





# Caring For Mentally Ill Parents - How to Provide Support and Understanding


**10 TIPS FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS**


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Seek support from other caregivers. You are not alone!
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Take care of your own health so that you can be strong enough to take care of your loved one.
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Accept offers of help and suggest specific things people can do to help you.
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Learn how to communicate effectively with doctors.
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Be open to new technologies that can help you care for your loved one.
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Watch out for signs of depression and don't delay getting professional help when you need it.
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Caregiving is hard work so take respite breaks often.
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Organize medical information so it's up to date and easy to find.
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Make sure legal documents are in order.
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Give yourself credit for doing the best you can in one of the toughest jobs there is!

**CAREGIVER ACTION NETWORK**  
CaregiverAction.org

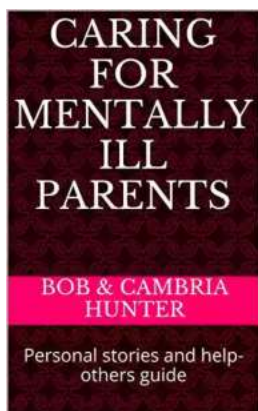
## The Importance of Mental Health Support

When it comes to caring for our parents, we often think about their physical health and well-being. However, mental health is equally important and should not be

overlooked. Dealing with mentally ill parents can be challenging, but with the right support and understanding, you can provide them with the care they need while preserving your own mental and emotional well-being.

## Facing the Challenges

Caring for mentally ill parents comes with a unique set of challenges. Watching someone you love struggle with their mental health can be emotionally exhausting and overwhelming. Additionally, there may be instances when their behavior becomes erratic or unpredictable, making it difficult to maintain a stable and supportive environment.



### Caring for Mentally Ill Parents: Personal stories and help-others guide by Cat McGill(Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 616 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
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It is crucial to remember that mental illnesses are not a choice, and the behavior associated with these conditions is a result of their condition, not a reflection of who they are as a person. By understanding this, you can approach the situation with empathy and compassion.


## Building a Support Network


When taking on the responsibility of caring for mentally ill parents, it is important to build a strong support network. This network can include family members, close friends, or even support groups specifically designed for caregivers of mentally ill individuals.


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Support groups provide a safe space where you can share your experiences, challenges, and emotions with others who are going through similar situations.

Not only can they offer practical advice, but they can also provide emotional support, as they understand the unique struggles you face.

## **Seeking Professional Help**

Remember, you don't have to navigate this journey alone. Seeking professional help is essential for both you and your parent. Mental health professionals can offer guidance, therapy, and strategies to cope with the challenges of caring for a mentally ill parent.

They can help you understand your parent's condition better, offer coping mechanisms for your own emotional well-being, and provide guidance on how to communicate effectively with your parent during difficult times.

## **Emphasizing Self-Care**

Caring for someone with mental illness can be all-consuming, and it's easy to neglect your own well-being in the process. However, taking care of yourself is crucial to maintain the stamina and resilience needed for long-term caregiving.

Make time for activities that bring you joy and help you relax, such as practicing mindfulness exercises, engaging in hobbies, or spending time with loved ones. Prioritizing self-care ensures that you can continue to provide the best possible care for your parent.

## **The Power of Communication**

# Growing up with mentally ill parent(s)

"my head hurts."  
"well I get migraines and I have back pain and i'm tired and I think I have cancer..."

simultaneously feeling like a burden and a caregiver

fantasizing from a young age about living in a clean house and never running out of things you need



knowing you can't blame anyone else for your shitty life so you feel guilty for not being able to handle adult responsibilities as a young child

HORRIBLE coping mechanisms

[has the audacity to complain about literally anything]  
"WELL SORRY IM THE WORST PARENT IN THE WORLD AND EVERYTHING'S MY FAULT"

dealing with child protective services for as long as you can remember



Open and honest communication is vital when caring for mentally ill parents. Encourage them to express their feelings and concerns while actively listening without judgment. Be patient and understanding, remembering that their mental illness might affect their ability to articulate their emotions clearly.

Communication also involves setting boundaries. It's essential to establish clear boundaries that protect your mental health and well-being. This might include

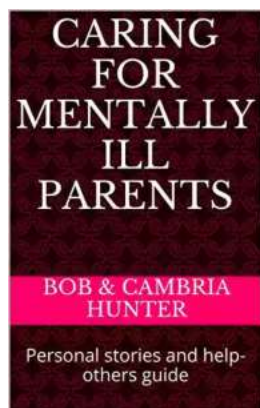


setting aside specific times for caregiving tasks or seeking outside help when needed.

## Dealing With Guilt and Emotional Strain

Feelings of guilt and emotional strain are common among caregivers of mentally ill parents. It's important to recognize these feelings and address them with professional help or by joining support groups. Remember that self-care and seeking support are not signs of weakness but vital steps toward being a better caregiver.

Caring for mentally ill parents is a challenging journey, but with the right support and understanding, you can navigate it successfully. Building a strong support network, seeking professional help, emphasizing self-care, and promoting open communication are all critical aspects of providing the care your parents need while taking care of yourself.



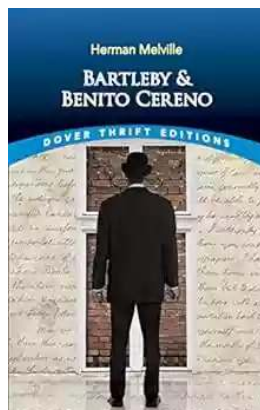
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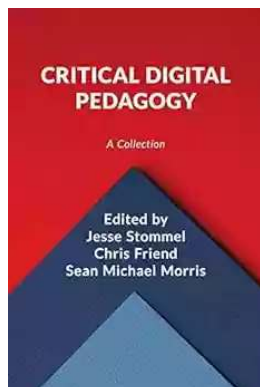


"Caring for Mentally Ill Parents" chronicles the journey of Bob & Cambria Hunter as they struggle to care for their fathers who suffer from mental illness. The book discusses challenges faced, lessons learned and hopeful strategies. The closing chapter deals with advocacy as a way of life.



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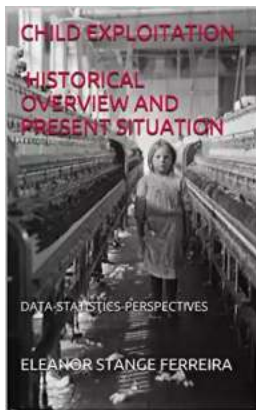
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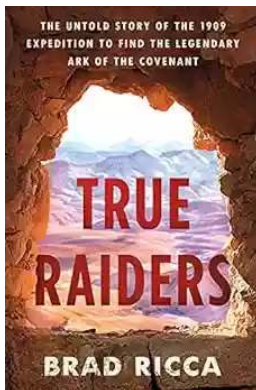
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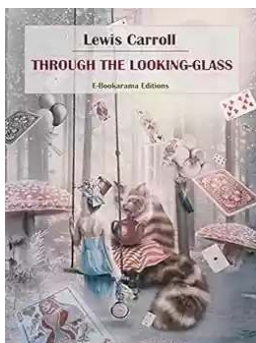
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