

# Honor Your Mother and Father

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“Cast us not off in the time of old age...whenever strength faileth...forsake us not.”

This acknowledgement of a sacred obligation to care for our elderly is surely the noblest ingredient of the essential Jewish character. We are where we are because earlier generations have shown us the way. We are the inheritors of their wisdom, the beneficiaries of their sacrifice.

*At this time of the New Year, many of us take the time to reflect and give thanks for all of our daily gifts. The Mitzvah of honoring our parents has primary significance as one of the Ten Commandments.*

**L’DOR V’DOR:** From Generation to Generation

With modern medicine leading to longer and longer life spans, more people than ever are becoming caregivers for their aging parents. It is a role, much like parenthood, that does not come with instructions. Good hearted and well-meaning adult children are managing in some cases, but not quite managing in others. Everyone today knows someone who is presently involved in caring for an elderly family member. Understanding the choices and the decisions that need to be faced when an elderly relative appears to need support is a daunting and often confusing task, with few guidelines. Turning to professional geriatric care managers who specialize in elder care planning, problem solving and financing of long term care can help assist with transitions necessary.

Financing the cost of long-term care frequently becomes enmeshed with elder care planning and adult children intervening

on behalf of their parents. With Medicaid being the primary method of paying for care on a daily basis in the United States, there remain strict asset and income tests for qualifying. Of special interest, specific to Holocaust survivors receiving war reparations, these unique circumstances provide an opportunity to potentially qualify for Medicaid. Furthermore, it may be possible to continue to protect those assets when the holocaust survivor has passed and the assets have been transferred to a spouse or other relative who is in need of Medicaid. State laws and regulations in this area remain somewhat unclear. However favorable results are being foreseen.

In contrast to celebrating secular holidays where we set aside a day to honor a mother or a father, in Judaism we learn that every day is a day of thanksgiving and every day we must honor and cherish our parents.

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