

A young Black man with short, dark hair is looking upwards and to the left with a thoughtful expression. He is wearing a dark blue crew-neck sweater over a light-colored t-shirt. The background is a blurred, warm-toned indoor setting.

Finding Peace, Power, and Purpose When Life
Feels Unfair

A Young Mans Guide to Strength Without a Father

Dr. Edward Austin

Disclaimer This book gives tips based on my own study and life beliefs. It is not meant to replace advice from doctors, therapists, or other experts. Please talk to the right professionals before making big changes to your health, money, or life plans. Any use of this book's information is at the reader's own risk.

Table Of Contents

Still Rising: A Young Man's Guide to Strength Without a Father	2
Dedication	2
Author's Note	2
Chapter 1: The Fire Inside – What Is Anger?	3
Chapter 2: The Empty Space – Why Do I Feel This Way?	4
Chapter 3: It's Not My Fault – But It's My Fight	5
Chapter 4: You're Not Alone – Others Feel This Too	6
Chapter 5: Change Is Possible – You're Not Stuck	7
Chapter 6: Who's Got My Back – Finding the Right People	9
Chapter 7: Victory Mode – Accepting and Rising Above	10

Still Rising: A Young Man's Guide to Strength Without a Father

By Dr. Edward Austin

Dedication

To every young man that was forced into a situation that they had no choice or power to control—but that is ready to rise above all obstacles and hindrances to become the man of God they were meant to be.

Author's Note

I understand what it's like to feel invisible, abandoned, or left to figure life out on your own. Life can hit hard when the guidance, protection, and wisdom of a father aren't there. But I want you to hear this clearly: your story does not end with absence.

God didn't leave you alone without reason. He left you with the chance to grow, to fight through your pain, and to rise stronger than ever. This book is my way of walking with you, as a mentor, a brother, and a guide, through the anger, confusion, and frustration that often comes with growing up without a father figure.

Each chapter is designed to meet you where you are. You'll find truth, Scripture, real-talk, and actionable steps you can start implementing today. The goal isn't just survival—it's victory.

You were created for greatness. Let's start walking toward it together.

— Dr. Edward Austin

Chapter 1: The Fire Inside – What Is Anger?

"Be angry, and do not sin; do not let the sun go down while you are still angry." – Ephesians 4:26

Anger isn't evil. It's *energy*. And when you've grown up without a father, that energy can sometimes feel like a wildfire you can't control. You might feel it as rage, frustration, or even constant irritation. The problem isn't that you're angry—it's what you do with that anger.



Anger is your body telling you something isn't right. Your mind is screaming, your heart is hurting, and your spirit is wrestling with a sense of unfairness. That fire inside can burn down bridges or it can forge a stronger version of yourself.

Case Study: Marcus, 16, grew up in a home where his father wasn't present. Every time he felt rejected, he'd punch walls or yell at anyone who looked at him the wrong way. Marcus didn't know that anger is a signal, not the enemy. Once he learned to channel it through journaling, prayer, and purposeful action, his energy turned into determination and focus.

Action Box: Name It to Tame It

- When you feel anger rising, pause and breathe.
- Say out loud: "I'm angry because..." and finish the sentence.
- Write it down. Naming your anger gives you control over it.
- Pray: "God, help me channel this anger in a way that honors You."

Anger is real—but it doesn't have to control your life.

Chapter 2: The Empty Space – Why Do I Feel This Way?

"The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit." – Psalm 34:18

You feel this way because you were meant to have guidance, protection, and a father's love—and life didn't deliver it. That empty space leaves questions, doubts, and sometimes guilt.

The truth is: it's not your fault. You didn't choose this. You didn't fail. But your heart still hurts, and that's natural. Feeling abandoned, lonely, or frustrated doesn't make you weak—it makes you human.



A father's love is unique and plays a pivotal role in an individual's upbringing. It encompasses both guidance and protection, offering a sense of security and belonging. When you do not get this type of guidance and protection it can alter your perspective of what fathers do. They should serve as role models, exemplifying traits like strength, patience, and empathy.

Impacts of a Father's Love

- Emotional Stability: A loving father should provide emotional support, fostering stability and security.
- Role Modeling: By demonstrating positive behaviors, fathers help shape their children's values and attitudes.
- Encouragement and Motivation: Fathers often inspire their children to pursue their dreams and reach their full potential.

In conclusion, feeling the need for guidance, protection, and a father's love is a natural part of human experience. These elements are fundamental in nurturing a well-rounded and resilient individual, capable of navigating life's complexities with confidence and integrity.

Daily Practice: The Feelings Map

- Take a journal or notebook.
- List three things that trigger your anger or sadness.
- Write down the thoughts that follow.
- Ask God for wisdom on how to respond differently next time.

Understanding why you feel what you feel is the first step toward owning your story and stepping into the man God created you to be.

Chapter 3: It's Not My Fault – But It's My Fight

"Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you." – 1 Peter 5:7

Self-Blame

It's natural to wonder why a parent isn't present and to internalize the absence as something you caused. However, the decision for a father to be absent is multifaceted and often stems from circumstances beyond your control, such as personal issues, relationship challenges, or life events affecting your father.



Feeling "Not Good Enough"

You might think that if you were different, things would be better. This is a misconception. Your individuality and worth are not determined by your father's presence or absence. Each person brings unique qualities to the world, and your father's choices do not diminish your value.

But here's the hard truth—you do have a fight. You have a responsibility to heal, grow, and rise above the challenges. You can't change the past, but you can influence your future. That's your power. You are not alone, and it's essential to remind yourself that the absence of a father is not your fault. Embrace your journey with confidence, knowing that your worth is inherent and not defined by the presence or absence of anyone else.

Example: Jalen spent years blaming himself for his father's absence. It wasn't until he wrote a letter (never sent) expressing his feelings to God that he started to release the weight of guilt.

Action Box: Release Letter

- Write a letter to God or to your absent father.
- Express anger, sadness, confusion—say everything.
- Close with a prayer asking God to guide your heart toward healing.

Remember: forgiving doesn't mean excusing. It means freeing yourself to move forward.

Chapter 4: You're Not Alone – Others Feel This Too

"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up." – Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

Growing up without a father figure can be a challenging experience. It often leaves a void that seems difficult to fill. However, it's important to remember that you are not alone on this path. Millions of boys have walked the same road and have emerged stronger, turning their pain into purpose.

Look at LeBron James, Jay-Z, Denzel Washington—men who thrived despite fatherlessness. Their stories aren't about privilege—they're about resilience, faith, and self-discipline.



While growing up without a father figure can be challenging, it's important to focus on the possibilities for growth and transformation. By seeking support, embracing opportunities for development, and finding strength in personal experiences, it's possible to turn pain into purpose and pave the way for a brighter future.

Daily Action: Role Model Board

- Write down names of men (living, historical, or spiritual) you admire.
- Note qualities you want to emulate.
- Pray for guidance to develop those qualities in your own life.

You're part of a larger story. God has placed people and examples around you to inspire, guide, and remind you that you are not alone.

Chapter 5: Change Is Possible – You're Not Stuck

"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." –

Romans 12:2

Anger and frustration are powerful emotions that can seem overwhelming. Yet, they are not permanent states. With intentional effort, you can redirect these emotions into more constructive channels.

Transforming Reactions and Choices

Your reactions and choices are not set in stone. They are influenced by past experiences and current neural connections. However, by consciously altering how you react to situations, you can rewire these connections.



The human brain is a marvel of adaptability, constantly evolving and reshaping itself in response to experiences, thoughts, and actions. This ability is known as neuroplasticity. It means that our brains are not static but rather dynamic, capable of change throughout our lives.

Every habit you form is a testament to your brain's capacity for change. When you consistently perform a new action, neurons in your brain start to forge new pathways. Over time, these pathways become stronger, making the habit easier to perform. This is why habits, whether positive or negative, become ingrained in our routines.

By understanding how your brain works, you can move beyond anger and frustration, develop new habits, and make choices that align with the person you aspire to become. Remember, the path to change begins with a single step, and each step rewires your mind and character for a brighter future.

7-Day Reset Challenge

Day 1: Write down three personal strengths.

Day 2: Pray for clarity and patience.

Day 3: List three things that trigger your anger.

Day 4: Journal how you'll respond differently.

Day 5: Identify one mentor or trusted adult.

Day 6: Reflect on a Scripture that encourages you.

Day 7: Take one positive action toward a goal (school, skill, or relationship).

God has given you the power to transform your life, and small daily steps compound into lifelong change.

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Chapter 6: Who's Got My Back – Finding the Right People

"Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed." – Proverbs 15:22

Understanding the Need for Guidance

Seeking guidance, mentorship, and accountability is not a sign of weakness; rather, it reflects wisdom and maturity. Recognizing that we all have areas where we can grow and improve is a vital step towards personal development. Embracing guidance shows a willingness to learn and evolve.



Finding the Right Mentor

Identifying the right mentor is crucial. This person could be a coach, pastor, teacher, older sibling, or anyone you trust and respect. Here are some steps to find the right mentor:

- **Reflect on Your Goals:** Understand what you hope to gain from a mentorship. Is it career advice, personal growth, or spiritual guidance?
- **Identify Potential Mentors:** Look for individuals who have experience and knowledge in areas you wish to develop. Consider their values, achievements, and personality.
- **Build a Relationship:** Before formally asking someone to mentor you, build a rapport. Engage in conversations, show genuine interest in their work, and seek their advice on small matters.
- **Express Your Intentions:** Clearly communicate why you believe they would be a good mentor and what you hope to achieve with their guidance.

Action Box: Make the Call

- Pick one person this week to reach out to.
- Script: "I'm looking for guidance and wisdom. Can I talk with you about life?"
- Follow through. Show consistency.

Remember, even David had mentors. God works through people to shape you into the man He designed you to be.

Chapter 7: Victory Mode – Accepting and Rising Above

"I can do all this through him who gives me strength." – Philippians 4:13

Acceptance is not about resigning to circumstances or giving up on change. Instead, it is about recognizing and embracing the present moment, no matter how challenging it may be. By acknowledging reality, we free ourselves from the shackles of denial and resistance, allowing us to focus on what can be changed.



Trusting a Higher Power

Handing over your struggles to God or a higher power can be a source of immense strength. It is an act of faith that enables you to let go of burdens that are beyond your control. This trust does not mean you stop taking action; rather, it empowers you to act with clarity and purpose, knowing you are supported by something greater than yourself.

Redefining Identity

Your identity is not determined by the absence of anyone, including a father figure. While such absences can be impactful, they do not define who you are. What truly shapes your identity are your faith, the choices you make, and the actions you take.

- Faith: Believing in yourself and a higher purpose gives you the courage to face challenges head-on.
- Choices: Every decision you make is an opportunity to grow and learn. Choose to act with integrity and resilience.
- Actions: Your actions speak louder than circumstances. They reflect your strength, determination, and values.

Rising Above Challenges

To rise above challenges, it is crucial to focus on your strengths and the things you can control. Surround yourself with supportive individuals who uplift and inspire you. Engage in activities that nurture your mind, body, and spirit.

Daily Practices for Victory:

- Morning prayer: Ask God for courage and clarity.
- Gratitude journaling: 3 things daily.
- Self-talk: Replace "I can't" with "God can help me."
- Service: Help someone else—your strength grows when you lift others.

"Your story doesn't end with what you lost—it begins with what you build."

You were created for a purpose. Stand firm, stay faithful, and step into the man God has called you to be.

— Dr. Edward Austin



*Purposed
Destiny*