

# Aging Matters

## Parent Care – Self Care

By Jack M. Rosenkranz, J. D.

How do we imagine the aging experience? What will it be like for us and how will we know what to do when our aging parent requires our help? Howard Gleckman attempts to answer these questions in his new book, *Caring for our Parents*, published last year (2009) by St. Martin's Press. Gleckman collects stories of aging adults and their families who are navigating their way through the complicated and fragmented long-term care system. Most of the aging adults in Gleckman's text suffer from Alzheimer's; their children find themselves caregiving and searching for care and services that are difficult to organize even when family members have the ability to pay for them. The loved ones of these aging adults do not know where to turn as they are faced with the challenges of choosing appropriate care and of having multiple insurers, providers and funding sources.

As the population ages, more Americans will be faced with taking care of their aging parents and making sure that they themselves will be taken care of in their twilight years. While the book pro-

vides numerous important references for adults taking care of an aging parent, it illustrates that caring for our parents is complicated and often requires an insider's knowledge of the health care system. Gleckman's illustrations are cautionary tales about the importance of getting help when maneuvering through the long-term care system. None of the families in his text seem to know beforehand that the aging process can be tailor-made with the help of individuals experienced in the health care process. The Informed Elder Institute, Inc. provides non-medical education and advocacy about Elder Care choices. You can reach the Informed Elder Institute, Inc. at 813-226-0000.

*It is the goal of The Informed Elder Institute, Inc. to provide, through proper education, consumer advocacy tools that can assist elders with getting quality, individualized health care that they deserve. For more information on upcoming seminars, please contact the Informed Elder Institute, Inc. at (813) 226-0000.*

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