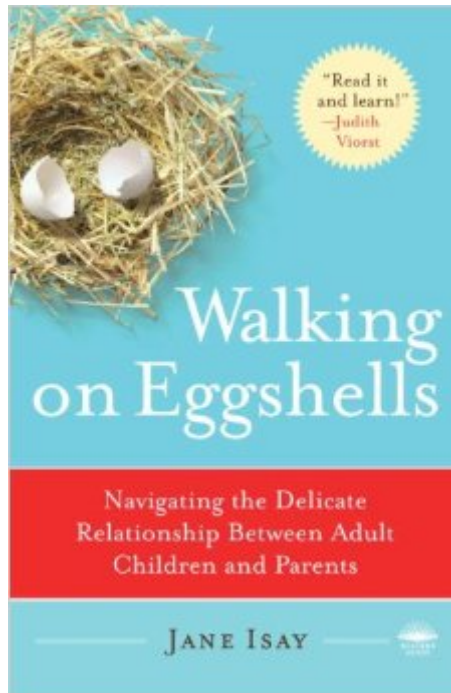


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# Walking On Eggshells: Navigating The Delicate Relationship Between Adult Children And Parents



## Synopsis

On giving advice: They Don't Want It. They Don't Hear It. They Resent It. Don't Give It. 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

This book makes some good points but didn't go deep enough to help me. I found "When Parents Hurt: Compassionate Strategies When You and Your Grown Child Don't Get Along" to be far more helpful because the author, Dr. Joshua Coleman, provides much more guidance for a range of situations and goes into much more depth for this very difficult problem.

This book is reassuring of how common are the conflicts between parents and their adult children, and provides sensible explanations of the feelings of adult children. Ms. Isay also empathizes with

the parents' legitimate feelings of hurt. But the solution suggested by this author is basically for a parent to bite their tongue, control their facial and body language, and pretend, lest their adult child be offended. This advice does not consider the tension and underlying rage that can build up in a parent that is also contending with all the issues of advancing age, to say nothing of the phoniness of the resulting "relationship". The subtitle of this book should be "Stepford Parents". I found it depressing and disappointing.

This book has multiple variations on a one-note theme that's summed up in the flap copy: Don't try to give advice to your adult children. Instead, the author advises, if you're endlessly accepting and generous, those children might (or might not) give you the time of day. As one of the earth mothers she interviews puts it, "Keep your door open and your mouth shut." Good advice? Maybe. But the evidence is all anecdotal, based on a pretty thin sampling of mothers and kids; and Isay never digs deep enough to explore what the resulting relationships are really like. In the final chapter, she reveals her own guilt about certain aspects of her relationship with her sons, and I couldn't help wondering whether that guilt was predisposing her to side with the kids in every conflict. Yes, parents need to recognize the autonomy of their grown children, but is the ultimate goal only to keep the peace at all costs? It seems shallow and empty and sad to me.

Jane Isay's book takes a long look at how relationships change as our children grow up. What worked (or almost worked) when they were teenagers or recent college grads does not succeed when they reach their 30's and 40's. Her well-written and well-researched book gives many case histories, describing problems and discussing solutions. Much depends on communicating, both parents and children, and on not giving advice. Anyone who has children this age, or will have children this age, or is a child him or her self, will find this book invaluable reading.

I was expecting more from this book than I got. The basic premise stated over and over is: Don't give advice, and hold your tongue. This seems to foster false and fake relationships. Would you want someone to "pretend" they adore you, when they really can't stand you? I think most people want relationships that are true and real. I was hoping for a book with more advice on how to deal with specific situations, not just "keep everything to yourself" I was disappointed in the author.

This is a fascinating book that will be useful and compelling for almost any adult from their 20s on up, in dealing with their parents and/or their own kids. It shows how these relationships change over

time, and how to adjust them once the kids reach adulthood. There is a lot to think about here, and the examples of how families have handled the changes in their lives are very helpful.

I purchased this book as a mother's day gift for my mom. We do not have the best relationship, and I wanted to find a gift that would help our bond to grow stronger. At first she was hurt by the gesture, but she ended up reading the book in 2 days and called me with only rave reviews. She said it felt as though the author were speaking directly to her and understood everything that went on between her and her kids. She has already recommended it to all of her friends with children and plans to read it again and again. It has opened up lines of communication between us, and I plan to read it soon so that we can discuss how we feel about our own situation. I am extremely satisfied with my purchase and feel that it helped spark the mending of my relationship with my mother. Hopefully we can continue to work on our issues thanks to this book.

I found this book helpful in relating to my adult daughters. The primary message of it, is that adults do not need or want advice from their parents. They do appreciate a neutral loving listening ear, and the encouragement which evolves from a lifetime of knowing and loving them. The case histories mentioned are common family situations, and made me think about family influences I hadn't before considered. I'm glad I read this book, and would recommend it to other parents interesting in forming a new, more complex, adult relationship with their children.

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