



Necessary Conversations: Between Adult Children And Their Aging Parents

Gerald Kaufman

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In this timely book, family counselors Gerald and Marlene Kaufman urge adult children and their parents to have direct conversations about the decisions that lie ahead as parents age. The Kaufmans suggest that families use their parents' retirement as the benchmark for having the first discussion about their parents' plans for the next phase of their lives. The Kaufmans point out that most families wait until they're faced with a crisis before having these conversations. The big questions facing aging adults are: 1. Where should they live as they become less able to care for a property? 2. How will they manage their finances so that they are as prepared as possible to meet their needs as they age? Are they ready to invite one or more of their children to become their partners in making financial decisions? 3. Are they ready to invite one or more of their children to become their partners in making their medical decisions? 4. How can parents and children work together in determining when it's no longer safe or wise for the parents to drive? 5. What end-of-life decisions should parents be prepared to make? What is the best way to have those discussions? Necessary Conversations is filled with stories and examples from many families, most with different life circumstances, but all facing these same issues. The chapters end with "Getting Started," a list of suggestions for action, as well as "Questions" for focusing on practical outcomes to the discussions. The book includes a series of exhibits—from a "Needs Assessment for Caregivers" to a "Medications and Supplements List" to a "Driving Contract and Checklist." A thoughtful and useful guide to a life stage that's often dreaded and muddled through. Gerald W. Kaufman and L. Marlene Kaufman have been family counselors for nearly 40 years. This book grew out of a seminar they were asked to lead with their adult daughter and her husband.

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