

OLDER KANSANS INFORMATION FORUM

And Thou Shalt Honor: A Caregiver's Companion

by Beth Witrogen Mc Leod (Editor), Bob Condor, foreword by Rosalynn Carter,
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This is a very useful, informative book. Rosalynn Carter has stated, "There are only four kinds of people in this world—those who have been caregivers, those who currently are caregivers, those who will be caregivers and those who need caregivers."¹ This statement covers all of us, no matter what our age or position in life.

Caregiving will be one of the most important issues in our recent collective social history. Medical breakthroughs continue to extend life spans in all developing countries in the past 50 years. The needs of the elderly are already a focus. One in four American families care for an older relative, friend, or neighbor.² The premise of *And Thou Shalt Honor* is to examine the personal, and practical side of providing dignified, sensitive, yet comprehensive care, to those in need, particularly the elders, in our lives.

The book is a reference to the PBS special of October 2002, part of the larger Caregivers, USA.org project, a free service funded by an initial developmental grant from the Motion Picture Television Fund. In addition to the PBS television special, inter-active website, and this book, the organization also supplies additional caregiving books, DVD's, audio tapes, and is organizing regional "town hall"-styled meetings of interested parties, private and governmental services and departments, involved with caregiving services.

This reference title, although initially appearing cumbersome (445 pages), is surprisingly easy to use and read. It takes a "cookbook" approach to the needs of the caregiver, with short chapters, and sidebars such as "Expert Opinion," and, "Outlook," "For More Information" sidebars are complete with website addresses and toll-free telephone numbers. Poignant personal stories are featured in "Point of View."

Other features include: "Take Action" specific steps toward solving problem situations, and the evaluation tool "Caregiver's Checklist." Specific topics are easy to find in the table of content, and are well indexed.

Part Eight: Resources lists additional websites, books, and organizations that address the needs of both the caregiver and care recipient.

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¹ *Kansas Caregiver Guide 2003*, Kansas Dept. on Aging, p. 41

² *ibid.* p. 2