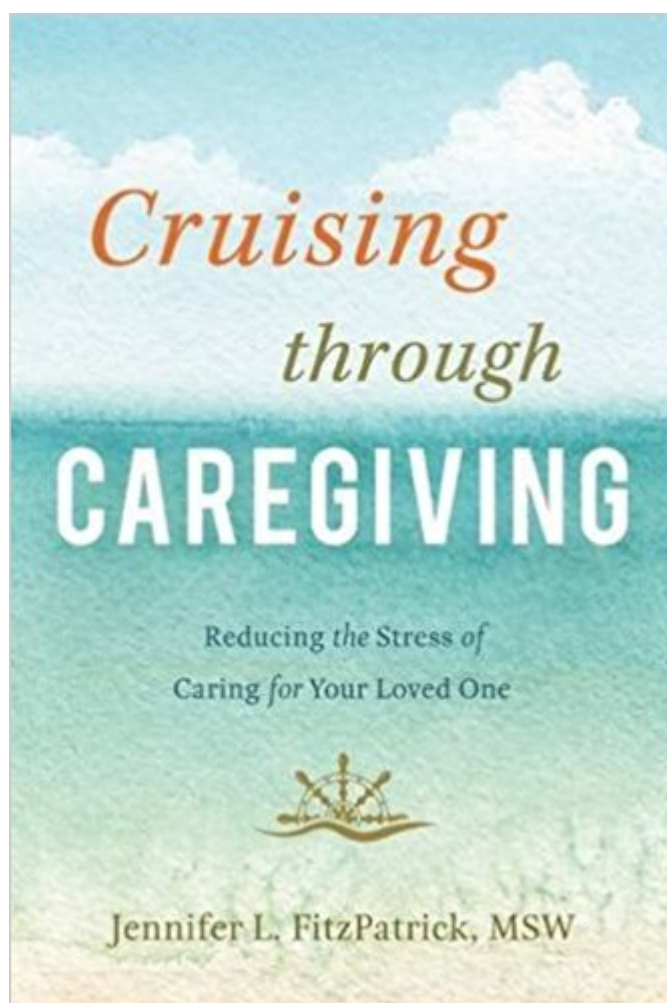


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# Cruising Through Caregiving: Reducing The Stress Of Caring For Your Loved One



## Synopsis

Caregiving is no vacation, but you can cruise more smoothly through it! If you're facing the daunting reality that you're about to become a caregiver—whether you planned for it or not—Cruising through Caregiving is the down-to-earth and authoritative answer you need. Jennifer FitzPatrick has been through nearly every possible scenario on the caregiving spectrum, both professionally and personally, and she expertly shows you how to be a responsible, loving caregiver without being overcome by guilt, exhaustion, or worry. It doesn't matter whether you have advantages such as money or an extended family. You don't have to passively just let things happen. No matter your particular situation, FitzPatrick has a practical and thoughtful solution to deal with it. She'll help you discover and harness powers you don't even know you have—from getting other family members to participate in caregiving to navigating a loved one's finances, living setting, or declining physical and mental health conditions. Advice and resources from FitzPatrick and twenty-four other professionals show how to give your loved one the best quality of life possible without sacrificing your own life, health, career, relationships, or financial stability.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Jennifer FitzPatrick MSW, CSP is the Founder of Jenerations Health Education, Inc. and the author of Cruising Through Caregiving: Reducing The Stress of Caring For Your Loved One. She is a gerontology instructor at Johns Hopkins University and has been featured in U.S. News & World Report, The Huffington Post, Reader's Digest, Fast Company, and The Chicago Tribune.

She has also been featured on ABC and SiriusXM. Caring.com has called *Â Cruising Through Caregiving* one of the best caregiving books of the year. For speaking inquiries please check out [jenniferfitzpatrick.com](http://jenniferfitzpatrick.com) or [darlene@jenerationshealth.com](mailto:darlene@jenerationshealth.com). For media inquiries please contact [contact@jenerationshealth.com](mailto:contact@jenerationshealth.com).

Thank you, thank you Jennifer FitzPatrick. My entire family is in the midst of the most challenging space of life, caring for our mother whose Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases triple the difficulty. This book came along and its practicality, heart and soul gave us so much needed direction. I love that you help us set parameters without feeling like we were abandoning our mom. It's such a wonderful gift that you've given us a tactical reference guide to navigate this time with grace.

I just love this book! It's written for those of us who are in it for the long haul. We're not sure how to care for our elder, and still have a life of our own. The author uses boating terms, but no, she isn't trying to say caregiving is at all easy-it's just a framework for her thought process, like not "going overboard", or not "hitting a sandbar". She gently but firmly discourages perfectionism and guilt, while continuously pointing out helpful resources. Caregiving is new and unfamiliar territory for me, it's good to have a guide!

I have been caring for my 86-year old mother since my father died 11 years ago. My how I wish I had had this book when I first started this journey as I would have saved myself a lot of anguish. My personal favorite chapter: Don't Be a Martyr (Because Martyrs Die). EXACTLY. Thank you Jennifer for reminding me of this (but in a non-judgmental, supportive voice). If you're new to caregiving or have been doing it a while (like I have), there is MUCH to be gained from reading this book. Good luck to all of us.

As someone who continues to help navigate the cycle of aging in-laws, i have found this book to be a useful resource for working through a variety of daily challenge.

Excellent book! A must have for every caregiver and those who will become caregivers.

great book and great advice!

Author FitzPatrick is very clear about what she hopes readers will get from this book. Cruising

through Caregiving should help you "save money, energy, and time, so that you can have an improved caregiving experience." And, wow, she really delivers the goods for making that happen. The book is divided into fifteen chapters. Topics include: (\*) Defining the different types of caregivers (primary, secondary, and tertiary) (\*) Respecting your older loved one's autonomy and preferences (\*) Recognizing the needs, desires, and limitations of the whole caregiving crew (\*) Deciding what type of care is best for your loved one AND his or her caregivers (\*) Learning how to take care of yourself while caregiving (\*) Recognizing symptoms of burnout, especially when you've decided--consciously or not--to become the martyr in the caregiving situation (\*) Navigating the senior care system (\*) Accepting the financial cost of caregiving (\*) Utilizing your loved one's primary care doctor in the best way--and knowing when you need to see a specialist (\*) Taking care of a loved one with dementia (\*) Accepting that your older loved one will die (\*) Utilizing hospice in the most advantageous way (\*) Learning how to set your own self up for a positive experience as you age. Throughout the book, FitzPatrick's tone is conversational, down-to-earth, and refreshingly straightforward. Her advice is practical and very clearly taken from real life experiences. What I love most about *Cruising through Caregiving*, though, is that it is so incredibly affirming to the caregiver. FitzPatrick repeats again and again that your caregiving experience shouldn't drain everything from you--not money, energy, or time. Taking care of a loved one is an important--and unavoidably stressful--job, but, at the end of the day, she says, "you deserve to come out of the caregiving experience emotionally, physically, and financially healthy." There is no shaming or judgment in the book. FitzPatrick talks about all options in an open way, plus she gives specific resources (with working links in the kindle version) that help provide answers and guidance. There is simply a wealth of information in this book, and I learned so much. I'll add one last thing. If you are in a situation where you or your older loved one has received a diagnosis for a serious condition, I would also recommend reading *The Patient's Playbook: How to Save Your Life and the Lives of Those You Love*. It's another no-nonsense guide to finding the best care possible.

Are you a caregiver for a relative, perhaps an elderly parent? Might that a possibility in upcoming years? Do you want to take steps now to prepare for your own future so no one will have to fill that role when you no longer can care for yourself? If any of these scenarios set off alarm bells in your head, this book is an important tool. If they don't, it's probably even more important. In the interest of full disclosure, I requested (and received, thank you) an advance copy in exchange for an honest review because I'm already involved in senior health issues, albeit from a different perspective. Since I retired from going to a workplace every day back in 2002, I've been a state-certified

volunteer long-term care ombudsman for Ohio. Each week, I visit my assigned facility to talk with residents and help make sure their rights are being upheld (and, if not, do what I can, together with the local Area Agency on Aging, to facilitate positive change). Any book that deals with the topic of long-term care, then, is of great interest to me - not just because I'm always eager to learn but because, if it's well done, I can recommend it to others who may need it. And recommend it I most certainly do. The goal, the author says, is to make readers "feel more powerful" and let them know they may have many options. It shows caregivers ways to save time, money and energy and have a personal life. "Caregiving is like a muscle that can be developed and strengthened," the author writes, and her book is designed to help with that. Following a "boating" theme, she tackles really tough issues such as "promises" we may make (think assuring your mother you'll never, ever put her in a nursing home) to whether it's a good idea to quit your job and take over full-time care of a loved one (and how to deal with it if that's what your loved one expects you to do). Best of all, it's not just platitudes and lip service; options are presented for each topic, and chapters include "course corrections," or steps to take if you're already halfway down the wrong path. Everywhere are examples, checklists, worksheets and questions to answer that will help you make the best decisions for yourself and for (and with) your loved ones. Still other chapters focus on expectations and realities of the health-care system (i.e., Medicare and Medicaid), the ramifications of dementia and - not insignificantly - what you need to do now to prepare for the time you may need some type of care yourself. Even if you're not performing a direct caregiving function - or one of your loved ones already is in a long-term care facility - there's plenty of good information here for you. I'm always surprised, for instance, when a resident of "my" nursing home - or someone in their family who's visiting and is concerned about some issue - tells me he or she had no idea the local Area on Aging even exists, much less what services it provides. At the end of the book is a comprehensive list of resources; depending on where you are on the caregiver continuum, you can look them up immediately or stash them away for future consultation.

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