

Preface

The intent of this book is to be a small, quick reference handbook for the primary caregiver of a dementia patient. It is written to relay the issues I encountered as a primary caregiver, and when applicable, solutions that worked for my mother and me throughout her 13-year struggle with Alzheimer's disease. It is intentionally not meant to be an exhaustive or scientific study of dementia or Alzheimer's, but rather a concise reference that deals with everyday life issues I faced when caring for my mother, first in her home, and then in a nursing home facility.

One of my problems when researching Alzheimer's progression and care issues after my mother was diagnosed was that there is an endless amount of information available to sift through. I rarely looked at a book because when I did, they were so involved and in such detail, it always seemed I would have to read through most or all of a several-hundred-page book to find suggestions on the one issue I was concerned with at that moment. When I did find the situation or suggestion I was looking for, often it was a very textbook, medical, or scientific perspective that did not touch our everyday reality.

I've laid out this handbook by topic and subtopic, so it can be used only as a quick lookup when needed, or after reading it in its entirety, as a quick reference guide.

I am an average caregiver with neither a medical nor a legal background. The medical and legal examples and suggestions I offer in this book are my personal experiences and opinions and are not meant to replace professional medical or legal advice.