

Coping With Your Difficult Older Parent, LeBow and Kane

Review by Phyllis Laudano, Staff Writer
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"Coping With Your Difficult Older Parent: A Guide for Stressed-Out Children"

by Grace Lebow and Barbara Kane, with Irwin Lebow

[Order this book from Amazon.com](#)

In a Nutshell: This book is appropriate for the novice caregiver or the caregiver-to-be as a tool to teach practical problem-solving skills.

Those who are caring for an aging parent can surely relate to the guilt, anger, and utter frustration they experience as they deal with a mother or father who:

- Tries to monopolize every last bit of their time and attention.
- Is critical of everything they do.
- Holds them personally responsible for everything that goes wrong.
- Is consumed by worries over real or imagined health problems.
- Makes unreasonable and/or irrational demands of them.

Although it is unusual for the elderly to change their behavior patterns, there is HOPE for you, the caregiver. You can eliminate the overwhelming emotional burden of caring for a difficult parent.

"Coping with Your Difficult Older Parent" is a unique and excellent book in the field of eldercare. It is the first self-help book written for caregivers, which offers practical, easy to apply tips and guidance on how to respond to and cope with a parent's difficult behaviors. This is a book of hope for all grown children who are struggling with anger, stress and frustration caring for their parents, whether it is on a daily basis or by long distance.

The authors show, with easy-to-read real-life cases, that no matter how difficult and stressful your relationship with your older parent is, in almost every case there is something you can do to improve the situation. This book gives caregivers the tools needed for making significant and positive changes in their relationships with older parents. Framed near the margin of most pages are words of encouragement and practical, easy-to-implement hints designed to help the reader cope with and change their situation. This book helps frazzled caregivers with little time on their hands to get to the heart of their problems and begin to solve them.

The book covers just about every topic that caregivers to aging parents are concerned with. But I would specifically emphasize the attention paid to:

- Stepping Over Your Parent's Objections
- Clinging and Dependence
- High-Risk Situations Such as Driving
- Controlling Behavior
- Self-Destructive Behavior
- Grieving and Mourning

Not only is this book an excellent guide for navigating the emotional minefield that elderly parents often drag their children through, it would also be quite appropriate to use as a primer for the novice caregiver or the caregiver to be. If the saying "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" is true, then heading off potential problems involving a difficult parent would be

of tremendous value to those who know they will inevitably face this situation somewhere down the road. Alzheimer's Disease and related disorders are not the focus of the book, although there are some popular resources listed in the bibliography.

The authors provide an extensive list of books and articles which address various topics relating to eldercare. Most are intended for primary and family caregivers, although some are intended for professionals. The book would benefit from a reading list that is broken down to focus on specific problems such as communication, medical issues, death & dying and other relevant topics, much as they are organized in the Table of Contents. Nevertheless, the book itself does a great job of addressing key problems and their solutions.

Topics Discussed /Table of Contents

Difficult Parent Questionnaire
When Your Parent Clings To You
The World In Black and White
Negative and Other Turn-Off Behaviors
Self-Centered Behaviors
The Controlling Personality
Self Abuse and Depression
The Problem Of Fearfulness
Loss, Grief, and Mourning
How To Keep From Being Difficult Yourself

About the Authors

Grace Lebow, MSW, LCSW-C and Barbara Kane, MSW, LCSW-C, are clinical social workers and care managers specializing in older people and their families. They co-founded [Aging Network Services](#) of Bethesda, Maryland. They also created a nationwide network of similar professionals to work with geographically separated families.

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