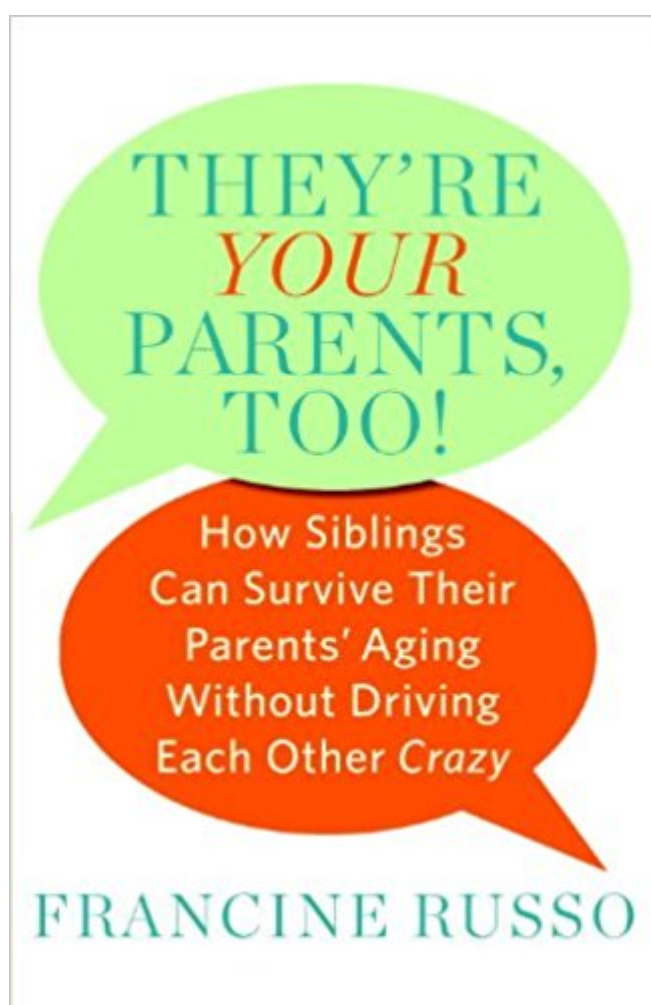


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# They're Your Parents, Too!: How Siblings Can Survive Their Parents' Aging Without Driving Each Other Crazy



## Synopsis

Your parents are growing older and are getting forgetful, starting to slow down, or worse. Suddenly you find yourself at the cusp of one of the most important transitions in your life—and the life of your family. Your parents need you and your siblings to step up and take care of them, a little or a lot. To make the right things happen, you will all need to work together. And yet your siblings may have very different ideas from yours of what's best for Mom and Dad. They may be completely uninterested in helping, leaving you with all the responsibility. Or they may take charge and not allow you to help, or criticize whatever help you do give. Will you and your siblings be able to reach an understanding and work together, or will the challenges you face tear you apart?

Most of us enter this period of our lives unprepared for the difficult decisions and delicate negotiations that lie ahead. This is the first book that provides guidance on the transition from the "old" family to the "new" one, especially for adult siblings. Here you'll find practical advice on a wide range of topics including:

- Who will make major medical decisions, manage finances, and enforce end-of-life choices if your parents cannot? And how will this be decided and carried out?
- How will you negotiate caregiving issues and deal with unequal contributions or power struggles?
- How can inheritance and the division of property, assets, and personal effects be handled to minimize hurt feelings and resentment?
- How will you cope with the natural reemergence of unresolved childhood rivalries, hurts, and needs?
- How can caring for your parents be an enriching experience rather than a thankless chore?

Most important, how can you ensure the best care for your parents while lessening conflict, guilt, anger, and angst?

Written by a veteran journalist who chronicles life and how baby boomers live it, *They're Your Parents, Too!* offers all the information, insight, and advice you'll need to make productive choices as you and your siblings begin to assume your parents' place as the decision-making generation of your family.

Filled with expert guidance from gerontologists, family therapists, elder-care attorneys, financial planners, and health workers; resonant real-life stories; and helpful family negotiation techniques, this is an indispensable book for anyone whose parents are aging.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Russo is so insightful, so psychologically acute and compassionate that she held me rapt for the whole book...They're Your Parents, Too! is the first book of it's kind I have ever read and I am extremely grateful to Russo for giving us her wisdom and the help of the experts whose voices guide us through what is an extremely difficult passage for us all." —Pepper Schwartz, Ph.D., Professor of Sociology, University of Washington and author of Prime: Adventures and Advice on Sex, Love, and the Sensual Years "Francine Russo has written a stunning book about one of the most complex but ignored times of human transition—the sibling relationships when parents are in decline and then die. Taking over often becomes a sibling struggle—and therein lies the core of Francine Russo's uplifting book." —Pauline Boss, Professor Emeritus, University of Minnesota and author of Ambiguous Loss "I wish Francine Russo had been my tutor as I faced my own mother's decline and death. All the issues that came up for my brother and sister and me are addressed so accurately and compassionately in this book. This is a manual that shows us how to negotiate a healing path through our parents' final challenge, and prepares us for our own." —David Richo, PhD., author of When the Past is Present and How To Be An Adult "This book by Francine Russo will be enormously helpful to siblings struggling with the many challenges posed as their parents grow older." —Robert N. Butler, M.D. President and CEO, International Longevity Center, Founding director of the National Institute on Aging "Interesting, relevant, insightful! Anyone who reads this book will find something that opens a window to new thinking about themselves and their relationships. Russo has really done her homework. I'm recommending this to everyone I know who's having sibling issues around their parents—and

that's practically everyone I know. Harriett Balkind, founder of SNOETY.COM (SECRETS NO ONE EVER TOLD YOU) "Even I, who practice mediation for a living and am able to help people with their difficult conversations, found it extremely difficult to start my own family's discussions about caring for our mother without help from outside. Now I am committed to helping families find ways to have such conversations, using Francine Russo's useful and engaging book as a springboard. Brigitte Bell, Brigitte Bell Mediation, Evanston, IL "More than a how-to book, this groundbreaking work illuminates a difficult stage of life." Library Journal

Francine Russo is a widely recognized journalist who covered the boomer beat for Time magazine for nearly a decade and authored the "Ask Francine" column. She has also written for The Atlantic, The New York Times Magazine, Redbook, Family Circle, Ladies Home Journal, Self, Glamour, and The Village Voice. A mother of two and stepmother of three, she has a Ph.D. in English and lives in Manhattan.

As a hospital social worker, I deal with family conflicts over eldercare, or lack thereof on a daily basis. I was confused & perplexed by the sibling conflicts & the decline to be involved with eldercare, saying "I'm too busy to help care for my parents". Hoping to find some explanation & guidance, I was very happy to have found this book. While it was somewhat helpful, I did not find it too useful in what I deal with at work. I guess my expectations are a little bit too high. I think that this book would be comforting to family members who are caring for their elders as I don't believe the ones that are not involved in eldercare would even bother to research such books.

I am 76 and took care of all four of our parents over a period of 15 years. If only I had had this book! It nailed all the problems and gave useful advice on how to deal with them, especially if you are the one "on location." I am about to purchase a copy for each of my 4 children, because the time is coming for my husband and myself. I hope they don't stay in such a state of denial as they are now and read it and think about it. The hurt and anger regarding care of a parent is almost unavoidable. But if at least one sibling has read a book like this, that person may very well be able to negotiate a better outcome. One thing that this author suggests often is an intermediary of some kind, social worker, pastor, others. In the 70s and 80s when this was happening to us, there was no one. Our pastor was helpful, but didn't have any real insight. The best resource proved to be the support

groups for Alzheimer's caretakers. It would seem that our aging population has brought about assisted living residences and other facilities that didn't exist back then.

Great place to start if you're struggling with parental and sibling relationships due to parental aging issues. The title is catchy but a little blame-y... but don't be put off, it's a very open and realistic exploration of sibling bonds and difficulties caused by caregiving stress. Made me feel less alone and ready to figure out how to move forward thoughtfully and with integrity.

Today, many of us find ourselves smack dab in the middle of a pretty rugged situation. Our parents are aging, often mentally or physically incapable of caring for themselves, they need guidance and care, unfortunately so do we, our own kids and our work responsibilities. Throw into this mix distant and obstinate siblings and you've got one explosive situation. This book is an invaluable guide to those who are going through this situation. However it's an even more essential tome for those who MIGHT be going through this in the near future. If they read this book in-time perhaps they can spare themselves some of the misery I and others have gone through. Worf

Great Book, Been telling all my coworkers its a MUST read even if you are just dealing with Aging Parents without any Siblings

Francine Russo didn't just pick a topic and fill it in. She lived this, researched it and presented it to caregivers and caregiver support professionals. Are you caring for your parent? Do you have siblings? Is one of your siblings caring for your parent? Millions of us could improve our lives by reading this book. Pass it around. Your siblings need to read it too. Then sit down and have a family meeting. Everybody benefits.

Disappointed. Turns out this is one of those self-help books which are mostly anecdotes rather than useful information or suggestions. I bought several copies, but ended up giving them away.

This book is very informative for anyone who has siblings and who is dealing with an elderly parent. The book provides a good insight into how to handle the sibling rivalry and past hurts that adult children bring to the table when coping with an aging parent.

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