

Grandparenting with Heart: ... and Love, and Care, and Wisdom

Dr. Juliet C. Rothman MSWPhD

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Grandparenting with Heart: . . . and Love, and Care, and Wisdom Dr. Juliet C. Rothman MSWPhD Grandparenting with Heart is a personal, interactive experience, which is meant to validate, assist, and encourage grandparents' desires to have meaningful relationships with their grandchildren of any ages. It is grounded in the saying that is familiar to many of us "There are only two things we can leave our (grand)children, One is Roots and the other is wings". Written in a casual, welcoming, and inclusive style, the book first explores "roots" and wings" through interviews with grandparents of many ages, in many settings and many cultural backgrounds, individually and in focus groups, and shares with the reader some of their ideas about communication and relationship. Because each of grandparenting experience is unique and different, even within the same family, the second chapter explores some of these differences and the ways in which they may affect this special relationship. The next part of the book focuses on grandchildren, first, with some helpful insights to help readers to understand their world, and to recognize some of the major differences between today's childhood and teen experiences and all of our own. From this framework, the book moves on to discussions with grandchildren in a wide variety of places - from playgrounds to mountain trails, schools to backyards. It is very clear from these that grandchildren want to engage with grandparents! They share their ideas about relationship, and, perhaps best of all, offer "advice" on what they most value in the grandparent relationship. From here, the next section of the book offers some ideas for enhancing conversations, for finding the right place and time, and for addressing some of the more difficult and challenging things that grandchildren may share. Suggestions for relationship development with grandchildren of different ages will help each reader to focus more closely on their own personal relationships. The last section "puts it all together" - grandparent ideals and wishes, the grandchildren's experiences and suggestions, and relationship-development ideas that encourage positive and meaningful experiences. In an additional section, called "Our Grandchildren's Gifts" grandparents share personal stories, letters, and experiences that have made them feel that their relationship with their grandchildren is, truly, very special and meaningful for them. Grandparents are invited to share their own stories on a "Grandparenting with Heart" blog. Each chapter of the book includes a special section called "For Personal Reflection", with a guide for thinking about the material in the chapter personally, and for exploring ideas and experiences, both personal and with grandchildren, that can help us each toward a deep and meaningful relationship. It is the author's sincere hope that grandparents will find this book helpful, and that they will find many spots that make them smile!



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