

# Preface

Over the years, I have seen Maryln Appelbaum many times speak to audiences on how to handle hard-to-handle people. Her audience members sit transfixed as she teaches them the reasons difficult people are difficult and the crucial skills necessary to handle them. The highlight of each session is always a live demonstration on how to handle a difficult parent. I have never seen another speaker do this type of demonstration. Maryln invites the audience to think of the most difficult parent they have ever had to work with and to share examples of what that parent did. Then she chooses the parent example that is the most difficult and invites the audience member who shared the example to come to the stage and pretend to be that parent. Maryln pretends to be the educator and demonstrates the skills to use. The person who is playing the role of the difficult parent always tries to stump Maryln by exaggerating the difficult parent's behavior. She has had parents who rage, complain, whine, and make unreasonable demands. There have been situations that have ranged from silly to dangerous. She always gets the person calm. She always talks to them in a way that they listen. She never allows the difficult person to dominate the situation. Maryln treats each situation with respect and dignity. All her audience members come away having seen in action how to handle hard-to-handle parents.

Maryln Appelbaum is my mother. We have worked together for the past twenty years. She walks her talk. She does this not only with audience members but in real life. This book is packed with the strategies that she teaches at workshops. They work for her. They work for me, and they will work for you. She makes handling hard-to-handle parents easy.

*Marty Appelbaum, President of Appelbaum Training Institute*



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