

Moving Your Aging Parents: Fulfilling Their Needs and Yours Before, During, and After the Move

Nancy Daniel Wesson
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Reviewed by Olivera Baumgartner-Jackson for Reader Views (8/08)

There are very few certainties in life. We are born and we die. If we are lucky, we age. If we are very lucky, our parents live to a ripe old age as well. When that happens, the traditional roles of children and parents become somewhat reversed. The oh-so-strong, capable and never-wrong person of our youth all of a sudden finds him- or herself in need of our assistance - their child! This is always a difficult position to be in, and usually it is true for both of the involved parties. So how does one handle such delicate situations without “putting down” one’s parents?

Wesson’s “Moving Your Aging Parents” is a true gem of a book. It is rarely gentle, compassionate, but utterly useful and practical at the same time. Wesson seems to have thought of every aspect of moving – from the very initial stages of planning and mapping things out, to the practicalities of the actual moving activities, packing, unpacking and settling in to the ways to create a “new home” quickly and efficiently. Wesson understands very clearly that a house is not a home, and she guides the reader into making it a home quickly, suggesting the essential activities, key pieces and rituals to achieve that. She is forever attentive to the fact that it is the parent’s comfort, safety and happiness that count the most and she suggests ways of respecting their wishes, while maintaining a level of practicality and feasibility.

Having read “Moving Your Aging Parents,” I found it an invaluable resource not only for those who have to help parents move, but really for anybody contemplating a move in general. The advice contained within those pages is incredibly practical and well thought out. I wish I would have read it sooner; or at least before our last cross-country move. If there is one piece of advice I could not agree with more, it would be the one about hanging the artwork you own as soon as possible. Nothing says home more than that as far as I am concerned.

I could not recommend this book highly enough to anybody who is lucky enough to be in the position to help their aging parents move. “Moving Your Aging Parents” provides all the advice on the technicalities of moving you’ll ever need; and it will also teach you some valuable lessons in patience, understanding and compassion.