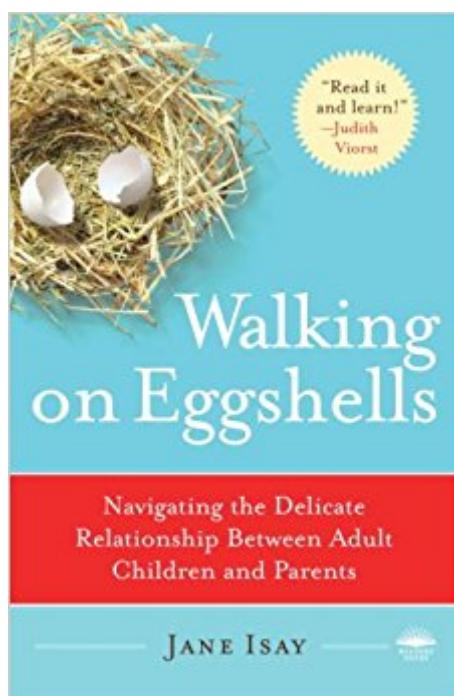


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Walking On Eggshells: Navigating The Delicate Relationship Between Adult Children And Parents



Synopsis

We raise our children to be independent and lead fulfilling lives, but when they finally do, staying close becomes more complicated than ever. And for every bewildered mother who wonders why her children don't call, there is a frustrated son or daughter who just wants to be treated like a grownup. Now, renowned editor Jane Isay delivers the perfect gift to both parents and their adult children—real-life wisdom and advice on how to stay together without falling apart. Using extensive interviews with people from ages twenty-five to seventy, Isay shows that we're far from alone in our struggles to make this new, adult relationship work. She offers up groundbreaking insights and deeply moving stories that will inspire those in even the toughest situations. Isay's warmth and wit shine through on every page as she charts an invaluable course through the confusing, and often painful, interactions parents and children can face. Walking on Eggshells is the much-needed road map that will keep you connected to the people you love most.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Jane Isay, the editor who discovered Mary Pipher's *Reviving Ophelia* and commissioned Rachel Simmons' *Odd Girl Out*, has written an insightful, compelling book about "the delicate lifelong bond between grown kids and their parents." Isay traveled across the country and interviewed nearly 75 people (including dozens of parents and grown children), and *Walking on Eggshells* shares moving stories that will help parents and grown children build strong new adult relationships with one another. We asked Po Bronson, author of *Why Do I Love These People?*, to read Isay's book and

give us his take. Read his review below. --Daphne Durham Guest Reviewer: Po Bronson Po Bronson is the author of the brilliant bestseller *What Should I Do with My Life?*, the powerful and poignant *Why Do I Love These People?*, a hilarious novel called *The Bombadiers*, and *The Nudist on the Late Shift*, a collection of "true stories" about Silicon Valley. When we tell family stories, we so often focus on the beginning and the end. The beginning is the two decades of our childhood and adolescence, and it's been the favorite narrative arc ever since Freud. What happens in your childhood does not stay in your childhood--it haunts the rest of your life. In the last decade, we've suddenly heard more stories of the end--narratives constructed around a parent's death, and often the year spent caring for that parent on their deathbed. Because these are the conventional narratives, they often distract our attention from the many decades in between. We barely even have a terminology for these years--and the terms we employ sound like oxymorons: "Adult Children," "Parents of Adults." There's an old saying: you can choose your friends, but you can't choose your family. In the beginning this is true--we're in the care of our parents, like it or not. And in the ending this is also true--they're in our care, like it or not. But in the long middle, this isn't so true. The middle is a period where both child and parent can keep their distance, if they prefer. And often do, harboring resentment. We too often accept that this is just the way it is. "She's never going to change" is a common, fatalist refrain. In *Walking on Eggshells*, Jane Isay shines a much-needed light on these years. With a graceful respect for the families she investigates, she tells their stories--how they lost their love, and how they regained it. Isay covers the many ways families develop resentment, and the many techniques they employed to make peace. She shows that small changes in routine can go a long way to restoring goodwill. But it's not a self-help book; it's more of a literary contemplation, and we learn more by inspiration than by emulation. Though this book addresses the parents directly, I suspect it will be passed back and forth, between generations, in many a family. --Po Bronson --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Starred Review. As baby boomer parents age, they're discovering the empty-nest syndrome is nothing compared to what happens when their kids graduate from college and start leading lives of their own. To a generation famous for being involved in every aspect of their children's lives, it can be upsetting to find that those children no longer need or welcome your advice. How does one parent children who no longer need parenting? Publishing veteran Isay, an editor and mother of two grown sons, interviews scores of parents and adult children of all ages to see how they are doing it. The stories are heartwarming, and Isay recounts them with intelligence and compassion. What does she find? Nothing Ann Landers hasn't already told us. Mainly: don't give advice; make friends with

your children's significant others; and remember that love heals. The most compelling story is Isay's own. One wishes it were the centerpiece of the book rather than tacked on as an epilogue. Her experience is an example of her most interesting discovery: children are quick to forgive and often the ones who take the initiative in forging a new brand of closeness between themselves and their parents. •a closeness that is best described as adult. (Mar. 27) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I ordered the book on March 31 and received it on April 6, so it arrived in a timely fashion. The book appeared to be brand new from the outside. The dust cover showed no wear and the book felt new. A week or so after receiving the book I finally opened it to read it and discovered green highlighting throughout the book. The highlighting is obviously on passages that spoke to the previous reader, but kind of takes away from the statement that the book was 'new'. Am I upset? No, some of the passages that are highlighted speak to me too. Would I have bought the book if I had known there was highlighting in it beforehand? No, because I wouldn't have known the extent of the highlighting. So I am giving it 4 stars, but I'm not unhappy with the purchase. Responding to the contents of the book: This book is about having a positive relationship with your grown children - say 25 years and older, possibly out of college and living on their own, but possibly still living with you. Jane Isay has compiled a number of stories to illustrate different ways parents of children have coped with their children growing up and 'distancing' themselves from their roots to gain autonomy. It could speak to you as being the 'grown child' if your parents are still living or as being the 'parent' of grown children. For parents who are new to this experience, it is a painful ripping apart of your soul as you try to navigate staying in touch with your children without allowing yourself to be their doormat and disrespected beyond all reason. Hurt feelings, miscommunications, misunderstood motives abound. I'm a fourth of the way through the book. At the end of the chapters the author has summarized the points she is making. So far they are uplifting like her comment that she was surprised to find it just takes little changes to improve the relationship with grown children. (This was one of the green highlighted parts of my book.) The stories illustrate examples of 'little changes.' It's a reasonable read and positive. I was referred to the book by a client of mine who has recognized him and his wife in some of the stories and that is helping them make 'little changes' to have a better relationship with their grown child who lives in another country - the ultimate in distancing.

Explained a lot

Good book -- didn't hit on my particular example but a good read and valuable.

Good

Taught me a lot. I enjoyed it, and took some of the suggestions.

Not finished yet, but so far, I love it. It has helped me a lot explain why my adult children act the way they do and now I can tuck this info away and not get my feeling hurt all the time!

Extremely insightful and important for anyone, adult children or parents, who is having a hard time with their family, or any family member.

Got this book to help me sort through some issues I was having with my mom. It was a good read and got me in a better place.

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