

# Relationship Skills for the Caregiver



*Therapeutic Learning Connections*

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THERE ARE ONLY FOUR KINDS OF  
PEOPLE IN THE WORLD  
THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN CAREGIVERS,  
THOSE WHO ARE CURRENTLY  
CAREGIVERS,  
THOSE WHO WILL BE CAREGIVERS,  
AND THOSE WHO WILL NEED  
CAREGIVERS.

~Rosalynn Carter



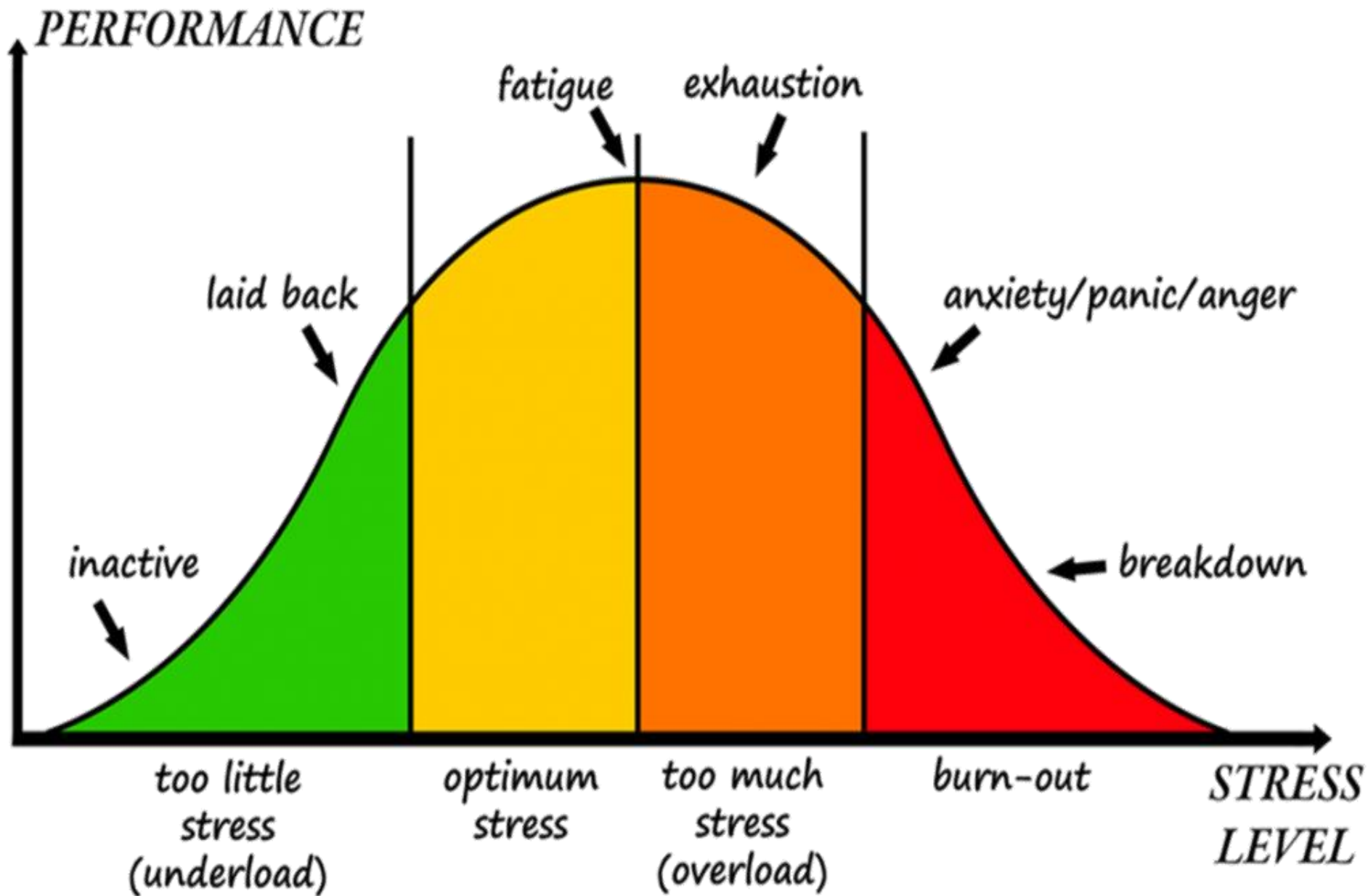
# Talk Amongst Ourselves...



**Caregiving is stressful because...**



# STRESS CURVE



***The Cost  
of Caring***  
from  
**Trauma Stewardship**  
by Laura van Dernoot  
Lipsky

Feeling Helpless  
and Hopeless

Sense that One Can  
Ever Do Enough

Hypervigilance

Diminished  
Creativity

Minimizing

Black and White  
Thinking

Chronic Exhaustion

Inability to Listen

Dissociative Moments

Inability to  
enjoy life

Unable to Empathize/  
Numbing of Feelings

Guilt

Anger/Cynicism

Fear

Addictions

Physical and  
Mental Illness

- 1. To take care of myself. This is not an act of selfishness. It will give me the capability of taking better care of my loved one.**
- 2. To seek help from others even though my loved ones may object. I recognize the limits of my own endurance and strength.**
- 3. To maintain facets of my own life that do not include the person I care for, just as I would if he or she were healthy. I know that I do everything that I reasonably can for this person, and I have the right to do some things just for myself.**
- 4. To get angry, be depressed, and express other difficult feelings occasionally.**
- 5. To reject any attempts by my loved one (either conscious or unconscious) to manipulate me through guilt.**
- 6. To receive consideration, affection, forgiveness, and acceptance for what I do, from my loved ones.**
- 7. To take pride in what I am accomplishing and to applaud the courage it takes to meet the needs of my loved one.**
- 8. To protect my individuality and my right to make a life for myself that will sustain me in the time when my loved one no longer need my full-time help.**
- 9. To expect and demand that as new strides are made in finding resources to aid physically and mentally impaired persons, similar strides will be made towards aiding and supporting caregivers.**





## Healthy Relationships

- Mutual trust, respect, love, and caring
- Shared decision-making
- The ability to talk about the "here-and-now" aspects of the relationship
- The freedom to share any negative emotional reaction with each other
- The ability to address any problems or difficulties that may arise in the relationship





**What's in  
Your  
Toolbox???**

# The Healthy Caregiver



# Emotion Judge or Emotion Scientist?

Emotion scientists see emotions as information. They have a desire is to be curious and learn more about their own feelings and the feelings of others



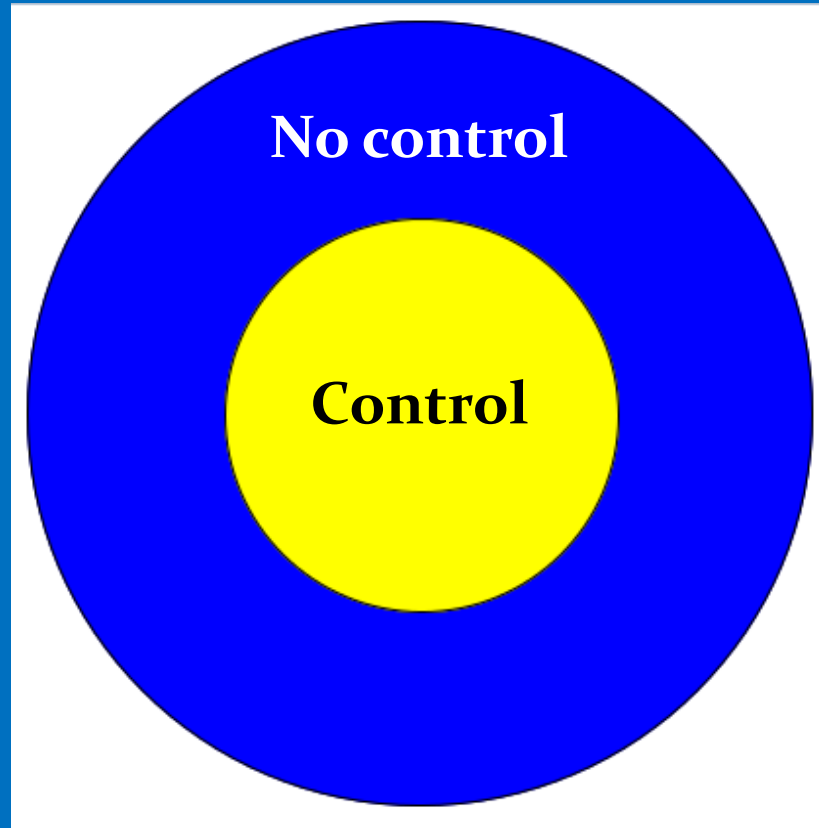
Emotion judges evaluate feelings to determine if they are good, bad, valid or worthy of compassion.

DEPRESSION, ANXIETY AND  
PANIC ATTACKS ARE NOT  
SIGNS OF WEAKNESS.  
THEY ARE SIGNS OF TRYING  
TO REMAIN STRONG FOR  
FAR TOO LONG.



**Avoiding your  
vulnerability  
eventually  
causes  
suffering to  
you and to  
those around  
you.**

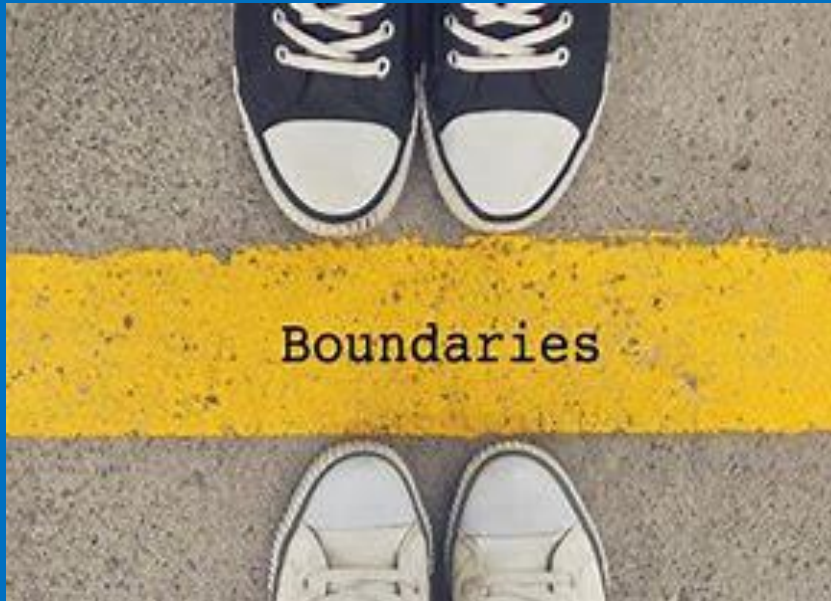
**-Andy Crouch**



God, grant me the serenity to  
accept the things I cannot change,  
courage to change the things I can,  
and wisdom to know the difference.

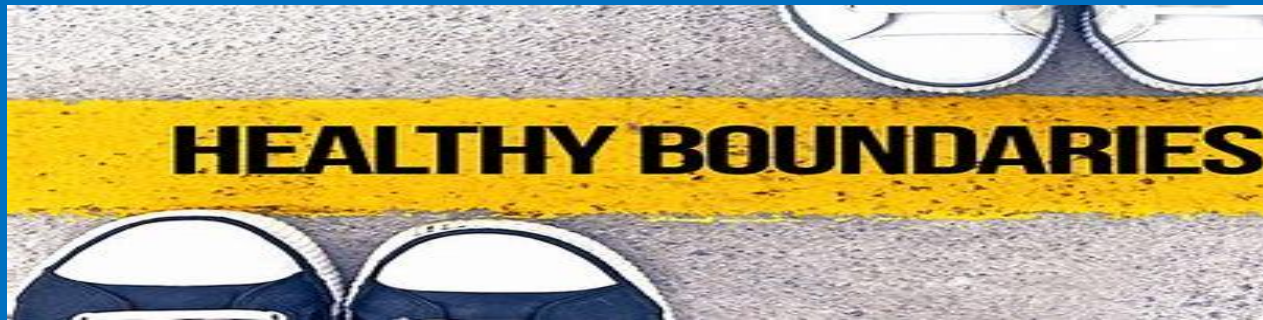
# *Signs That You Need Boundaries*

@NEDRATAWWAB



- You feel overwhelmed.
- You feel resentment towards people for asking for your help.
- You avoid phone calls and interactions with people you think might ask for something.
- You make comments about helping people and getting nothing in return.
- You feel burnt out.
- You frequently daydream about dropping everything and disappearing.
- You have no time for yourself.





Boundaries are our “YES” and our “NO” based on our needs. They tell other people how to treat us-what’s acceptable and what isn’t.





Internal boundaries are decisions we make to ourselves about what we will or won't tolerate from ourselves or others.

External boundaries are limits we set with others about what we will/won't tolerate from them. -Lindsay Braman



# Relationship Agreements

We agree...

1.



# Conflict Resolution PIE

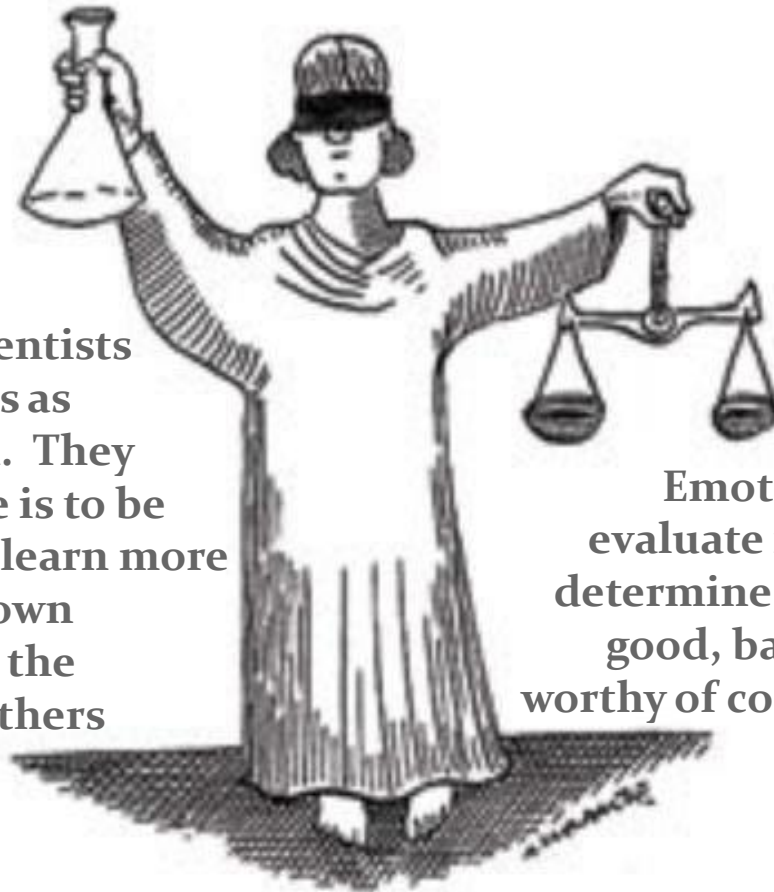
- Perspective
- Intention
- Empathy





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Emotion judges evaluate feelings to determine if they are good, bad, valid or worthy of compassion.

From Marc Brackett's book Permission to Feel

# Empathy: Noun and Verb

**Empathy** is...

seeing with the **eyes** of another,  
listening with the **ears** of another,  
and **feeling** with the **heart** of another.



# *What blocks empathy?*

- *Powerlessness*
- *Defensiveness*
- *Anger, fear, shame*
- *Vulnerability seen as a weakness*
- *Racism/privilege*
- *Multiple stressors*
- *Compassion fatigue*
- *Lack of self-awareness*
- *Unsupported trauma and loss*
- *Empathy deficit disorder*





## Listen to Behavior

- If they could, seniors would tell us....
- *“I don’t always have words for how I’m feeling. I don’t yet have a way to talk about my emotions, so I let my behavior do the talking for me.*
- *Sometimes my behavior hides how I’m really feeling.*
- *Instead of asking, “What’s wrong with you?” consider compassionately wondering, “What happened?”*

**HELP:**

- Asking for it
- Receiving it
- Offering it



*Don't be a  
stingy  
receiver!*



# Helping Them Tell Their Story...

- What was your favorite childhood memory?
- What was your favorite toy as a child?
- Did you have any pets when you were growing up?
- What was your favorite subject in school?
- Did you have any hobbies as a child?
- What did you want to be when you grew up?
- What was your favorite book as a child?
- Did you have any nicknames growing up?
- What was your earliest memory?
- What was your favorite game to play as a child?



# Power Struggles



1. Never get into power struggles
2. If you get into one, you need to win
3. Choose carefully!!!!!!

# How We Doin'?





**Everything!**

# Conflict Resolution Resources

1. [Resolving Family Caregiver Conflicts - You Can Disagree and Still Care - Senior Care Corner](#)
2. [Caregiver Stress and Resolving Conflict \(eldercareathome.org\)](#)
3. [Dealing With Common Family Conflicts as a Caregiver \(aarp.org\)](#)
4. [family-conflicts-about-aging-parents-resolution-guide \(accordcare.com\)](#)
5. **Types of Conflicts and Tensions Between Older Parents and Adult Children found at [235754000be174d6aaa9485f35173bab.pdf \(icdst.org\)](#)**
6. [Resolving Conflict When Helping Aging Parents - YouTube](#)

# Resources for Caregivers

1. [Caregiver Stress Syndrome - Caregiver.com](#)
2. Challenges of Caring for Elderly Parents found at <https://www.bing.com/search?q=challenges+of+caring+for+an+elderly+parent&cvid=02c355e4b10f4fe5ae82886cf2679322&aqs=edge..69i57j0.14151j0j9&FORM=ANAB0i&PC=HCTS>
3. [10 Difficult Elderly Behaviors and How to Handle Them - AgingCare.com](#)
4. The Challenges of Caring for an Elderly Parent found at <https://www.bing.com/search?q=challenges+of+caring+for+an+elderly+parent&cvid=02c355e4b10f4fe5ae82886cf2679322&aqs=edge..69i57j0.14151j0j9&FORM=ANAB0i&PC=HCTS>
5. Caregiver Bill of Rights found at <https://www.caregiver.org/resource/caregivers-bill-rights/>
6. <https://thecaregiversvoice.com/tips-caregivers/6-ways-communicating-with-your-aging-loved-ones-will-improve-your-relationship/>
7. [Caregiving and Connection: Tips for Strengthening Relationships with Aging Adults - Healthy Humans Project](#)
8. Coping With Your Difficult Older Parent : A Guide for Stressed-Out Children by Grace Lebow
9. How to Care for Aging Parents, A One-Stop Resource for All Your Medical, Financial, Housing, and Emotional Issues by Virginia Morris
10. A Bittersweet Season: Caring for Our Aging Parents--and Ourselves by Jane Gross
11. [Parenting Aging Parents - Navigating the Changes and the Stages](#)
12. [Caregiving: Common Disagreements Between Adult Children Caregivers and Aging Parents - YouTube](#)
13. [How to keep your elderly parents safe and in their home longer | Roger Wong | TEDxStanleyPark - YouTube](#)

# Resources

1. [Caregiver Stress and Burnout - HelpGuide.org](#)
2. [Caregiver Stress | Alzheimer's Association](#)
3. [Cargiver Bill of Rights - Alzheimer's Los Angeles \(alzheimersla.org\)](#)
4. [A List of the Best Podcasts for Caregivers 2021 - Elder Guru](#)
5. [4 Of The Best Podcasts To Inspire Self-Care - Glitter Guide \(theglitterguide.com\)](#)
6. **The Caregiver's Guide to Dementia: Practical Advice for Caring for Yourself and Your Loved One by Gail Weatherhill**
7. **Creating Moments of Joy Along the Alzheimer's Journey: A Guide for Families and Caregivers by Jolene Brackey**
8. **When Reasoning No Longer Works: A Practical Guide for Caregivers Dealing with Dementia & Alzheimer's Care by Angel Smits**
9. [When Caregivers Are Honest, It Makes Folks VERY Uncomfortable | HuffPost Communities](#)

# Resources

## Books

1. **Ambiguous Loss: Learning to Live with Unresolved Grief** by Pauline Boss
2. **No Act of Love is Ever Wasted: The Spirituality of Caring for Persons with Dementia** by Richard Morgan
3. **Living With Grief: Alzheimer's Disease** by Kenneth J. Doka –describes disenfranchised grief
4. **Loving Someone with Dementia: How to Find Hope While Coping with Stress and Grief** by Pauline Boss
5. **Alzheimer's Disease: A Guide For Families And Caregivers** by Lenore Powell (Discusses the shame related to the disease of Alzheimer's.)
6. **When Your Parent Becomes Your Child: A Journey of Faith Through My Mother's Dementia** Paperback by Ken Abraham
7. **A Bittersweet Season: Caring for Our Aging Parents--and Ourselves** by Gross, Jane
8. **The Longest Loss: Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia** by the Hospice Foundation of America and Kenneth Doka
9. **Living with Grief: Alzheimer's Disease** by Ken Doka
10. **Caring for a Loved One with Dementia: A Mindfulness-Based Guide for Reducing Stress and Making the Best of Your Journey Together** by Marguerite Manteau-Rao (February 2016)
11. **Healing Your Grieving Heart When Someone You Care About Has Alzheimer's: 100 Practical Ideas for Families and Friends** by Alan Wolfelt



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6. [Resolving Conflict When Helping Aging Parents - YouTube](#)

# Life Story Questions

1. [Fun Questions to Ask Your Grandparents About Their Life | PINKVILLA](#)
2. [56 Family History Questions for Your Parents — Modern Heirloom Books](#)
3. [35 Meaningful Questions To Ask Your Grandparents | HuffPost Life](#)
4. [351 Life Story Questions to Ask People \(Storytelling\) - Begin My Story](#)
5. [70 Question Prompts to Capture Childhood Memories – Storii](#)
6. [Fill-in-the-Blanks Life Story - www.legacyproject.org](#)