



Measure of the Heart: Caring for a Parent with Alzheimer's

Mary Ellen Geist

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Mary Ellen Geist decided to leave her job as a CBS Radio anchor to return home to Michigan when her father's Alzheimer's got to be too much for her mother to shoulder alone. She chose to live her life by a different set of priorities: to be guided by her heart, not by outside accomplishment and recognition.

The *New York Times* wrote a front page story about Mary Ellen on Thanksgiving 2005. It was one of the most e-mailed stories for the month. Mary Ellen also kept a blog of her experiences, which received an enormous response from readers on WCBS880.com. Through her own story and through interviews with doctors and other women who've followed the "Daughter Track"--leaving a job to care for an aging parent--Geist offers eye-opening advice. She shares emotional insights on how to encourage interaction with the loved one you're caring for; how to determine daily tasks that are achievable and rewarding; how the personality of the patient affects the caregiving and the progression of the disease; as well as invaluable advice about how the reader can take care of themselves while accomplishing the Herculean task of constant caregiving to others.

Geist's years in journalism allow her to report on Boomers' caretaking dilemmas with professional objectivity, and her warm voice brings compassion and insight to one of the most difficult situations a son or daughter may face during his or her life.

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