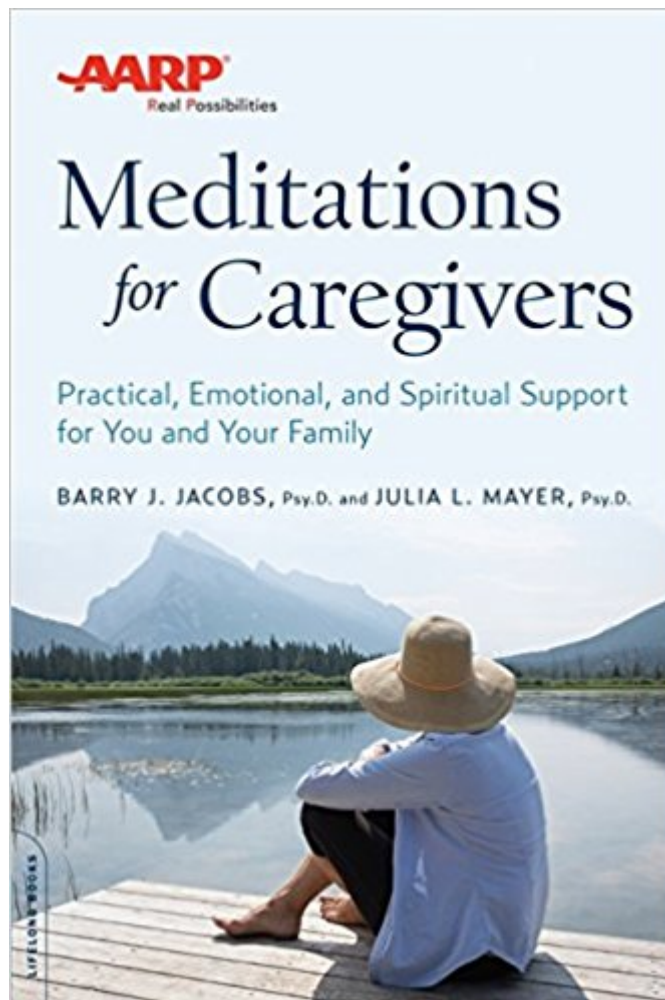




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# **AARP Meditations For Caregivers: Practical, Emotional, And Spiritual Support For You And Your Family**



## Synopsis

Family caregiving has its challenges: emotional overload, time constraints, anxiety, burnout, missed work, adult sibling conflicts, and marital issues. *AARP Meditations for Caregivers* blends emotional and spiritual motivation to minimize the strains while helping caregivers view their work as a mission from the heart. Chapters are organized by theme, including topics such as accepting your feelings, knowing your limits, seeking support, and managing stress. Each reading offers a poignant meditation, an anecdote drawn from the author's personal or clinical experience, and hands-on or psychological advice to foster coping skills and a sense of fulfillment. The meditations in this dispensable book will provide you with solutions to typical caregiving challenges, offer relief and renewal through mindfulness, and inspire you to find meaning and value in the work you do.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"This invaluable, wise, and compassionate guide is frank, inspirational, and altogether timelessly human."#151;John Rolland, MD, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine"*AARP Meditations for Caregivers* will help caregivers find their own way to a place of calm and purposefulness."#151;Carol Levine, director, Families and Health Care Project, United Hospital Fund"*AARP Meditations for Caregivers* is filled with stories of hope, perseverance#151;even transcendence. Drawing from their personal experience as well as others, Drs. Jacobs and Mayer remind us that providing care for a loved one can be a sacred, moral, and enriching endeavor."#151;Katy Butler, author of *Knocking on Heaven's Door*"This collection of lessons and insights assures us that our caregiving experiences are not unique. Stressed caregivers will be able

to draw solace from these anecdotes."#151;Robert L. Kane, MD, School of Public Health, University of Minnesota, and author of *The Good Caregiver*"This book is truly a bible for caregivers. Barry Jacobs and Julia Mayer tell more than 100 stories of dilemmas faced by children, siblings, husbands, and wives thrust into a role of caregiver...Reading these all-too-human tales, caregivers won't feel quite as alone#151;and they'll see that even when they're angry, frustrated, sad, stressed out, they can find ways to express love, empathy, and humor."#151;Marc Silver, author of *Breast Cancer Husband*"AARP Meditations for Caregivers captures the frustrations and determination, sorrows, and joys typically experienced by family caregivers. Drs. Jacobs and Mayer offer concrete suggestions and inspiration for those who provide countless acts of loving care."#151;Janis Abrahms Spring, PhD, author of *Life with Pop: Lessons on Caring for an Aging Parent*

Barry J. Jacobs, Psy.D., is a clinical psychologist, family therapist, and the author of the book *The Emotional Survival Guide for Caregivers: Looking After Yourself and Your Family While Helping an Aging Parent*. Dr. Jacobs has given more than 400 local, regional and national presentations on family caregiving for family caregivers and community groups, mental health/social service professionals, and physicians/nurses. Since 2008, Dr. Jacobs has been the national spokesperson on family caregiving for the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association. He is on the expert panel for the Caregiver Crisis Great Challenge for TEDMED.com, an honorary board member of the Well Spouse Association, and a past board member of the Collaborative Family Healthcare Association. He is on the expert panel for the AARP Advisory Panel and writes a monthly caregiving column for AARP.org. As a clinician, Dr. Jacobs specializes in helping individuals and families cope with serious and chronic medical illnesses. As an educator, he works as the Director of Behavioral Sciences for the Crozer-Keystone Family Medicine Residency Program in Springfield, Pennsylvania, and has had adjunct faculty positions with the Temple University School of Medicine, the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing, and the Department of Psychology of the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. Julie L. Mayer, Psy.D., a clinical psychologist, has been doing individual and couples therapy for almost 25 years. She is the author of the novel *A Fleeting State of Mind*. Dr. Mayer has a private practice in Media, Pennsylvania, where she specializes in women's issues, including caregiving and other relationship concerns. She has held adjunct teaching positions at the Institute for Graduate Clinical Psychology of Widener University and in Widener University's undergraduate programs. She was also an Instructor for the Master's Program in Creative Arts Therapy at Hahnemann University for eight

years, teaching courses on human development and psychoanalytic theory. Dr. Jacobs and Dr. Mayer, who are married, previously wrote online columns of psychological advice for WebMD and HealthCentral.com. They live in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania.

Barry Jacobs and Julie Mayer have written an indispensable book for anyone who is taking care of an ill loved one. I was in the mental health field for 35 years, much of that time devoted to working with families coping with a medically ill member. I wish this book had been available then. It would have made a great difference to many of the caregivers I worked with. This is an inspiring book that has its feet planted squarely on the ground with regard to the challenges and rewards of caregiving. The book is structured to be used as a daily meditation. It is divided into topics, such as mindfulness, joy and happiness, humor, sacrifice, moral compass, making it easy for the reader to choose passages depending on their needs. Each selection is a short story about an actual situation followed by a simple comment or suggestion that hits the mark squarely. I loved this book and hope others will, too.

As a clinical psychologist who works with older people, along with individuals and families of all ages dealing with cancer and health issues, the struggles to provide care for an ill or elderly person can't be underestimated. There are also so many opportunities for growth and healing as well. I will strongly recommend this book to my clients and friends because I think there are very few resources that address caregiving in such a practical and compassionate way. As the child of elderly parents, I have found many of the anecdotes in this book meaningful to me personally. Drs. Jacobs and Mayer have written an easily digested and comprehensive book that provides practical advice and comfort for those faced with the complexities of taking care of someone. From accepting feelings, to having a sense of humor, knowing your limits, and finding rewards in the often stressful process, Jacobs and Mayer are like wise friends who have your back. They understand through their own personal and clinical experience what you may be feeling and what you might need to do. This book gets to the heart of the caregiving journey many of us are going through. If you are looking for support to help take care of yourself and your loved one, you'll turn to this book again and again for advice, wisdom and hope. It would make a great gift for the caregivers you know.

The book is good. The title is off. It has nothing to do with meditation, which is fine for me. Basically it is different people telling brief stories about their experiences which makes you know you are not

alone. A more accurate title would have been "The daily life" or "All in a Day's work" "by Caregivers." It is brief stories we can relate too. The title is just misleading.

This is a uniquely powerful, provocative and reassuring book for people in that special hell that is contemporary caregiving. Full disclosure: my wife and I have known the authors, Barry Jacobs and Julia Mayer, for years. But, fuller disclosure, they have helped us and untold others navigate the emotional and technical minefields of caring for others--especially aging parents--and we are all glad to have their invaluable advice in book form (so we don't have to keep calling them to be talked down). Because of what they see in their practices, but also because of the challenges they have navigated with their own extreme caregiving experiences with their parents, they bring a form of deeply cautious optimism and insight into medical family matters that offers comfort and perspective even in the most epically uncomfortable situations where everyone has lost perspective. Not just another oversimplified how-to book, it is structured like a series of meditations that you can pick up and read instead of screaming or drinking (or both). I might even let my mom read it.

I gave this to a girlfriend who has been taking care of her seriously ill husband for almost 2 years. She took one look at the title, teared up a bit and thanked me profusely. I read a few pages before wrapping it up for her and I loved the messages written through personal experiences.

A valuable resource for both clinicians and caregivers. The book includes a range of topics from anger to flexibility and humor to rewards of caregiving. Each chapter portrays personal snippets of real, human experiences with caregiving as well as pearls of wisdom from the authors. As a clinician myself, I will certainly recommend this book to my patients and then use it when I care for my parents in the future.

I read the book and came away with some interesting ideas on being a caregiver and communicating with the person receiving the care. I sent it to my other family members for their reference.

A very comforting book of individual observations of care givers. It gave me some new ideas on coping with a spouse who was diagnosed with Lewy body dementia. I no longer have him at home as he is in a care facility that only deals with dementia and Alzheimer's patients. This book would have been very helpful during the 7 years that he was home.

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