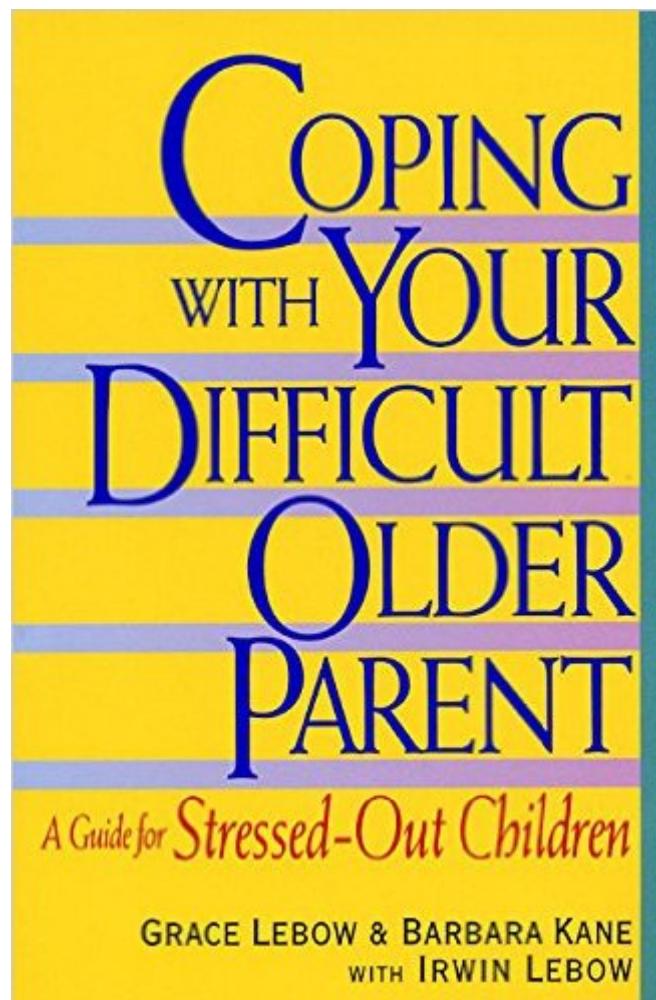


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# Coping With Your Difficult Older Parent : A Guide For Stressed-Out Children



## **Synopsis**

Do You Have An Aging Parent Who --Blames you for everything that goes wrong? Cannot tolerate being alone, wants you all the time? Is obsessed with health problems, real, or imagined? Make unreasonable and/or irrational demands of you? Is hostile, negative and critical? Coping with these traits in parents is an endless high-stress battle for their children. Though there's no medical definition for "difficult" parents, you know when you have one. While it's rare for adults to change their ways late in life, you can stop the vicious merry-go-round of anger, blame, guilt and frustration. For the first time, here's a common-sense guide from professionals, with more than two decades in the field, on how to smooth communications with a challenging parent. Filled with practical tips for handling contentious behaviors and sample dialogues for some of the most troubling situations, this book addresses many hard issues, including: How to tell your parent he or she cannot live with you. How to avoid the cycle of nagging and recriminations How to prevent your parent's negativity from overwhelming you. How to deal with an impaired parent who refuses to stop driving. How to assess the risk factors in deciding whether a parent is still able to live alone.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This book fills a gap in eldercare literature in a very unique manner. The subject is a touchy one: parents who have suffered with lifelong personality disorders whose problems have been exacerbated by aging. Often they have driven the very children on whom they depend away from them and now need their care. A person in the unenviable position of being a caregiver for such a parent is often uncomfortable even sharing what they are enduring with other people, for fear of

looking as though they hate or are slandering their parent ("How could their mother possibly be that bad?"). Navigating ordinary eldercare issues is challenging enough without deeply rooted personality disorders complicating matters and emotions. My own mother suffers from what I now know to be narcissistic personality disorder. She was so fearful from physical and psychological abuse doled out by her own mother, that she clung to both her brother, and myself, her only surviving relatives. Her marriage broke up, and she ended up living with and being supported by her brother. She was fearful that I would marry, or get friends, and any friendship I formed was viewed as a personal affront, and she would let me know that it was her or them--- choose one. If that didn't work she would do something calculatedly embarrassing enough that the friendship was ruined. She worked for only ten years of her life, and never planned for retirement, stating "My girl will always take care of me!" I did take care of her, because I was afraid something bad would happen, her brother had passed away, and she would be totally alone. Finally at age 89, her legs gave out and she had become totally demented---on top of the personality disorder. The hospital staff admitted her to a nursing home.

This book applies sound theories of human behavior to the relationship issues between generations. The relationship between the older, difficult parent and the grownchild is fraught with potential for unhappy, even dangerous living conditions. This book clears the air. The authors advise refocusing on the relationship between parent and grownchild rather than indulging in anger, guilt or other unproductive emotions toward the parent. The elderly parent may not be amenable to change. But the relationship can change if the grownchild becomes aware of, and is willing to change his/her part in maintaining a fruitless pattern. Thus the relationship can be molded to a more satisfactory shape by an insightful reader who modifies his response to his parent following the suggestions in the book. The reader freed from patterns that may date back to early childhood is in control of how this cornerstone relationship with parents is conducted. The explicit suggestions in this book show how to do this - how to set boundaries, depersonalize, empathize and above all to understand the parent's behavior rather than react to it. Such change can affect not only the elderly parent/grown child relationship, but other relationships in the grown child's life as well. Thus, this book suggests the difficult, but necessary, basic changes that can improve our emotional health. Some may need a professional companion to help them apply the principles of the book. The book, however, may be enough for many intelligent readers puzzled by the problems their elderly parents present. The suggestions are concrete, backed up by good case examples and specific to a clientele with which the authors are very familiar.

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