

Talking to Siblings About Caring for Mom and Dad

**By Matthew Crider, JD
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Many modern families have members living all over the country—and all over the world. Which means that the holiday season provides one of the only times to all get together in person, celebrate, catch up... and talk about caregiving strategies for aging parents. Unfortunately, this kind of conversation can be a difficult one, especially if not all siblings agree about mom or dad's needs, or if one sibling feels that he or she shoulders an unfair amount of responsibility. In spite of the difficulty, having the conversation can be of the utmost importance.

In this article in Time Magazine author Francine Russo describes the consequences that can follow when lines of communication breakdown. "It wasn't until my mom's funeral, watching my dad and sister cling to each other and weep, that I got a hint of their long ordeal — and how badly I'd screwed up."

Russo makes the point in her article that much of the tension and disagreement among siblings can come from inaccurate or conflicting information. "Friction often stems from parents giving their children different information about how they're doing. Mom may put on a good show for the out-of-towner, who then discounts what the local sibling says." This is all the more reason for siblings to communicate with each other, not just through mom or dad.

If you aren't sure how to get the conversation started, Paula Spencer, senior editor for Caring.com wrote this article for Third Age which gives some helpful strategies on how to ease into the difficult topic of caring for aging parents this holiday season.

About Matthew Crider, J.D.

Matthew Crider formed [Crider Law PC](#) in 1999 so he could help individuals by providing creative solutions and be their trusted advisor and legal counselor. He serves his clients by listening closely to their goals, dreams and concerns and working with them to develop superior and comprehensive estate and asset protection plans. His family law and divorce focuses on assisting families in a dissolution matters, including divorce, child custody and visitation, child and spousal support, spousal support and alimony, and parental rights.

