

ences of four fathers (out of the 40 parents) who share in their children's care. Interestingly, she shows how health care professionals reinforce gender expectations by emphasizing mother and daughter competence in managing chronic illness.

Parenting Your Parents: Support Strategies for Meeting the Challenges of Aging in the Family

Bart Mindszenty and Michael Gordon
Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2002

Reviewed by Sheila Martel

The realistic vignettes included in *Parenting Your Parents* describe probable situations and offer resolutions for adult children (an unsatisfactory term) caring for aging parents. Among the family situations presented, many are neither easy nor do they end happily. Chapter three, for example, illustrates the need to carefully consider all ramifications of encouraging elderly parents to relocate.

The book is enhanced by the authors' own stories of caring for elderly parents. A Personal Parenting Planner poses many key questions and a resource guide that follows is excellent. It offers a complete list of resources at both national and provincial levels.

Elderly divorced parents are missing from the family compositions presented. Certainly, our children will be dealing with elderly parents who are divorced, and who might live at great distances from one another. Moreover, differing viewpoints and attitudes toward the very issue of caring for elderly parents requires further discussion. Some adults simply will not accept responsibility for their elderly parents. This is undoubtedly rocky terrain for siblings who disagree over their individual and collective obligations toward their aging/ill parents.

It would seem that reversing the roles—turning grown children into “parents”—is simplistic and unrealistic. Although the authors did not invent this paradigm, it begs reassessment. The authors recognize, for example, that the need to take time off from work can be costly to careers. (The issue of sacrificing career achievement and leisure time in order to care for loved ones is hardly new terrain for mothers, however.) Further, the book does not live up to the promise of its subtitle, *Support Strategies for Meeting the Challenges of Aging in the Family*, since explicit support for caregivers is not provided. Nonetheless, Mindszenty and Gordon have succeeded in creating a reader-friendly primer for parent care. *Parenting Your Parents* is an excellent starting point for those beginning to undertake this important and complicated journey.