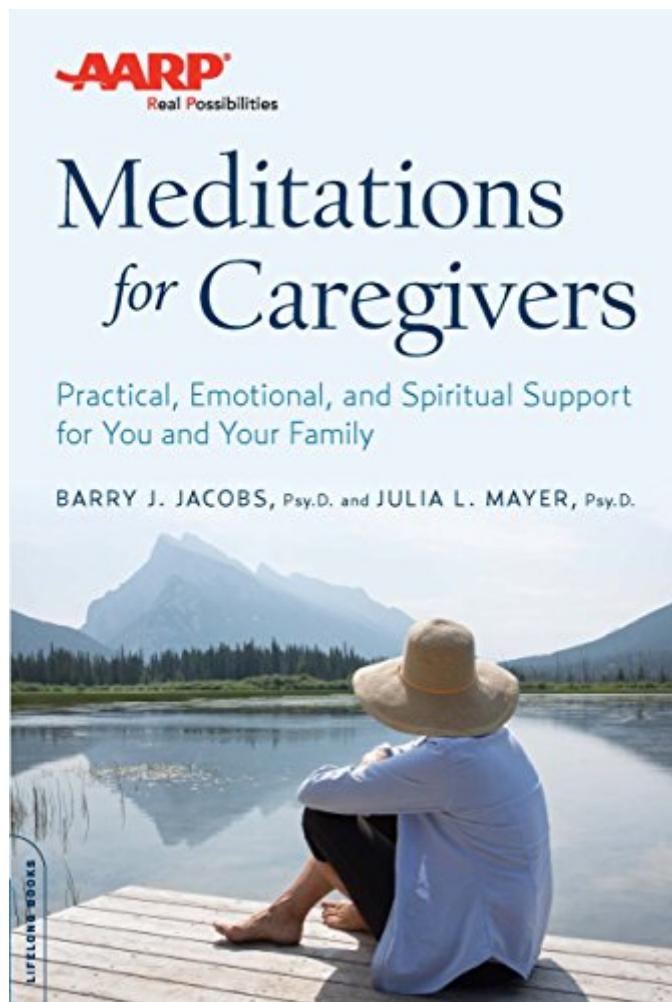


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# AARP Meditations For Caregivers: Practical, Emotional, And Spiritual Support For You And Your Family



## **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 indispensable 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**

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.

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.

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.

I have loved this book as a clinician and as a family member. Clinically, this book is written at the perfect level for clients. It is easy to read and organized in short chunks. The book only lasted 2 days in my lending library as it left my office with a client who is feeling guilt related to her self-care in the face of the pending death of her husband of 30 years. As a family member, I hope to gift this book to my parents and relatives, as we have lost our grandma recently. In the last 6 months of her life my mother, aunts, and uncles endured considerable distress in making decisions for grandma and in staying unified through the escalating demands of her care. These meditations share a healing message that is perfect for them. I recommend this book for all clinicians, family members, and individuals in the care of caregivers (i.e. that is everyone reading this review).

I can't say whether this book is important for professionals in the field, but it's immeasurably useful for the rest of us. For better or worse, almost all of us will find ourselves in the position of taking care of family members--whether because of illness, disability, age. I've been in this position twice in my life, and I wish I had this book then. Barry Jacobs and Julie Mayer speak from both personal and professional experience, using anecdotes and stories, in ways that are wise and freeing and compassionate and incredibly helpful. Not knowing is hard: not knowing what to do, not knowing what you can feel, not knowing what you can express. Not knowing how to handle the guilt of not needing care and not being able to acknowledge that you do need care. How to handle all this. This book will help. Really help. I can't think of higher praise.

Our experiences as caregivers will fill us with grief, anxiety, and guilt. Yet, despite the many challenges we'll face, we can also feel gratified and thankful during our caregiving journeys. In *AARP Meditations for Caregivers*, Drs. Jacobs and Mayer remind us that it's natural to feel frustration and sadness during our processes as caregivers, but each meditation also offers a new way to think positively about many of the challenges caregivers face. Every caregiver needs encouragement from time to time. The meditations in this book present valuable tips to alleviate a caregivers' burden and keep their spirits high. It is an essential resource for all caregivers.

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