

## Carol Bradley Bursack

■ Author ■ Columnist ■ Speaker

[www.mindingoureliders.com](http://www.mindingoureliders.com)

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## Biography

**F**or over twenty years author, columnist and speaker Carol Bradley Bursack cared for a neighbor and six elderly family members. As a result of this experience, Bursack wrote *Minding Our Elders: Caregivers Share Their Personal Stories*, a portable support group for caregivers. *Minding Our Elders* is used as a college text for gerontology and nursing home administration classes as a way to humanize, for students, the family caregiving experience. Bursack's award-winning Websites, [www.mindingoureliders.com](http://www.mindingoureliders.com) and [www.mindingourelidersblogs.com](http://www.mindingourelidersblogs.com) include links to helpful agencies, articles rich with information and comfort, links to chat groups, and resources for caregiver, boomer and senior needs.

Bursack's syndicated newspaper column "Minding Our Elders," runs weekly, in print and on-line. She's an expert blogger on [OurAlzheimers.com](http://OurAlzheimers.com) and a regular contributor to [AgingCare.com](http://AgingCare.com). Bursack has been interviewed on many national radio shows, including "Mr. Eldercare," "Today's Author," "The Ron Ross Show," and Kevin Skipper's "The Parent Care Show." She has been interviewed and quoted in magazines and newspapers around the world, including *Family Circle*, *Quick and Simple*, North Jersey Media Group, *The Leader-Telegram*, *Tampa Tribune* and the *Sydney Morning Herald*. She also speaks to groups of all sizes, on caregiving issues.

Bursack is a member of AARP, CAPS (Children of Aging Parents), the National Caregivers Advisory Panel and the National Family Caregivers Association (NFCA), National Council of Hospice and Palliative Professionals (NCHPP), the National Association of Baby Boomer Women and the National Association of Women Writers. As an expert in her field, she is featured in *Montclair's Who's Who in Heath* and has written hundreds of articles for national publications. Bursack is also a contributing author to "The Media Librarian's Handbook," (Facet Publishing, UK 2008).

Bursack, who has a degree in English literature, lives in Fargo, ND.



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## Suggested interview questions

**1** How is a caregiver's health affected by the responsibilities and emotional stress of caregiving?

**2** Dysfunctional families - How do caregivers take care of parents who never took care of them?

**3** You can't parent your parents - aging is vastly different from childhood.

**4** How do most families divide up the caregiving duties between siblings?

**5** At what point does grief become a major issue for the caregiver?

**6** How long do most people stay involved with caregiving?

**7** Why is caregiving so much more of an issue than it was a generation back?

**8** How do caregivers deal with resentment when their long held dream of freedom and travel after kids leave is shattered because they must become caregivers?

**9** How do caregivers please everyone: the kids, the spouse, the job and the elder?

**10** What is happening when Dad starts hitting on your wife?

## Facts that support the segments

**A** study by researchers at the University of Nevada found that family caregivers face health risks including depression, anxiety, substance abuse, severe anger, cardiovascular disease, cancer and risk of infectious diseases.

From the 1999 MetLife Juggling Act Study: "It is a staggering figure for the 22.4 million U.S. families who provide care," said Sandra Timmermann, Ed.D., a gerontologist and

director of MetLife's Mature Market Institute. "Of the caregivers we studied, 84 percent made adjustments to their work schedules by doing at least one of the following: taking sick leave or vacation time, decreasing work hours, taking a leave of absence, switching from full to part time employment, resigning or retiring. Very few of their employers provided programs or resources to support

their caregiving efforts. Only recently have policy-makers and business leaders begun to recognize the sacrifices and contributions made by working caregivers."

An AARP study stated that a many as 44 million Americans provide elder care.

According to the National Alzheimer's Association, approximately 30% of today's caregivers die before those they are caring for.

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## Testimonials from media

Carol- Thanks for taking the time to be my guest today on "Ask Mr. Eldercare".

Wow! Did that half hour scream by. Your information was so magnetic I was stunned when the clock said it was time to end the show! Your depth of experience and warm dedication toward the elderly shined through your words of encouragement. You were just what I wanted my for my listeners.

Your heartfelt insight about "Parenting Our Parents" brings a much needed message of love, hope and direction to those caring for aging parents. On top of that, you made the interview a breeze for me! When your schedule permits, I'd love to have you back on the show again.

All my best,

**Martin Sabel**

Mr. Eldercare

[www.blogtalkradio.com/MrEldercare](http://www.blogtalkradio.com/MrEldercare)

"Just wanted to say thanks for participating in last night's program. Your thoughts were insightful and important and from what I have been able to gather so far from viewers and colleagues, the information was well received and helpful. I hope we can speak again in the future."

**Brian A. Content**

News Director

WHDFTV Miami-Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach

WHDN-TV Boston

"Don't think that Carol's specialty isn't of interest. Even though most of our "youth obsessed" culture is in denial over it, she has a wonderful way of bringing the issue to the airwaves in a fresh, non-intimidating way. All of us baby boomers need to get a firm grip on "elder care" before it overtakes us, and it will overtake all of us! Her approach is not just clinical know how, it is heartfelt and rich in experience, that makes for riveting radio. Just what people caught up in the middle of it need."

**John Counsell**

Late Night Counsell

CFRA AM 580 radio

Ottawa, Canada

"Carol is a great interview. She is knowledgeable about her topic and talks easily when asked questions. Her book is also a good read. My family has recently been dealing with some of the issues involving aged love ones. It was very comforting to read the stories in Carol's book if only to know that our family is not alone in dealing with the issues we've been confronted with."

**Kim Love**

KROE/KZWY/KYTI/KWYO/KLQQ Radio

Sheridan, Wyoming

"I have had Carol on a number of times on my show and each time she brings very insightful and heart felt information. Her understanding of the challenges of care giving are outstanding, realistic and far from clinical. We plan on having her on again."

**Ron Thulin**

The Ron Thulin Show

Radio 1310 AM

San Antonio, Texas

"No one speaks on behalf of the elderly more articulately than Carol Bradley Bursack. Her passion as a voice for seniors rang clearly as a guest on my "Elderlaw Forum" radio broadcast. She has a standing invitation to address my audience."

**Professor Michael Myers, Host USD**

Senior Legal Helpline

"We were extremely pleased with not only the message you shared with our listeners but also the sincerity in which it was delivered. You came across articulate and well informed, and we received positive comments regarding your true advocacy for caregivers."

"Good luck and we will put you on our short list to invite back very soon."

**Michael Haynie**

Managing Principal - bias4action

Show Host - Positive Momentum

KBAR 1230AM

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## Testimonials from speaking

### Comments from the Dementia Workshop sponsored by Guardian and Protective Services:

"Excellent! The personal touch was great, and it was good to end (a long workshop) on a lighter note."

"I was the caregiver for my grandmother...the person who she took out her anger on. No one ever told me to take a break and not feel guilty. Really, the presentation was beautiful. Thank you!"

"Wonderful! Hopeful and peaceful on the heels of all the legal stuff (of the event). The stories were worth savoring."

"Touched on an important point – let yourself feel the grief and frustration without feeling guilty. Give yourself a break. Good to have the first-hand accounting of a caregiver."

"The information was wonderful! My mother is dealing with this with my grandpa...the speaker was excellent. Her own personal story is very touching. I enjoyed the reading from her book."

"A wonderful speaker with a caring voice."

"Straight forward, honest and helpful!"

Carol,

"I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to you for taking your valuable time to provide a presentation for the Fargo VA employees entitled "Minding Our Elders." We gathered so much important information that we can utilize in our every day practice. You were right on target with your comments to include the importance of including family in those key discussions. I heard so many positive comments about your presentation and I plan to discuss many of your comments with our Customer Service Team."

**Karen R, Robinson, PhD, RN**

Associate Director for Patient Care

Department of Veterans Affairs

Fargo, ND

Carol Bradley Bursack is a dynamic speaker. Her message was not only informative, but it was heartfelt. I look forward to attending more gatherings where she will be presenting.

**Laura Hagen**

Director of Social Services

Pelican Valley Health Center

Carol,

What a tremendous job you did speaking today! I really, really appreciate your speaking style, and the depth of content which you shared. I struggled to not sob aloud! The part about when your Dad died in your arms. I was choked up and wiping away tears as unobtrusively as I could.

While it's something I'd rather avoid (crying in public) I think it was worth it because of the value of the content of your presentation. I think you touched a lot of hearts and made the point of what it's all about. Thanks for being so open with your thoughts and feelings. What a gift!

I also want to commend you for including the spiritual in your talk. It may be risky to share that you actually sensed his spirit leaving, but I think people are too much in denial about things of the spirit, and they need to hear it now and then from credible people like you.

**Julie Sorenson**

Safe Stay, Moorhead, MN

Carol,

I want you to know it was my privilege to hear you speak about your book. Your honesty and compassion for caregivers and their loved ones is overwhelmingly fresh. I was surprised to realize I was moved to tears by your stories as you were re-living many of the emotions the people I counsel experience. It is clear to me that this is your ministry.

**Doreen Vosburg**

Vosburg Counseling...for Seniors

Dear Carol,

I read your column every week, but hearing you in person and listening to your stories and experiences brought not only tears but laughter. You are right – we are not alone!

**Maggie Driscoll**

Oaks Program Director

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## Experience with the media

Dozens of radio interviews including The Bev Smith Show, Radio Health Journal, The Tom Pope Show, Coping with Caregiving, Hear It Now (PBS), The ElderLaw Forum, The Lee Michaels Show, Mr. Eldercare, Today's Author, The Ron Ross Show, and The Parent Care Show

Syndicated newspaper column, "Minding Our Elders," runs weekly, in print and on-line

Expert blogger on [OurAlzheimers.com](http://OurAlzheimers.com) (HealthCentral)

Writer and forum moderator for [AgingCare.com](http://AgingCare.com) (MediaBrains)

Quoted in, and interviewed for, magazines and newspapers around the world, including Family Circle, Quick and Simple, North Jersey Media Group, The Leader-Telegram, Tampa Tribune and the Sydney Morning Herald.

Speaker for groups of all sizes on caregiving issues, including sandwich generation, boomer and senior audiences, as well as professionals in the field

Provided a one-hour segment for the multipart teleseries "I Just Want to Help," which includes other top names in elder care

Has written hundreds of articles for print and online

The book, "Minding Our Elders: Caregivers Share Their Personal Stories," is being used in colleges and universities as a text book to help humanize the family caregiving experience for gerontology and nursing home administration students

Interacts with countless authors, experts, doctors and other professionals who want to be included on her blogs

Bursack is a member of AARP, CAPS (Children of Aging Parents), the National Caregivers Advisory Panel and the National Family Caregivers Association (NFCA), National Council of Hospice and Palliative Professionals (NCHPP), the National Association of Baby Boomer Women and the National Association of Women Writers. As an expert in her field, she is featured in Montclair's Who's Who in Health and has written hundreds of articles for national publications. Bursack is also a contributing author to "The Media Librarian's Handbook," (Facet Publishing, UK 2008).

## As seen in

**FamilyCircle**



**VIV**



**The HealthCentral Network**

**Agingcare.com**

*The Community for Caregivers*