

Newsletter For Mature Adults



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Becoming Your Parents' Parent

Sometimes, a parent's decline comes gradually, giving you time and mental energy to plan. At other times, you are thrust into a full-on caregiving role after a sudden event: a stroke, a fall, or a significant illness.

No matter how you arrive in your caregiving role, you land in unknown territory trying to figure out your parents' housing, finances, health decisions, and day-to-day care, all while managing your own life and career.

That is some of what Kim and Mike Barnes faced when they started caring for their parents. It inspired the couple to launch [Parenting Aging Parents](#), a website and online community designed to help others navigate the difficulties of switching roles and becoming parents' parents.

Shared Personal Journeys

The Barnes share their firsthand experiences throughout the site in videos and podcasts. Mike's mom grappled with Alzheimer's, and he needed to find memory care for her while also ensuring that his father received the proper care at his independent living facility. Kim's mom had been independent and caring for herself but moved to an independent living building. She had also been the victim of a scam, after which her kids started managing her finances.

Their story resonates with many who are navigating the complications of caring for aging parents and facing a slew of decisions. If you are in such a position, Parenting Aging Parents can help you face the incredible physical, financial, and emotional challenges that accompany such a role. The website features information and interviews with experts about everything from dementia, caregiving, and insurance to Medicare, legal topics, and end-of-life considerations.

For example, two attorneys offer insight into the confusing and complicated legal aspects of medical decisions and what you need to know about the medical power of attorney, medical directives, HIPAA releases, and "DNRs" (Do Not Resuscitate) orders.

In addition, [housing issues](#) get considerable attention, including discussions about home safety, planning vacations while leaving parents at home, and understanding senior living options.

For instance, during a podcast, Mike discusses his and his sister's challenges in choosing a memory care facility for his mom. He reflects on how little he comprehended at the beginning of the process and how he had expected the experience to be like choosing an apartment in his twenties.

Other topics include scam awareness, managing sibling disagreements about parental care, and how to approach the sensitive topic of taking away parents' car keys.

Strangers Unite for Support

Another component of Parenting Aging Parents is a [Facebook group](#). It is a robust community of more than 12,000 people who come together to vent, ask questions, share recommendations, learn from one another, and find support and comfort from other people experiencing similar challenges.

Recent conversations have included dealing with narcissistic parents, skilled nursing questions, cell phone recommendations, and convincing a parent that it is time to consider assisted living.

Further solace for Facebook group members comes from [Zoom support groups](#) every other week. Dementia, grief, making tough decisions, family dynamics, caregiver stress, and narcissistic parents are some upcoming topics.

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