we had hoped—that is, how we can overcome life's disappointments. Kushner turns to the experience of Moses to find the requisite lessons of strength and faith. Moses towers over all others in the Old Testament: he is the man on the mountaintop to whom God speaks with unparalleled intimacy, and he leads his people out of bondage. But he is also deeply human, someone whose soaring triumphs are offset by frustration and longing: his people ignore his teachings, he is denied entrance to the Promised Land, his family suffers. But he overcomes. From the life of Moses, Kushner gleans principles that can help us deal with the problems we encounter. Through the example of Moses' remarkable resilience, we learn how to weather the disillusionment of dreams unfulfilled, the pain of a lost job or promotion, a child's failures, divorce or abandonment, and illness. We learn how to meet all disappointments with faith in ourselves and the future, and how to respond to heartbreak with understanding rather than bitterness and despair. This is a book of spiritual wisdom—as practical as it is inspiring. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I read two or three of Kushner's books years ago, and found them to be incredibly wise and comforting. This one was a disappointment. Maybe I expected too much: I wanted help with a growing regret that I am not accomplishing or will never accomplish things in my life that I had always expected to do. It is a pervasive, over-all melancholia, and is based in seeing your health,

vigor, and opportunities available only to the young slipping away. Instead, Kushner offers advice for losing one's job, or divorcing. The segment in the book on Alzheimer's, which is of particular importance to me, meandered off into a description of the Greek tale of the forgetting power of the waters of Lethe, and never came back to offer advice or comfort. Overall, I found the topics arranged in a rather bewildering way, with the transitions to Moses and his problems somewhat strained. This was unfortunately not what I was looking for.

Absolutely fantastic book on the subject. If I would have thought of it as a religious book I may have hesitated to get it, but by reading the free sample available knew it was just perfect. Excellent down-to-earth and extremely useful thoughts. It's not a book about a set of beliefs but about helping humans of all backgrounds to cope with life's unexpected situations. I wish I had read this long time ago and saved myself quite a bunch of headaches.

Great book. I bought it a few years ago and read it in paperback. I bought it again recently to read on my Paperwhite. I have read all but one of Kushner's books and have most of them more than once. I wish he was 25 years younger. If he was, perhaps he would honor us with many more books!

Since I am Christian clergy, almost all of my study of the Bible has been dominated by Christian scholars. Thus I have not had much exposure to what Jewish scholars say about their own texts. This was a refreshing way to look at the life of Moses. Also, the subject matter was appropriate for me because I read it first just after I left parish ministry and now am reading it again, a few years later, with a small group. Many of us in the group are in our 50's and 60's, so the material is not only interesting as study of the Bible, but also helpful in negotiating this time in our lives. I recommend it to anyone, especially people who take a religious view on life.

I have enjoyed all of Rabbi Kushner's books, but this one is my favorite. If you suffer from low self-esteem, this book will help you put your failures in perspective. Even high achievers fail repeatedly. People who seem to be extremely successful often have agonizing failures in their history. Failure is part and parcel of the human condition. Our ultimate success should be judged, not on how many times we fail, but on how we live with and reach beyond our failures. Rabbi Kushner's wisdom and compassion are wonderful.

In my life I've read a huge number of books, to the point that some ideas are becoming to pop up

over and over again, but with Kushner's books, new insight poses itself regularly. I find myself underlining or highlighting, or feeling inclined to anyway, most of the book. There are so many tidbits in this book that I love that it's hard to single out one to share. One I liked: An old rabbi named Zusya was nearing death and became agitated at the thought. As he had led an exemplary life, his followers asked why. He said, if God asks me why I wasn't another Moses, I can answer that He did not give me the greatness of soul that He gave Moses. If God asks me why I wasn't another Solomon, I can answer that He did not give me the wisdom of Solomon. But when He asks me, Zusya, why weren't you Zusya, why were you not the person I gave you the ability to be, I will have no defense. Kushner's books are a blessing to me.

I wish I could hail this book from the rooftops for Thanksgiving and the holiday season. It is like stardust to the guy who feels like he's failed, his hopes dashed; the lady who thinks her life is a disappointment in an empty nest or that she didn't live up to her potential in her career; or anyone else who believes her or his road to money and glory has been forever blocked or even decimated. This book was published in 2006, written by Rabbi Harold Kushner, also the author of the bestseller "When Bad Things Happen to Good People." Whereas the latter was so helpful to those who, like Rabbi Kushner, lost a loved one, this book is manna, like grains of gratitude for seeing and grasping all that is good within your life, even when it seems that all has gone so wrong.

"Overcoming" is the book that others have since tried to write, like "The Up Side of Down: Why Failing Well is the Key to Success." This is not an overly religious book or a book only for Jews because it's written by a Rabbi. This is a spiritual book, a positive book, that invokes the life and failures of Moses for its lessons. If you know someone who has suffered a major life setback, lost a job, a house, a marriage, I cannot recommend to you highly enough that you give this book as a gift for the holidays.

Rabbi Harold Kushner is an amazing author. This book is what has helped me overcome some of life's setbacks. I have also given away a lot of these books to people who have lost businesses, gone through a terrible breakup, and people whose lives have been turned upside down.

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