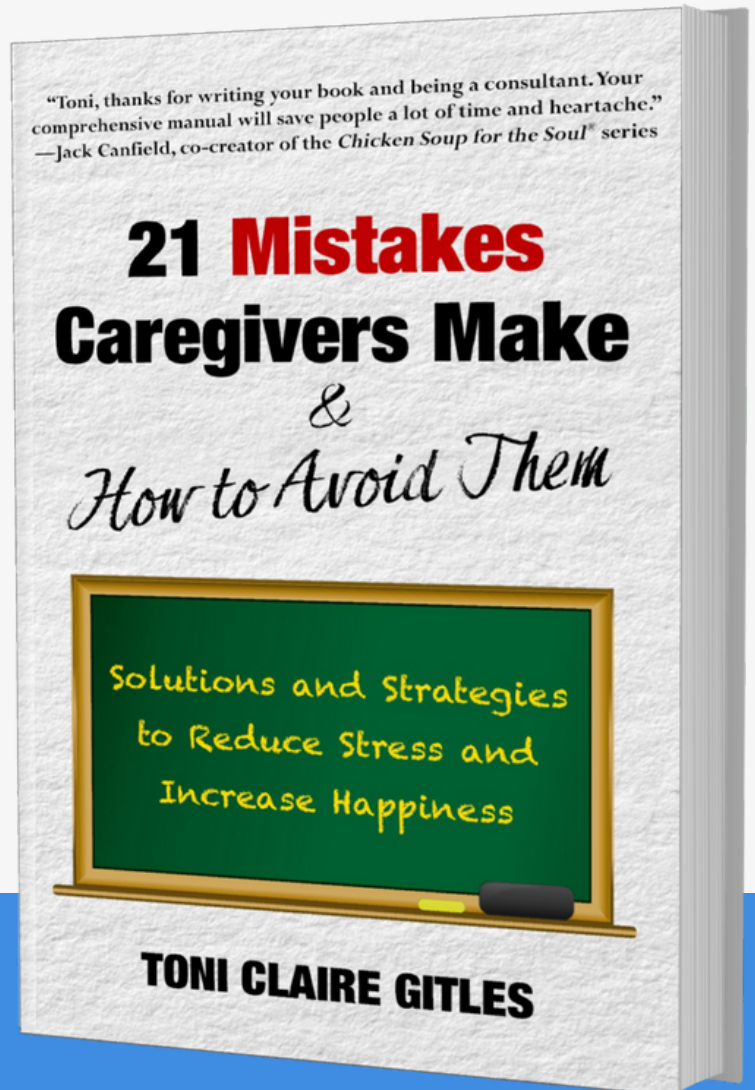


# Media Kit

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**TONI GITLES**

CEO of Caregiver Empowerment  
Heart Light Enterprises LLC

# Author Bio

Toni Gitles keeps love at the forefront by encouraging caregivers to embrace their role and thrive, helping them to avoid the pitfalls and roadblocks on the journey that may derail them from a meaningful experience.

Toni is a Certified Caregiving Consultant™, Certified Caregiving Educator™, Support Group Facilitator, Happiness Trainer, and professional speaker. Her training and personal experience enable Toni to meet family caregivers where they are, whether their loved one's health issue is due to aging or a chronic or progressive disease. Toni gently guides caregivers by offering advice, resources, and a compassionate ear.

Toni and her partner, Dennis Dulniak, locate restaurants willing to provide Dementia-Friendly Dining. Additionally, owners of establishments reach out to Toni and Dennis after seeing them in the media. The pair train restaurant staff with information about dementia, situations they may encounter, and how to interact with family members and the person with dementia to create a pleasant and memorable experience for all of them. For Dementia-friendly Dining, the restaurant owner provides a quiet area and establishes specific days at off-peak times. Visit [www.centralfloridadementia-friendlydining.com/](http://www.centralfloridadementia-friendlydining.com/) for more information.

Toni and Dennis also organize conferences with Elite Supported Travel on Holland America Cruise Lines for caregivers and their loved ones with dementia-related diseases. For more information, please visit [www.elitecruisesandvacationstravel.com/upcoming-dementia-friendly-cruises.html](http://www.elitecruisesandvacationstravel.com/upcoming-dementia-friendly-cruises.html) and join them.

Toni's ultimate goal is to change the conversation in the United States about caregiving and people with disabilities. Medical personnel benefit by acknowledging family caregivers as knowledgeable support systems who help maintain their patient's health and well-being. All people need to be respected and understood. People who understand caregiving and common diseases that affect us encourage others to be more kind, compassionate, and helpful to families in their communities.



An international speaker, Toni Gitles contributed to three caregiving and lifestyle management books and is the author of the new book *21 Mistakes Caregivers Make & How to Avoid Them: Solutions and Strategies to Reduce Stress and Increase Happiness*, available September 2023.

Toni is a competitive ballroom dancer in her free time and enjoys gardening and playing with her Maltese dog, Jasmine. She is a volunteer with the Myasthenia Gravis Foundation of America (MGFA), and in 2022, she received the Emerging Leadership Award from the Foundation.



# Book Description

In 2003, my mother was experiencing an unresolved health issue. I flew across the country from my home in California to Florida to take Mom to the doctor to get answers and a treatment plan. When the doctor failed to offer help for the problem (“Your mom’s old, there’s not much we can do”), I had one of those lightning bolt ah-ha moments. Mom was not just getting old; she was 86!

Since I could work remotely in my consulting position, I moved back to Florida, bought a home nearby, and prioritized spending time with Mom, helping her go through this stage in her life, and creating memories. Listening to my intuition paid off when, in March 2006, my mother, then 89 years old, was in the hospital when the doctor assessed her with a life-threatening illness. I was standing next to the neurologist looking at a scan of mom’s brain when he informed me, “If your mom survives, she will never live independently again.” I quickly surmised that I would now be the primary caregiver. Even though I was unsure about what that would entail, I was happy to be there to help and support Mom.

Mom did survive. After three weeks in rehab, I took her home and moved into her guest room. It was time to figure out what I was supposed to do now! No written instructions. No guidebook for caregiving. The hospital gave me the names of three rehab centers, and the only resource information rehab gave me was the name of the home health agency that would provide a nurse and occupational therapist to visit my mom weekly. “What do I do now?”

So, I’ve written the guidebook I needed then to help caregivers now. *21 Mistake Caregivers Make & How to Avoid Them* gives you an understanding of the caregiving experience, your responsibilities, how to approach the challenges, be prepared for the stressors, and have a more joyful experience. The word “Mistakes” is used instead of “Chapters” to bring attention to the things that can blindsides you if no one prepared you for caregiving. To increase your confidence, you are guided in the skills to identify responsibilities, manage communication, ask for support, celebrate life, create happiness and give and receive love, and much more.



For a long time, I didn’t realize there are often mistakes and failures on the road to success. I was well into adulthood when I realized mistakes could teach us a lot—they help us course correct. And when you learn from your mistakes, you use that knowledge to make better choices next time, be more effective at the task, and grow. In other words, while it can still be frustrating, it needn’t be a source of stress. So, while making a mistake is disheartening, you make the best decision based on current information and wisdom.

# Book Excerpts

When you identify with the caregiver title, you join the estimated 53 million people in the greater national caregiving community. As a part of the ever-growing, extensive caregiving community, you can participate in that community and reap the benefits of lessons learned from other caregivers, educational programs, and respite opportunities.



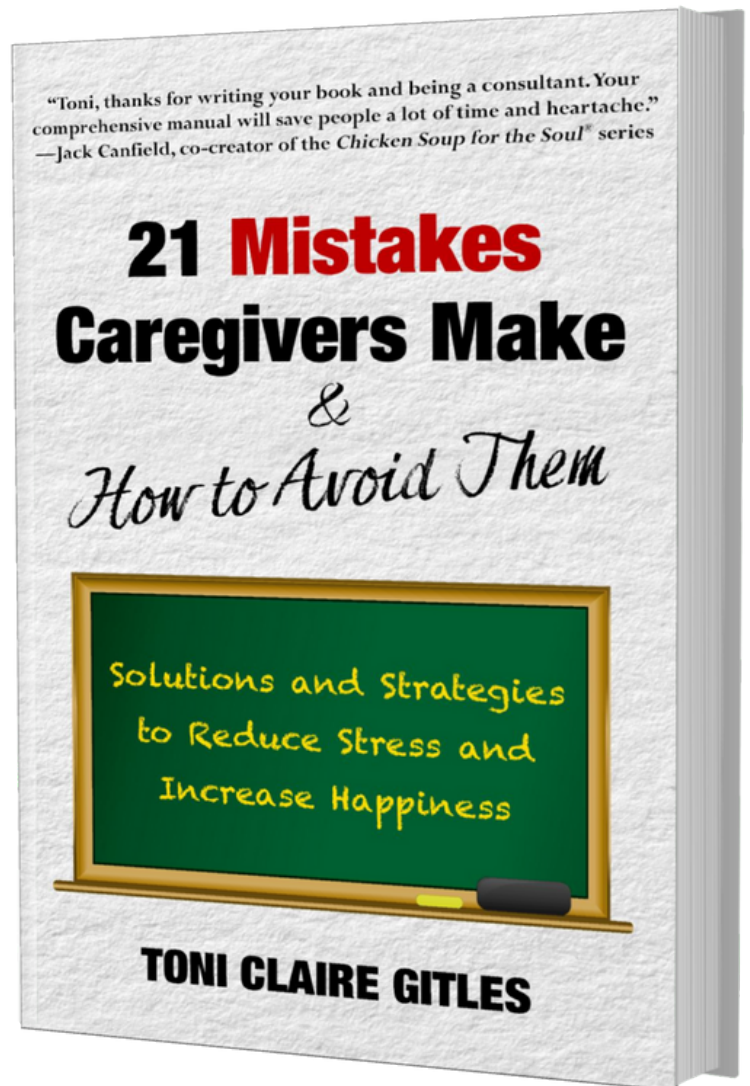
While being called on to care for a loved one with failing health can be stressful, when you recognize that caring for your family member gives your life meaning, it is possible to accept and welcome the opportunity. You can view caregiving as a way to fulfill your purpose, express love, learn, and grow. Growth comes from adversity, and while you don't know what challenges you will face, you can choose to accept the struggles and have faith that you have the strength required to survive and even thrive.



When you engage fully in life, with as much joy and enthusiasm as you can muster, you can create unexpected positive experiences. You may discover lovely surprises about your loved one—learning something fascinating and new. You may have conversations with other caregivers that bond you together for life. You may receive advice that has made your life simpler and develop a new relationship with your religion or spirituality. You may find an intimacy with your loved one that you didn't know could exist.



You can do this! While being a caregiver is demanding, you will learn many strategies that make aspects of caregiving easier. In addition, you will develop skills and experience growth that only comes with this level of adversity.



# Book Excerpts

You are currently or will likely be a caregiver someday. You may also need care for yourself. Even if you have planned carefully and have siblings, the reality is that one person has the burden of caregiving. Caregiving forces you to rearrange priorities and leisure time, which can be overwhelming. While every person's situation is different, the combination of frustration, stress, worry, and a steep learning curve is common.



Caring for your loved one and caring for yourself can feel like competing priorities. They are not. Prioritize your well-being and the care your loved one receives will be provided by the much happier, healthier you.



You are a superhero and deserve all the gratitude and support your role embodies. So, embrace your caregiver title to reap the rewards of the experience!



You don't have a crystal ball, but you do have awareness and instinct. It is impossible to avoid all crises, but learn from each experience, be present, and hone your prediction skills to anticipate future challenges.



Moving from denial to acceptance allows you to share authentically from your heart with family and friends. You create positive interactions and inspire support. With your most difficult challenges, you grow and find strength and gifts previously untapped. A shift in mindset can transform your experience. Accept your caregiver role and responsibilities to move from victim to empowered and in control.



Lack of or incomplete legal documents poses significant issues if your loved one becomes incapable of expressing their wishes or, worse yet, dies before they record their wishes. However, the Executor of the Will must carry out the recorded wishes, even if the loved one changed their mind yet didn't update their Will.



You care about your loved one's well-being, and it may be difficult to stand by when you believe you know best, but it is important to allow your loved one to make their own decisions. You can offer support without forcing your opinion on them.



# Book Excerpts

Your caregiver CEO skills will serve you, your loved one, and the healthcare team well during a medical emergency and routine doctor's visits. Enjoy the confidence of being prepared when you present organized documents that will help the medical team expedite exceptional care.



When interacting with health care professionals, your loved one may or may not be able to speak up for themselves. Because you are attuned to your loved one's needs and listen from a different perspective, you can be an enormous support.



Learn your loved one's wishes, likes, and dislikes. Then, lead with curiosity and discover what drives their desires. Turn your conversations into a game of discovery, and you will both win!



The financial decisions made or not made today will impact you and your loved one's future. You have options now that will narrow as time passes. Learn from professionals, make informed decisions, and know you have done everything possible to prepare for what's coming next.



Celebrate your loved one! Celebrate your relationship! Minimize regret and maximize memories by being present and finding joy every day.



There are a few things you have control over in caregiving and life. Fortunately, your happiness is one of them. So, decide to be happy, and believe you can be happy. Caregiving is challenging, yet it does not need to make you miserable. Practice the action plan!



When you feel lost or have lost hope, your inner guidance system will help you find your way. Reboot and reconnect to your spirituality, your source of strength and direction!



To love and be loved has been called a universal need. With strained relationships, forgive yourself or your loved one as needed and clear the path for love to show up. Consider the opportunity that caregiving affords to live a life of purpose and to provide meaningful connections and how it applies to your life. Love is the greatest gift you will give or receive. Give love lavishly! Receive love abundantly!

# Endorsements



Toni, thanks for writing your book and being a consultant. Your comprehensive manual will save people a lot of time and heartache.

—**Jack Canfield**, Author and Speaker, Co-Creator of the Best-Selling *Chicken Soup for the Soul*® series, Co-Author of *The Success Principles*™

Toni Gitle's book is a cathartic journey down the path of caregiving. She gives voice and truth to the honor of caring for someone we love when the roles are reversed. It is a testament to a love story often untold and which we are totally unprepared for in life — the deepest measure of sharing life with another human being.

I highly recommend this book to anyone serving the higher calling of caregiving.

—**Samantha Masterson**, CEO & President at Myasthenia Gravis Foundation of America, Inc.



Kudos to Toni Gitle, whose comprehensive guidebook, *21 Mistakes Caregivers Make & How to Avoid Them*, is a must-read! I speak to caregivers every day of the week. Almost all of them are overwhelmed and have no idea where to start their inquiries. Toni's expert advice begins before care is needed while the person is cognizant and can discuss issues about future care. I highly recommend that all adult children read *21 Mistakes Caregivers Make & How to Avoid Them* as soon as possible, take notes, and implement the solutions as needed. Toni emphasizes the importance of self-care, which includes knowing what you are dealing with and creating a supportive community. Even with my experience working with seniors for over fifteen years, I found caregiving for my mother very stressful and challenging. Toni's invaluable caregiving manual will change your life!

—**Nancy Ludin**, CEO of The Jewish Pavilion and the Orlando Senior Help Desk



# Endorsements



Congratulations to Toni for an amazing “Job well done” with her book, *21 Mistakes Caregivers Make & How to Avoid Them*, which touches my heart with reality and honest focus on the day-to-day struggles of caregiving. Professionally, as an RN and CEO of Elite Cruises and Vacations, I create travel opportunities for caregivers and their loved ones with cognitive challenges. I focus on providing moments of JOY for our clients and life-long memories for their caregivers. As we strive to provide helpful education and practical takeaways for the caregivers, it frequently becomes painfully evident how demoralized and dispirited the caregivers are.

Toni’s book is the perfect reference and live-saving manual that most of us need. Toni’s masterpiece is an excellent roadmap for the difficult journey I am currently navigating, as my parents are in hospice. The factual information in my brain has drained out. As family caregivers, we must develop a spirit of self-care and mutual respect (even if our loved one does not participate).

Few of us were trained for family caregiving, so the emotional strain and overwhelming stress create an unexpected mess. Toni’s book is an excellent assistant that puts us on a BETTER path with honest insights and action plans for daily functioning. The layout allows quick access to relevant information to assist with challenges we did not expect. The learning curve for this caregiver gig is steep and challenging. With *21 Mistakes Caregivers Make & How to Avoid Them*, Toni has created a path to significantly reduce this challenge and help us move from crisis to SUCCESS.

—**Kathryn M. Shoaf Speer**, RN, BSN, ATP; owner and CEO Elite Cruises And Vacations LLC, Elite-Supported Travel/Dementia-Friendly Travel; Family Caregiver, and Care Partner. [www.EliteCruisesAndVacationsTravel.com](http://www.EliteCruisesAndVacationsTravel.com)



# Endorsements



Toni had both the burdens and the benefits of learning firsthand the challenges of caregiving. She showed strength and courage and then used this valuable life experience to provide insight and guidance to others traveling a similar journey. Her book, *21 Mistakes Caregivers Make & How to Avoid Them*, reflects her hard-won credentials to share her wealth of practical wisdom. As a seasoned estate planning and elder law attorney, I see the toll that caregiving takes on the caregiver. Now you can improve your caregiving experience with Toni's guidance on how to avoid common mistakes and misconceptions. With her straightforward and no-nonsense approach blending a dose of reality and humor, Toni's book is a must-read for all caregivers.

—**Peggy R. Hoyt**, J.D., M.B.A., B.C.S., Board Certified Specialist in Wills, Trusts, Estates, and Elder Law; Co-founder, The Law Offices of Hoyt & Bryan; Author of the Amazon Bestseller *101 Ways to F\$\$k Up Your Estate*

The author brings a relational and relatable style to this caregiver tutorial. She has experienced all the points she discusses. The reader and caregiver will discover techniques and tips for making their caregiving experience manageable and rewarding.

—**Karen Cranmer-Briskey**, Former editor of an international hearing healthcare publication and experienced caregiver for her husband, who was 24 years her senior



This book by Toni Gitle has an enormous amount of truly helpful information. It's brilliantly written and easy to find the information I needed. The action plan at the end of each Mistake was a wonderful way to create my personal care plan. It was like a roadmap that I could easily follow and get results.

—**Rebecca Minogue-Gitles**, Cared for her husband

# Endorsements



Nothing in life is more important than our loved ones, and the statistics show that way more than likely, in your life, you will be wearing the hat of being a caregiver. Toni has put together a masterclass based on tried-and-true principles she learned while being a caregiver for her mother. You will discover something beautiful within yourself that few ever unlock. This book is beyond what you believe it is.

—**Jonathan Dunn**, Founder of The Dream Leader Institute

In *21 Mistakes Caregivers Make & How to Avoid Them*, Toni beautifully shares her personal caregiving story and intertwines the lessons learned as she inspires others to create meaningful moments with the family members in their care. Toni is open about the challenges and generously offers advice to help family caregivers find their path to a sustainable caregiving experience. Each chapter clearly defines a challenge caregivers face, explains why taking action is important, and then offers actionable steps to avoid common caregiving missteps.

The final four chapters particularly touched me by demonstrating why staying connected with your purpose and reason for choosing to embark on this challenging journey is essential. Toni's wisdom and insights are practical and evoke all the emotions that arise when caring for a family member, allowing us to explore the growth opportunities that come with adversity.

Thank you, Toni, for empowering caregivers with the confidence to navigate their journey!

—**Theresa Wilbanks**, Founder of Sustainable Caregiving, author of *Navigating the Caregiver River*, and Caregiving Consultant



# Endorsements



“Nobody understands being a caregiver like another caregiver.” In her book *21 Mistakes Caregivers Make & How to Avoid Them*, author Toni Gitles proves the truth of this statement. Giving examples from her caregiving experience with her mother, Toni takes us into the lonely yet loving world of family caregiving. Her “mistakes” allow others to learn and avoid some of the upset that is a natural part of caring for someone you love. After my work with family caregivers for over three decades, I can attest that even though all families are unique, many aspects of caregiving are predictably similar. Knowing where not to step is as important as knowing your options. I recommend this book by Ms. Gitles to families who care.

—**Mary Ellen Philbin**, CEO, Share the Care, Inc.  
[www.helpforcaregivers.org](http://www.helpforcaregivers.org)

I am very grateful that Toni Gitles has written *21 Mistakes Caregivers Make & How to Avoid Them*, which provides an exceptional reference guide with in-depth, informative descriptions, amazing insights, action plans, and stories that will benefit many current and future caregivers. Her expertise and dedicated talents to help others have been of direct benefit to me while working with me through my wife’s dementia journey. In addition, Toni has been highly instructive in my role as a facilitator for a men’s support group caring for loved ones with dementia. I am confident that all who read this book will improve their caregiving skills.

—**Dennis Dulniak**, Ed.D., Caregiver, Care Partner, and Founder of Nana’s Books Foundation and Central Florida Dementia-friendly Dining



# Endorsements



As I delved into Toni's book, I was touched by how valuable it would have been if it had been available when my parents were nearing the end of their lives.

The chapter on love (Mistake #21, Undervaluing Love in the Relationship) particularly resonated with me. It highlighted how I often had to handle challenging situations rather than spend quality time with my parents. Toni's perspective and recommendations are incredibly astute. Toni poured her heart and soul (along with all her vast knowledge and experience) into creating this invaluable reference resource. The information and concepts in this book should be taught in schools so that young people can learn how to support their grandparents and parents in practical ways and through sharing their love.

—**Lois Warnock**, Soul Divinity Healing & Art;  
Spiritual Coach – Strategist, Intuitive Artist

I am pleased to endorse Toni's book, *21 Mistakes Caregivers Make*. She has the personal insight from caring for her mother to give caregivers solid advice for dealing with their living situations. Toni has run our Caregivers' Support Group for the Myasthenia Gravis Foundation of America since 2021, and the group continues to grow. Her relaxed, practical attitude in the support group carries over to this book, which I recommend for all caregivers. She provides excellent tips to facilitate a healthy relationship between caregivers and their loved ones.

—**Dova Levin**, National Senior Director of Education and Patient Programming, Myasthenia Gravis Foundation of America, Inc.



Toni Gitles has a unique “street smarts” approach to caregiving that will allow you to experience greater depths of compassion, hope, and joy. Buy her book now!

—**Steve Harrison**, Co-founder of [www.AuthorSuccess.com](http://www.AuthorSuccess.com)

# Endorsements



Caregivers frequently struggle to cope with the crisis of the moment. Stress levels rise to match the high stakes involved; we want to do right by those depending on us. Toni's *21 Mistakes that Caregivers Make & How to Avoid Them* provides clear paths to mental and logistical preparation, so each challenge doesn't feel like a crisis. The beauty and power of this book dwell in the personal stories Toni shares to guide us along the way. Caregiving can be overwhelming, isolating, and exhausting. Let this resource help you avoid regret, remorse, and the feeling of "I wish I had known earlier!" Let it be a treasured part of your support network that you turn to again and again. It's an understanding friend for you at 3 AM on a sleepless night. Let it be a source of comfort, reminding you that you can do this and you are not alone.

—**Gina Tyckoson**, Founder, ClarifySuccess.com  
Certified Caregiving Consultant and Certified Caregiving Educator, Certified Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Care Practitioner, and Certified Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Care Trainer

As a caregiver, I constantly sought help managing my mom's complex care needs. As her health worsened, my sense of overwhelm increased; I did not have the emotional bandwidth to read an entire book on caregiving. Several sit on my bookshelf today unread. What I love, love, love about this book is that by breaking down caregiving into 21 mistakes, the reader can go directly to the current problem or emotional trigger and grasp key aspects in just three or four pages. Checklists or action plans then get right to the steps so needed in the moment. Now that I am a professional caregiving partner, I will wholeheartedly recommend this book to my clients.

—**Tanya Straker**, Caregiver Consultant and Author of *6 Life Hacks for Family Caregivers: Be Your Own Coach & Beat Burnout*



# Endorsements



When I was thrown into managing my dad's estate after he died, it was a huge learning curve! I wasn't prepared at all to figure out where his Will was or what accounts he had open that I needed to close and who to notify. On top of that, to find out that my dad didn't even have an up-to-date Will when he died was costly and overwhelming. So, I especially value the chapter in Toni's book about organizing important papers for Power of Attorney and Executor for the Will. I wish I'd had more direction BEFORE I needed it!

If you're caring for a parent or loved one now, you can't wait to get all the right paperwork in order, and even if that person is stubborn like my dad was, read this book now. You'll find a treasure of information, including action plans on what to do now versus later and how to navigate tough conversations. I wish I had had this information before my dad passed, and now that I am looking after my mom, who has lung cancer, I can ask more of the right questions, help her get everything in place sooner, and also enjoy this time with her more.

—**Katrina Sawa**, Business Coach for Entrepreneurs, Publisher, and 12x International Best-Selling Author with 20 books, including *Love Yourself Successful*

In her thoughtful book, Toni comforts us that we can rectify mistakes during our caregiving experience. She reminds us that our advocacy, tenacity, and caring hearts are the best ways we course correct.

—**Denise M. Brown**, Coach, Trainer, Author, and Family Caregiver, Founder of The Caregiving Years Training Academy



# Endorsements



Toni's book is akin to an encyclopedia covering many details necessary to know once you become a caregiver. Toni reveals to you most of the mistakes caregivers often make and how to make better choices. It is everything she learned through sheer trial and error, and she leaves no stone unturned.

—**Junie Swadron**, Author, *Your Life Matters!*

Toni's book, *21 Mistakes Caregivers Make*, is the perfect roadmap to help you conquer any fears about caregiving. First, it's an easy-to-read, solution-filled guide to help ease your worries and answer questions while dealing with caregiving. Then, with tips and guidelines to navigate one of the most challenging chapters of your life, Toni helps you turn it into one of the most memorable.

—**Tricia Lechmaier**, Owner and President,  
Lechmaier Family Chiropractic Center



This is an important and much-needed book because many of us will become caregivers, likely when we least expect it. Toni Gitles has written a wonderful guidebook to help lessen anxiety and improve the confidence of those charged with the task. I will share this resource with my patients' caregivers.

—**Arnaldo Isa**, MD, Neurology Associates in Maitland FL

*21 Mistakes* is easy to read and understand, so I can quickly find the topics quickly that I most need help with. The way Toni organized the book makes it easy to use as a reference with resources so you don't have to read the book all at once.

—**Susan Stern**, Cares for her mom  
Founder, Spring to Life Coaching



# Target Audience



- Those caring for a loved one, especially a spouse or parent
- Millennials and baby-boomers whose parents may need help in the future
- Those caring for family members or friends with chronic or progressive disease
- Seniors wishing to be proactive in their health care and organizing matters
- Someone supporting a caregiver

# Book Benefits



- Celebrate the caregiver and their loved one
- Confidence for the caregiver
- Find joy and happiness, create memories
- Stories that inspire transformation
- Explore communication and advocacy
- Learn to prioritize well-being
- Minimize stress and regret
- Transformation through adversity
- Move from chaos to control
- Value giving and receiving love



# Story Ideas for Reporters

1. How *21 Mistakes Caregivers Make* will change your life.
2. Your background and interest in caregiving.
3. The most important thing for a caregiver to remember.
4. How to build your Care Community™.
5. Five strategies to manage your energy.
6. Three mistakes people make in the emergency room.
7. Five happiness principles for less stress.
8. Five ways to find meaning when caring for a loved one.
9. Training businesses to be Dementia-friendly.
10. Prepare to embark on a Dementia-friendly cruise.
11. Learn to lead and follow in the dance of caregiving.
12. How to prepare for a medical crisis.





# Interview Questions



1

What was your inspiration for the book?

2

How long did you care for your mother, and what was her diagnosis?

3

How did your relationship with your mother change over the 14 years of caring for her?

4

How did caring for your mother change your life?

5

If you cared for a loved one now, what would you do differently?

6

Who should read the book?

7

What do you want the reader to take away after reading your book?

8

What is the best advice you can give to current caregivers?

9

What is a caregiver's biggest mistake, and what is the solution?

10

Why is caregiving so stressful?

11

What challenges does a family member face when caring for a loved one?

What is the most important thing a new caregiver should know?

12

What do you wish you had known when you started writing the book?

13

Why is it important for caregivers to focus on happiness?

14

What guidelines do you offer to improve communication between caregivers and their loved ones?

15

Why do you say it's important for a caregiver to give and receive love?

16

What are the benefits of caring for a loved one?

17

Why is it important for a caregiver to ask for help?

18

Other than the book, how do you help caregivers?

19

What is your background, and how did you come to work with caregivers?

20

What helps your book stand out from others on the same subject?

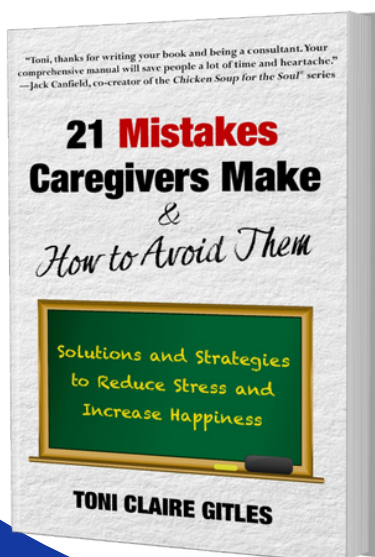
21

What was your biggest mistake, and what did you learn?

22

# Downloadable Photos

Toni appreciates requests for photographs for media use.  
Please send her your media link when posted.  
Thank you.



# Connect With Toni

## Toni Gitles

*CEO of Caregiver Empowerment  
Heart Light Enterprises LLC*



### **Facebook Group – Heart of Caregiving**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/568316578647069>

### **Twitter – @HofCaregiving**

<https://twitter.com/HofCaregiving>

### **Instagram – @heartofcaregiving**

<https://www.instagram.com/heartofcaregiving/>

### **LinkedIn – Toni Gitles**

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