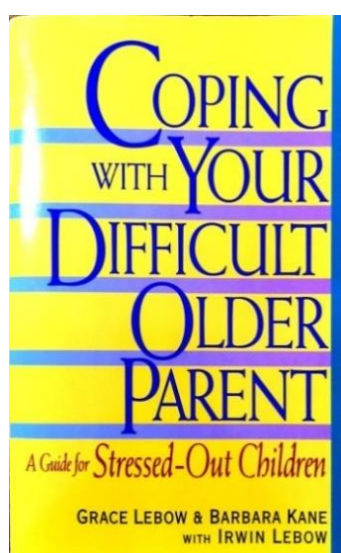


Understanding our Difficult Older Parents

Many a times, dealing with an older parent with difficult behaviours is already very stressful but when we add in a caregiving component to it, this becomes double trouble.

We often find caregivers of parent with difficult behaviours feeling frustrated, unappreciated and helpless during their caregiving journey. This is not surprising, as caregiving is not just completing daily physical tasks at hand, but also includes the psycho-emotional aspects as well. This often requires caregivers to understand, empathise and view these behaviours differently.



Let me introduce this book which I recently read, entitled “*Coping with Your Difficult Older Parent: A Guide for Stressed-Out Children*” by Grace Lebow and Barbara Kane.

Originally when I got this book, I thought it would be amusing to read as it oddly satisfies my need to affirm how difficult my parent is (using the “Difficult Parent Questionnaire”). However, as I read further on, I found it to be more than what it seemed to be.

This book strategically categorises the different types of difficult behaviours such as dependency, turnoff, self-centeredness, controlling, self-destructive and fearfulness. It focused on sharing why these behaviours are displayed and encompasses how we can manage them effectively yet continuing to have a positive relationship with our parents.

I found this book to have effectively addressed the psycho-emotional aspects of our elderly parents and allow us to “step into their world” so that we can understand them better. Often, it is not about our parents trying to be difficult, but them having difficulties coping well in their current situation. In addition, the helpful tips provided in the book were also useful to help us connect with our elderly parents in a more positive and uplifting way.



I would encourage anyone – caregiver or otherwise – to give this book a shot so as to have greater insights about our parents’ behaviours and hopefully better able to cope with behaviours we find difficult in our daily lives.

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