

KNOWLEDGE CENTRAL

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B O O K S

Helping Grieving People—When Tears Are Not Enough: A Handbook for Care Providers. J. Shep Jeffreys. New York: Brunner-Routledge, 2005, 336 pages, \$39.95.



Softcover



Helping Grieving People is intended for use by professional care providers, trained volunteers, and family caregivers. The content is suitable for all types of patient populations affected by a loss, not just patients with cancer and their

families. The book gives meaningful suggestions to assist a wide variety of grieving patients. The author provides examples of a traumatic loss, such as death, debilitating illness, trauma, suicide, an inability to conceive, and changes in workplace or life circumstances, and stresses that everyone experiences loss at some point in life. According to the author, understanding the universality of grief gives providers the basis to assist grieving individuals because the environment and circumstances surrounding the loss can vary among people.

Helping Grieving People is well organized. Each chapter begins with a detailed introduction and ends with a summary. Careful attention to societal, cultural, religious, physical, and psychospiritual differences are mentioned throughout the text. The author discusses loss and death in a family, including its impact on various family members such as significant others, parents, children, grandparents, and siblings. He also provides ways to assist family members with their grief. Exercises and

stories throughout the book allow readers to assess their own level of grief or the level of grief of others. In addition, text boxes offer suggestions or highlight key points.

The physical layout of the text is its only weakness. Frequent capitalized headings make it difficult to determine when a new subject is being introduced. However, the biggest strength of *Helping Grieving People* is that it explores the many different ways that people grieve and discusses the reasons for the forms of grieving. Another strength of the book is its description of the dying process and overview of grieving process at each phase. This text would be a strong addition to many professional, volunteer, and family caregivers' libraries.

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Elder Rage or Take My Father . . . Please! How to Survive Caring for Aging Parents. Jacqueline Marcell. Irvine, CA: Impressive Press, 2001, 368 pages, \$19.95.



Softcover



Many people who have been involved with the care of older adults can identify with *Elder Rage or Take My Father . . . Please!* Jacqueline Marcell, television executive, was brought to her knees by the experience of caring for her aging par-

ents. In the text, she chronicles a poignant, sometimes heart-wrenching, sometimes

humorous journey through the healthcare delivery system and home care.

Anecdotal comic relief was added in the narrative when the author faced difficult situations. This smart, savvy woman related the trials and tribulations of private caregivers, physician apathy, family dynamics, and other healthcare crises in caring for her parents. The book was endorsed by many media personalities, aging and Alzheimer disease specialists, and authors. Marcell, who was forever changed by this experience, is an advocate for eldercare awareness and reform. The continuing saga of her parents is updated on her Web site (www.ElderRage.com). In addition to the author's narrative, the book includes information on additional resources such as *A Physician's Guide to Treatment Aggression in Dementia* by Rodman Shankle, MS, MD, and behavioral modification guidelines, as well as discussions of long-term care insurance and Alzheimer disease and a recommended reading list. The cited resources also are listed with their respective Internet addresses.

Although published in 2001, *Elder Rage or Take My Father . . . Please!* continues to be a valuable asset to family members, healthcare providers, and caregivers. Besides the classic *36-Hour Day: A Family Guide to Caring for Persons With Alzheimer Disease, Related Dementing Illnesses, and Memory Loss in Later Life* by Nancy L. Mace and Peter V. Rabins, few books have been as explicit in relating the agony of caring for older family members diagnosed with Alzheimer disease or aggression in dementia, whether the cause is related to cancer, HIV, or other etiologies.

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V I D E O S

Palliative Care: Care for Terminally Ill Patients. Grand Rapids Community College (Producer). Sherborn, MA: Aquarius Health

Ease of Reference and Usability



Quick, on-the-spot resource

✓ Basic



Moderate time requirement

✓ ✓ Intermediate



In-depth study

✓ ✓ ✓ Advanced and complex, prerequisite reading required

Content Level

Media Size



Pocket size



Intermediate



Desk reference

Care Media, 2003, 30 minutes, VHS \$125, DVD \$145.




Video



Horseback riding, boating, exercising, and golfing—this video's introduction portrays aging adults as active, engaging, and full of life. This positive style of presentation permeates throughout the video even in discussions on palliative care and hospice. The purpose of *Palliative Care* is to educate individuals and family members about the importance of planning for the end of life. It stresses communication around issues such as advanced directives, healthcare choices, and financial matters. The video emphasizes care that encompasses the emotional, medical, social, and spiritual needs of dying patients. A number of individuals are interviewed during the 30-minute presentation, including an attorney, physicians in hospice care, a nurse, and several lay people. Text statements highlight key points throughout the video, helping viewers to extrapolate essential information.

One of the interviewees is a nurse who comments on hospice care. She is identified without credentials, whereas the physicians are clearly credentialed as MDs; therefore, the nurse should have been identified with her credentials (e.g., RN, LPN). A consistent approach to identifying healthcare professionals for patients and families is important, particularly in a healthcare system that is increasing using unlicensed personnel as substitutes for educated professionals.

The video seemed to be about 10 minutes longer than needed because some information is repeated at the end. Overall, *Palliative Care* provided a positive, organized, and informative approach to this subject for patients and families. The video would be a fine addition to many office media collections. It can be viewed in a private room in the office setting or loaned to patients and family members for home viewing.

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A Celebration of Life: Rising Above Breast Cancer. African American Women Help Others to Heal. Dean Radcliffe Lynes (Producer). Sherborn, MA: Aquarius Health Care Media, 2000, 58 minutes, VHS \$150, DVD \$170.




Video



A Celebration of Life is a call to action for women in the African American community. The video encourages and empowers African American women to engage in breast health behavior and provides information and knowledge so that women can make informed healthcare decisions. It also provides selected resources that are available for the African American community.

The video is intended for medical audiences and the general community. Strengths include its length and the discussion of breast cancer that reinforces the three-prong approach of breast self-examination (BSE), clinical breast examination (CBE), and mammography as the tools used to fight the disease. The video's presentation is straightforward, simple, and factual. Numerous speakers, including members of community action groups, deliver accurate information and discuss barriers to breast health. The video heightens healthcare professionals' awareness of the available resources and opportunities to make referrals while dispelling myths. *A Celebration of Life* offers the lay public information and access to healthcare services.

One of the few limitations of the video is that BSE and CBE are not demonstrated. However, this timely video provides a large amount of information in a positive manner. Healthcare professionals caring for women in general medical-surgical nursing or in oncology nursing will benefit from viewing *A Celebration of Life*.

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Worth a Look

Waking the Warrior Goddess: Harnessing the Power of Nature and Natural Medi-

cines to Achieve Extraordinary Health. Christine Horner. North Bergen, NJ: Basic Health Publications, Inc., 2005, 320 pages, \$24.95.

Christine Horner, MD, FACS, a surgeon who lost her mother to breast cancer, took a leadership role in organizing and managing a national campaign to pass laws requiring insurance companies to pay for breast reconstruction following mastectomy. *Waking the Warrior Goddess* is built on the premise that women have a warrior goddess within. The book discusses a holistic system of health called ayurveda (the knowledge of life) that emphasizes the balance of mind and body.

The book is divided into three major sections and has a total of 14 chapters. The author briefly discusses some of the physiologic aspects of breast cancer and then focuses on complementary approaches to breast health such as exercise, cellular housecleaning (body purification), emotional healing, and diet, including specialty foods. In a later chapter, she outlines a 30-step program in which she stresses how individuals can protect against and fight breast cancer. As she discusses the steps, she includes "points to remember," which are helpful in placing the description of each step into the overall picture of health. For example, in step three, readers are urged to avoid all health-destroying fats, but she follows this with the point that fat is important in the proper functioning of health. A more thorough discussion of the points would have been helpful because many of these issues are easily confused by media and product labeling. An extensive list of resources, including addresses, phone numbers, and Web sites, for topics ranging from antioxidant supplements to an organic wedding planner is provided. The author also includes a recommended reading list, complete reference lists for citations in the book, and an index.

Waking the Warrior Goddess would interest individuals seeking information on the role of nature, nutrition, and health. Instead of being a stand-alone book, the text could supplement other sources on breast health that focus more traditionally on cancer screening and detection, as well as treatment-related issues. If recommending this book, nurses should encourage patients to ask questions or discuss any changes they plan to make in their usual health routines. 