

UNEDITED REALTIME CLOSED CAPTIONING

"UP CLOSE"

JULY 2007

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>> THE FOLLOWING IS A SPECIAL PRESENTATION OF WEDU, TAMPA, ST. PETERSBURG, SARASOTA.

>>Cathy Unruh: ARE YOU PART OF THE SANDWICH GENERATION?

SOMEONE WHO TAKES CARE OF BOTH THEIR OWN CHILDREN AND THEIR ELDERLY PARENTS.

OUR GUEST TODAY IS PART OF THAT GENERATION.

SHE TOOK CARE OF HER THREE YOUNG DAUGHTERS, HER HUSBAND AND HER MOTHER, WHO WAS SUFFERING WITH ALZHEIMER'S AND PARKINSON'S DISEASE.

>>Cathy Unruh: WELCOME TO "UP CLOSE."

I'M CATHY UNRUH.

WE'RE TALKING ABOUT ROLE REVERSALS TODAY, A CHALLENGE FOR ANYONE CARING FOR A SICK AND ELDERLY LOVED ONE, PLUS THEIR OWN IMMEDIATE FAMILY.

CAROL O'DELL WROTE A BOOK ABOUT HER ROLE REVERSAL.

IT'S CALLED "MOTHERING MOTHER," A DAUGHTER'S HUMOROUS AND

UNEDITED REALTIME CLOSED CAPTIONING

HEARTBREAKING MEMOIR.

ALSO, CAROL O'DELL JOINS US TODAY.

YOU HAVE A LITTLE PIECE OF YOUR MOTHER WITH YOU, WEARING HER
PIN.

>>Carol O'Dell: I WEAR A BROACH OF MY MOTHER'S EVERYWHERE I
GO WHEN I SPEAK ABOUT HER.

>>Cathy Unruh: WHY DID YOU WRITE THE BOOK?

>>Carol O'Dell: I WROTE IT BECAUSE I COULDN'T FIND THE
INFORMATION THAT I NEEDED FOR MY SOUL, MY INTELLECT, MY
SPIRIT UTILITY.

I COULD -- SPIRITUALITY.

I COULD FIND WONDERFUL RESOURCES ON HOW TO DO IT, BUT THE
WHYS IS SOMETHING I HAD TO REACH IN MY SOUL.

>>Cathy Unruh: YOU COULDN'T FIND THAT AS YOU WERE GOING
THROUGH THE PROCESS OF CARING OF YOUR MOTHER.

>>Carol O'Dell: NO.

EVEN ON THE INTERNET, THE BOOKS.

THE MEDICAL COMMUNITY HAS DONE A WONDERFUL JOB WITH GIVING
PROPER AND HELPFUL INFORMATION.

BUT WHEN IT COMES TO THE HEART, I THINK THE STORY HAS TO
COME FROM THE PEOPLE WHO ARE LIVING IT.

>>Cathy Unruh: YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR MOTHER ACTUALLY
BEGAN WHEN YOU WERE FOUR, AND YOU WERE ADOPTED.

>>Carol O'Dell: YES.

I WAS ADOPTED WHEN I WAS FOUR YEARS OLD AND TAKEN FROM

DAYTONA BEACH FLORIDA TO ATLANTA TO LIVE.

IT TURNED OUT TO BE A REALLY WONDERFUL SITUATION, BUT IT WAS FILLED ALONG THE WAY WITH ALL THAT LIFE HAS TO THROW AT YOU. AS YOU LEARN ABOUT YOURSELF.

BUT IN THE PROCESS, I DID RECEIVE A WONDERFUL AND LOVING MOTHER AND FATHER.

>>Cathy Unruh: OF COURSE, LIKE WITH ALL PARENTS, YOU HAD SOME ISSUES.

WOULD IT BE RIGHT TO CALL YOUR MOTHER A FIREBALL?

WOULD THAT BE AN ACCURATE TERM?

>>Carol O'Dell: ABSOLUTELY.

ABSOLUTELY.

AND I'M REALLY GLAD, BECAUSE SHE WAS REALLY A DYNAMIC WOMAN FOR HER TIME.

SHE WAS A MINISTER FOR OVER 50 YEARS.

SHE DID A LOT OF CHARITY WORK.

AND SHE WAS REALLY ON FIRE, AND A GREAT EXAMPLE FOR A WOMAN.

>>Cathy Unruh: HERE IS A PICTURE OF HER.

THIS WAS TAKEN HOW LONG AGO?

>>Carol O'Dell: SHE WAS ABOUT 89 YEARS OLD.

THAT WAS IN THE ATLANTA JOURNAL PAPER.

IT WAS REMEMBERING MY FATHER.

MY FATHER PASSED AWAY ABOUT 15 YEARS BEFORE MY MOTHER.

AND SO I CARED FOR HER A LONG TIME AS SHE LIVED, SHE SAYS, INDEPENDENTLY, BUT IT TOOK A WHOLE COMMUNITY TO CARE FOR

HER.

>>Cathy Unruh: ACTUALLY, DURING THAT 15 YEARS WHEN SHE LIVED BY HERSELF, THAT'S WHEN YOU BEGAN THE PROCESS OF PARENTING HER, CORRECT?

>>Carol O'Dell: ABSOLUTELY.

CAREGIVING IS A JOURNEY, AND IT CONTINUES TO EVOLVE AS YOUR LOVED ONE'S NEEDS CHANGE.

BUT YOU DO START MANY YEARS BEFORE YOU HAVE TO MAKE THAT DECISION OF SHOULD A LIVING ARRANGEMENT CHANGE?

>>Cathy Unruh: SO YOU DID THINGS LIKE TELL HER SHE COULDN'T DRIVE ANYMORE.

TAKE AWAY THE CREDIT CARDS.

START PAYING ATTENTION TO HER DIET FOR HER.

>>Carol O'Dell: YES.

MAKING SURE THE HOUSE WAS SAFE.

PUTTING UP RAILS IN HER HOME WHERE SHE COULD GRAB EASILY.

REMOVING SCATTERED RUGS THAT SHE COULD TRIP OVER.

MAKING SURE SHE HAD HELP WHEN SHE NEEDED IT.

IT TOOK A LOT OF PEOPLE TO PULL THIS TOGETHER.

I WAS SORT OF THE COORDINATOR, FOR THE MOST PART.

AND THEN THE ROLES BEGAN TO REVERSE.

AT ONE POINT, I WAS LITERALLY TEACHING MY 15-YEAR-OLD HOW TO DRIVE WHILE HAVING TO TAKE MY MOTHER'S KEYS AT THE SAME TIME.

>>Cathy Unruh: LET'S TALK ABOUT THE HEART AND THE PSYCHE FOR

A MOMENT IN THAT SITUATION.

WHEN IT FIRST DAWNS ON YOU OR IT GRADUALLY DAWNS ON YOU, I AM NOW THE PARENT, MY PARENT IS THE CHILD, HOW IS THAT?

>>Carol O'Dell: IT'S SHAKING, BECAUSE YOU HAVE ALL THESE MEMORIES, AND YOU HAVE ALL THIS, WHAT I WOULD SAY MUSCLE MEMORY OF OBEYING YOUR PARENTS, OF DOING WHAT THEY SAY.

AND IF YOUR MOTHER OR YOUR FATHER SAYS, I DON'T WANT TO GO TO THE DOCTOR TODAY, YOU HAVE TO STEP UP.

AND ANOTHER PART OF YOUR MIND HAS TO KICK IN AND SAY, WE NEED TO GO.

>>Cathy Unruh: AND IT WAS WHEN YOUR HUSBAND WAS TRANSFERRED FROM GEORGIA TO FLORIDA, THAT'S WHEN YOU DECIDED THAT YOUR MOTHER NEEDED TO ACTUALLY LIVE IN YOUR HOUSE AND COME WITH YOU DURING THE MOVE.

>>Carol O'Dell: YES.

I KNEW THAT IT HAD BECOME VERY NECESSARY FOR US TO CARE FOR HER FULL TIME.

AND THIS WAS SORT OF THE WAY TO FORCE HER HAND.

>>Cathy Unruh: AND HOW DID SHE REACT TO THAT?

>>Carol O'Dell: IT WAS NOT EASY AT ALL.

THERE WERE A COUPLE OF TIMES I TOLD MY HUSBAND HE WOULD BE A GREAT NEGOTIATOR BECAUSE SHE LITERALLY WANTED TO BACK OUT OF HER HOUSE SALE.

AND WE HAD TO SAY, NO, MOM, THIS IS WHAT YOU NEED.

YOU NEED US FULL TIME.

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WE CANNOT RELY ON YOUR CHURCH AND YOUR COMMUNITY ANYMORE.

I HAVE TO BE THERE 24 HOURS A DAY.

>>Cathy Unruh: AND AT THAT TIME, WAS SHE SUFFERING WITH PARKINSON'S ALREADY?

>>Carol O'Dell: YES.

SHE HAD HAD PARKINSON'S FOR ABOUT TEN YEARS PRIOR.

PARKINSON'S GOES DOWN SLOWLY.

SO SHE HAD SOME GOOD YEARS AND WAS FUNCTIONAL FOR QUITE A WHILE.

>>Cathy Unruh: AND HOW DID YOU REACT TO THE PARKINSON'S, AND HOW DID SHE?

>>Carol O'Dell: THE HARD PART WAS WHEN WE WOULD GO TO THE NEUROLOGIST AND HE WOULD ASSESS HER AND I WOULD UNDERSTAND HOW SHE HAD DIGRESSED AND I WOULD UNDERSTAND SOME OF THE GAMES SHE WOULD PLAY WITH ME TO COVER UP AND MASK HER SYMPTOMS AND MAKE EXCUSES AND WHEN I WOULD STAND THERE AND REALIZE THINGS ARE GOING DOWN HILL, AND I'VE GOT TO MAKE SOME CHANGES IN MY OWN LIFE AND CARE FOR HER BECAUSE I'M AFRAID SHE'S GOING TO SAY -- AS SHE SHOOK LIKE THIS WHEN SHE WAS COOKING, SHE COULD CATCH HER SLEEVE ON FIRE.

IT'S VERY HARD TO TELL A WOMAN SHE CAN'T RUN A HOUSE ANYMORE.

>>Cathy Unruh: WHY DO YOU THINK SHE WANTED TO HIDE THAT FROM YOU?

>>Carol O'Dell: BECAUSE SHE WANTED TO KEEP HER INDEPENDENCE,

LIKE WE ALL DO.

I CAN'T IMAGINE WHEN THIS HAPPENS TO ME THE FEELINGS THAT I'M GOING TO GO THROUGH.

I WROTE "MOTHERING MOTHER," BUT I CAN'T IMAGINE HER OTHER SIDE OF THE JOURNEY.

>>Cathy Unruh: AND SHE ALSO SHOWED SYMPTOMS OF ALZHEIMER'S. THAT WAS SORT OF A BIG DEAL TO HAVE BOTH OF THOSE THINGS GOING ON AT THE SAME TIME.

>>Carol O'Dell: PARKINSON'S AND ALZHEIMER'S ARE BOTH NEUROLOGICAL DISORDERS.

IN THE END, THEY SORT OF FUNNEL DOWN THE SAME TUNNEL.

AND IT IS VERY DISCONCERTING WHEN YOU REALIZE SOME OF THAT FORGETFULNESS REALLY HAS A DEEPER ROOT.

>>Cathy Unruh: AND THAT IS A PROCESS THAT'S VERY DIFFICULT TO GET THROUGH FOR THE PERSON WHO IS FIRST OBSERVING IT, RIGHT?

YOU THINK, OH, THERE'S A LITTLE BIT OF FORGETFULNESS.

HOW DID THAT MANIFEST FOR YOU AND HOW DID YOU COME TO TERMS WITH IT?

>>Carol O'Dell: WELL, I REALIZED MY MOTHER WOULD ACTUALLY, WHAT YOU SAY FIB TO ME OR MAKE EXCUSES OR FORGET THINGS OR PUT THINGS IN BIZARRE PLACES OR MAKE AN EXCUSE FOR SOMEONE SHE DIDN'T REMEMBER.

AND BECAUSE I WAS SO BUSY AS A WIFE AND A MOTHER AND CARING FOR HER, I WOULD SORT OF MAKE EXCUSES WITH HER.

I WOULD GIVE HER THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT PERHAPS TOO LONG.
BUT IN THE END, THERE COMES THIS MOMENT WHERE YOU REALIZE
I'M DEALING WITH SOMETHING REALLY BIG, AND SHE'S FORGETTING.
JUST LIKE ANY ILLNESS, IT WILL SPEED UP AND THEN SLOW DOWN.

>>Cathy Unruh: SO SHE MOVES IN WITH YOU WITH THESE TWO
DISEASES GOING ON, WANTING TO BE INDEPENDENT, HAVING BEEN
INDEPENDENT, BEING TAKEN TO ANOTHER STATE, HOW IS THAT FOR
EVERYBODY?

YOU, YOUR HUSBAND, AND YOUR THREE DAUGHTERS.

>>Carol O'Dell: IT WAS PRETTY WILD.

I HAVE TO ADMIT THAT LIVING WITH YOUR MOTHER AGAIN AFTER
YEARS OF YOUR OWN INDEPENDENCE IS A REAL, WHAT WE USED TO
SAY IN THE '60s, A MIND TRIP.

AND IT IS VERY HARD TO HAVE TWO WOMEN IN A HOUSEHOLD VYING
FOR A KITCHEN.

WE DID SET HER UP A LITTLE APARTMENT, BUT SHE WAS IN THERE
IN THE MIDST AND IN THE THICK OF EVERYTHING.

OF COURSE, SHE HAD AN OPINION ABOUT MY MARRIAGE, MY COOKING,
MY GROCERIES, MY CHILD REARING, BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT MOTHERS
DO.

>>Cathy Unruh: ESPECIALLY A MOTHER LIKE YOURS.

>>Carol O'Dell: YES.

>>Cathy Unruh: AND SHE HAD HER OWN RELIGIOUS CONVICTIONS
WHICH SHE THREW IN, MAKING MORAL JUDGMENTS AND VALUE
JUDGMENTS AS SHE WENT ALONG.

>>Carol O'Dell: YES.

>> AS OVER TIME AS THE DISEASES PROGRESSED, THERE ARE SOME THINGS WHICH ARE NOT PLEASANT TO HAVE TO DO FOR YOUR OWN PARENTS.

BATHING, TENDING THE TOILET, INCONTINENCE.

WHAT WAS THE WORST PART OF ALL OF THOSE VERY INTIMATE DETAILS OF CAREGIVING?

>>Carol O'Dell: AS DIFFICULT AS ALL THAT SOUNDS, REALLY WHAT HURT ME THE MOST -- BECAUSE I THINK AS WOMEN, ESPECIALLY IF YOU'VE HAD THE FORTUNE OF HAVING CHILDREN AND LIVING A LONG AND FULL LIFE, YOU'VE DEALT WITH A LOT OF EVERYTHING FROM THROWUP TO DIARRHEA.

THAT'S PART OF MOTHERHOOD AND CARING FOR OTHER HUMAN BEINGS. BUT WHAT HURTS SO DEEPLY WAS SEEING HER OWN GRAPPLING WITH KNOWING WHAT SHE HAD AND KNOWING THE INEVITABILITY, THAT HURT FAR MORE.

BECAUSE I COULD DETACH MY MIND. WE CAN CLEAN UP MESSSES. WE DROP THINGS, SPILL THINGS, HAVE ACCIDENTS.

I COULD DETACH MYSELF AND JUST DO WHAT I NEEDED TO DO TO TAKE CARE OF HER.

BUT IT WAS THE EMOTIONAL ASPECTS OF SEEING HER SUFFER THAT WAS TRULY, I BELIEVE, HARDER.

>> BECAUSE, YES, WHEN YOU PUT YOURSELF IN THE PARENT'S PLACE SO NOW THE PARENT KNOWS THEY HAVE BEEN REDUCED TO THE CHILD AND THAT THEY DON'T HAVE CONTROL OVER BODILY FUNCTIONS.

DID SHE EVER GIVE VOICE TO THAT, OR YOU JUST WERE ABLE TO EMPATHIZE?

>>Carol O'Dell: WELL, I THINK IN SOME WAYS, IRONICALLY, MY MOTHER, BECAUSE OF BEING SUCH A FORCE OF NATURE THAT SHE WAS, SHE DIDN'T MIND PEOPLE WAITING ON HER TOO MUCH.

>>Cathy Unruh: OH, REALLY?

OKAY.

>>Carol O'Dell: SO THAT PART WAS KIND OF ODDLY EASY. BUT THERE WERE MOMENTS OF INTIMACY WHERE IT WOULD BE UNCOMFORTABLE AND WE WOULD MAKE A JOKE OR I WOULD PUT ON MUSIC.

AND I WOULD FIND LITTLE WAYS TO SOOTHE HER.

AND AS HARD AS IT IS TO SAY, WE ARE GOING TO HAVE TO ALLOW OURSELVES TO BE CARED FOR AT SOME POINT IN OUR LIFE.

AND THAT HUMBLING EXPERIENCE IS PART OF OUR JOURNEY AS A HUMAN BEING.

OTHERS MUST LEARN FROM US, AND WE MUST LEARN FROM IT.

AND IT'S VERY HARD TO STEP OFF OUR OWN INDEPENDENT HORSE, BUT IT'S A PART OF WHO WE ARE, AND THERE'S SOMETHING VERY INTRINSIC THAT WE NEED TO LEARN FROM THAT EXPERIENCE.

>>Cathy Unruh: FROM BEING THE PERSON WHO IS CARED FOR.

>>Carol O'Dell: YES.

>>Cathy Unruh: CAN YOU SUM UP WHAT IT IS THAT WE NEED TO LEARN?

IS IT EASY TO PUT INTO A COUPLE OF SENTENCES?

>>Carol O'Dell: I WOULD SAY THAT WE NEED TO LEARN THAT WE ARE A PART, IN THE WORDS OF THE LION KING, OF THIS GIANT CIRCLE OF LIFE.

AND AS WONDERFUL AS IT IS TO GIVE BIRTH, WE MUST ALLOW OURSELVES TO PARTICIPATE IN PASSING AS WELL.

AND BY ALLOWING OURSELVES TO BE THE ONE TO CARE FOR, WE ARE TEACHING THE WORLD, WE ARE TEACHING OUR DAUGHTERS, OUR SONS, OUR LOVED ONES HOW TO LOVE AND HOW TO GO THROUGH THIS THEMSELVES.

MY MOTHER IN THE END GAVE ME THE GIFT OF TEACHING ME HOW TO DIE.

>>Cathy Unruh: OKAY.

THAT'S QUITE A LESSON.

WE USE THE TERM "SANDWICH GENERATION" FOR SOMEONE IN YOUR POSITION, CARING FOR THE YOUNG AND OLD AT THE SAME TIME.

YOU SAY THAT'S RIDICULOUSLY INADEQUATE.

IT'S MORE LIKE THE VICE-GRIP GENERATION.

>>Carol O'Dell: ABSOLUTELY.

SANDWICHES HAVE NO PRESSURE ON EACH SIDE.

THE BREAD JUST LAYS THERE SO NICELY.

WITH A VICE GRIP, IT JUST KEEPS CRANKING DOWN.

I TRULY AT TIMES FELT LIKE, WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO TODAY?

AM I SUPPOSED TO MEET MY DAUGHTER'S NEEDS?

AM I SUPPOSED TO MEET MY MOTHER'S NEEDS?

IS THIS AN EMERGENCY, OR IS THIS AN EMOTIONAL PLOY TO GET ME

WHERE SHE WANTS ME?

IT BECAME VERY HARD.

AND THEN TO SAY I HAVE A HUSBAND, AND I HAVE A RELATIONSHIP THAT I WANT TO CONTINUE, AND I HAVE AN INTELLECT IN THE CREATIVITY THAT I DON'T WANT TO LOSE IN MYSELF.

BELIEVE ME.

IT WAS MORE LIKE THE VICE-GRIP GENERATION.

>>Cathy Unruh: AND WE'VE TALKED ABOUT THE PHYSICAL DYING AND VERY MOVING ABOUT LEARNING TO PHYSICALLY DIE, BUT YOU SAID AS YOU WERE GOING THROUGH THIS PROCESS, YOU REALIZED THAT YOU WERE DYING INSIDE.

AND YOU ACTUALLY FELT YOURSELF SHRINKING.

>>Carol O'Dell: YES.

I BELIEVE THAT SOMETHING AS BIG AS BIRTHING OR DEATHING, PULLS US INTO THAT VORTEX FOR A WHILE.

THAT'S AN INCREDIBLE VACUUM.

AND WE HAVE TO GO TO THAT BITTER EDGE, AND WE HAVE TO STAND AT THAT PRECIPICE AND SAY, I CHOOSE TO LIVE AND I CHOOSE TO TAKE YOUR HAND AND TO LET YOU PASS, BUT IT WILL DO NO GOOD FOR ME TO DIE IN ANY WAY SPIRITUALLY, EMOTIONALLY, PHYSICALLY, AND CAREGIVERS OFTENTIMES EVEN PASS BEFORE THEIR LOVED ONE.

>>Cathy Unruh: AND WHY IS THAT, DO YOU THINK?

>>Carol O'Dell: THE INCREDIBLE STRESS.

THE INCREDIBLE ABILITY TO SACRIFICE OURSELVES ALMOST TO THE

END AND TO THE BITTER EDGE, AND THEN NOT TO SAY AND TO UNDERSTAND THAT WE MUST STEP BACK FROM THAT LEDGE AND CHOOSE TO LIVE, THAT IT IS NOT OUR TIME TO GO.

>>Cathy Unruh: SO AS YOU WENT THROUGH THIS REALIZATION, YOU DID SOME THINGS TO KEEP YOURSELF ALIVE.
WENT BACK TO COLLEGE.

>>Carol O'Dell: YES, I DID, EVEN THOUGH IT WAS ONE NIGHT A WEEK FOR ONE CLASS, I DID RETURN TO COLLEGE, AND I DID CONTINUE TO WRITE.

I WROTE EVERY DAY.

AND THAT I BELIEVED WAS THE GENTLE THREAD THAT PULLED AND KEPT ME MOVING FORWARD IS THAT I HAD OUR STORY TO TELL.

AND WITH ALZHEIMER'S ESPECIALLY, I HAD OUR STORY TO TELL THAT WOULD BE LOST IN HER MIND, IN HER HEART AND BECOME MUDDLED WITH AND JUMBLED WITH THE PAST.

AND I WANTED TO BE ABLE TO SAY, WE DID THIS, AND WE GOT THROUGH IT TOGETHER SO THAT SOMEONE ELSE CAN KNOW THAT CAREGIVING IS A JOURNEY THAT YOU MUST STEP INTO AND THEN STEP OUT OF.

>>Cathy Unruh: SO WERE YOU ACTUALLY WRITING THIS BOOK AS YOU WERE CAREGIVING OR WERE YOU JUST MAKING THE NOTES THAT WOULD LEAD TO THE BOOK?

>>Carol O'Dell: I WROTE THIS BOOK EVERY DAY, AND I WROTE IT, AND EVEN WHEN I BEGAN TO EDIT IT, I WANTED TO KEEP THE EMOTIONS INTACT OF WHAT I WAS FEELING EXACTLY AT THAT TIME.

I NEEDED THAT RAGGEDNESS AND THAT RAWNESS TO BE THERE FOR OTHER CAREGIVERS.

>>Cathy Unruh: THAT'S ALSO WHY SOME OF THE STORIES ARE SO VIVID, IF YOU WERE WRITING THEM DOWN AS THEY HAPPENED. IN PARTICULAR, YOUR MOTHER OUT IN PUBLIC, SOME OF THE THINGS SHE SAYS.

GIVE US A COUPLE OF HIGHLIGHTS OF TAKING MOM OUT.

>>Carol O'Dell: MY MOTHER WAS BORN IN 1911. AND WE HAVE TO REALIZE WHAT A VERY DIFFERENT WORLD THAT WAS. AND WE HAVE TO REALIZE THAT SOME OF THE SOCIAL BELIEFS WE HOLD NOW WILL BE CHANGED A HUNDRED YEARS FROM NOW. AND MY MOTHER WAS ON THE EDGE OF A GREAT CHANGE. WHEN YOU IMAGINE SHE HAD SEEN WORLD WAR II. SHE HAD SEEN THE KOREAN WAR, VIETNAM WAR, THE CHANGES IN THE '60s AND '70s, THE CHANGES IN WOMEN, SHE JUST WAS VERY OPINIONATED ABOUT WHAT PEOPLE SHOULD DO. AND I HAD TO LITERALLY SORT OF STEP IN, AND AT ONE POINT, I LITERALLY LEANED OVER IN AN ELEVATOR TO A GENTLEMAN AND I SAID, I'M SO SORRY, BUT I WAS ADOPTED.

>>Cathy Unruh: LET ME CONFESS RIGHT NOW.

>>Carol O'Dell: AND THE BAD PART IS THAT NOT EVERY CHILD CAN SAY THAT.

BUT YOU'RE WELCOME TO USE IT.

>>Cathy Unruh: THAT WAS GOOD FOR YOU.

AND SHE ONCE SAID THAT THE TWO OF YOU NEVER FOUGHT.

AND YOU SAY, YOU NEVER HAD A FIGHT THAT SHE LOST.

>>Carol O'Dell: THAT'S THE TRUTH.

AND I BELIEVE WHEN PEOPLE ASK ME, THEY SAY, "WERE YOU CLOSE TO YOUR MOTHER?"

AND I REALLY WANT TO ASK, WHAT DOES CLOSE HAVE TO DO WITH IT?

AND YES, WE WERE CLOSE, AND WE FOUGHT LIKE CATS AND DOGS IN A WAY.

SHE WAS VERY OPINIONATED, AND I HAD TO LEARN TO BECOME OPINIONATED BACK, THAT SHE NEEDED TO RESPECT MY OPINION AS WELL.

AND I BEGAN TO FORM OPINIONS BECAUSE I HAD SOMEONE, A GRIST TO BRUSH UP AGAINST.

AND I BELIEVE THAT THE RELATIONSHIPS THAT WE'RE WILLING TO DISAGREE WITH ARE THE MOST VITAL ONES IN OUR LIVES.

>>Cathy Unruh: AND YOU HAVE DONE, OF COURSE, RESEARCH ON PARKINSON'S.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED?

WHAT COULD YOU SHARE ABOUT PARKINSON'S?

>>Carol O'Dell: WELL, I LOVE WHAT MICHAEL J. FOX SAYS WHEN HE SAYS PARKINSON'S IS THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON TAKING.

IT IS A VERY -- FOR MOST PEOPLE, A RATHER SLOW, DEGENERATIVE DISEASE, AND IT IS HEARTBREAKING IN HOW IT FREEZES THE BODY AND ENABLES THE PERSON TO JUST STAND THERE AND FIGHT AGAINST THEIR OWN FLESH.

AND IT IS A HEARTBREAKING DISEASE IN THAT RESPECT.

BUT IN ANOTHER WAY, AND I'VE READ SEVERAL BOOKS ON THIS SUBJECT, IT IS ONE OF THOSE IRONIC GIFTS THAT TEACHES SO MUCH ABOUT OURSELVES AND OUR LOVED ONES AND CAN BRING OUT THE BEST IN US.

AND I BELIEVE THAT'S WHAT MICHAEL J. FOX HAS REALLY CHOSEN TO DO.

BUT I CANNOT WAIT, AND I HOPE BECAUSE PARKINSON'S IS SOMETHING THAT WE ARE ON THE VERGE OF MAKING INCREDIBLE BREAKTHROUGHS IN.

AND I REALLY HOPE THAT ONE DAY THIS IS ONE OF THOSE DISEASES THAT WE'LL BE ABLE TO CHAMPION OVER.

>>Cathy Unruh: HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT STEM CELL RESEARCH AND THE VARIOUS EFFORTS BEING MADE?

DID YOU FORMULATE OPINIONS ON THAT GOING THROUGH ALL OF THIS?

>>Carol O'Dell: YES, I HAVE.

I BELIEVE MY OPINIONS ARE PERHAPS DIFFERENT THAN MY MOTHERS. I BELIEVE KNOWING MY MOTHER THE WAY I DO, THAT SHE WOULD HAVE SAID WHEN SHE WAS HERE ON EARTH, I BELIEVE -- WHATEVER CONSCIOUSNESS IS BEYOND NOW, SHE MAY HAVE A DIFFERENT OPINION, BUT HERE ON EARTH, I BELIEVE THAT SHE WOULD SEE IT PERHAPS AS TAKING ANOTHER LIFE.

AND SHE WOULD HAVE CHOSEN TO LET HER OWN PASS.

BUT THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN HER UNDERSTANDING OF IT.

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I BELIEVE THAT STEM CELL RESEARCH AND STEM CELL
BREAKTHROUGHS ARE INEVITABLE, AND THAT WE NEED TO STEP UP
AND LEARN HOW TO HANDLE IT AND HOW TO MACHINING IT,
BECAUSE -- AND HOW TO MANAGE IT, BECAUSE IT IS TOO
INCREDIBLE WHAT CAN BE DONE IN THIS FIELD TO IGNORE OR TO
PUSH TO THE SIDE.
FUTURE GENERATIONS WILL MAKE STRIDES IN STEM CELL SO WHY NOT
IT BE US.
WHY NOT STEP UP TO THE PLATE AND REALLY HAVE SOME DEEP
DISCUSSIONS AND FORMULATE A PLAN THAT IS RESPECTFUL OF ALL
HUMAN LIFE AND YET CAN MAKE INCREDIBLE STRIDES IN THIS AREA
FOR A MYRIAD OF DISEASES.

>>Cathy Unruh: ARE YOU DOING ANY ADVOCACY AS A RESULT?
I MEAN, YOU'RE WRITING, AND THAT'S ADVOCACY IN ITSELF AS
PEOPLE READ YOUR BOOK.
THIS IS THE EMOTIONAL SIDE.
ARE YOU BECOMING ACTIVE IN ANY OF THOSE FIELDS IN TERMS OF
RESEARCH?

>>Carol O'Dell: ABSOLUTELY.
AND I HOPE TO EVEN MORE, BECAUSE WHAT I'M TRYING TO DO, I'M
SPEAKING TO THE ALZHEIMER'S COMMUNITY.
I'M SPEAKING NEXT WEEK AT A CONFERENCE.
AND MANY OTHERS COMING UP.
AND I REALLY HOPE TO ALSO JOIN THE TWO, THE CAREGIVING AND
THE FAMILY SIDE WITH THE MEDICAL COMMUNITY, BECAUSE I THINK

THERE'S A LOT THEY CAN LEARN FROM A CAREGIVER THAT PERHAPS THEY HAVEN'T SEEN IN THE LIGHT, BECAUSE NO ONE HAS GOTTEN OUT THERE AND SHARED THEIR STORY AND HELP THEM TO UNDERSTAND.

THE MEDICAL COMMUNITY IS DOING THE BEST THEY CAN, BUT THERE ARE SO MANY PIECES TO THIS PUZZLE.

>>Cathy Unruh: I WOULD HAVE TO ASSUME THAT YOUR EMPATHY FOR OTHER ELDERLY PERSONS GOING THROUGH ANYTHING LIKE THIS HAS BEEN MAGNIFIED.

>>Carol O'Dell: YES.

>>Cathy Unruh: IS THAT PERHAPS WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH THE MEDICAL COMMUNITY?

THEIR JOB IS CLINICAL.

>>Carol O'Dell: YES.

>>Cathy Unruh: YOU WOULD LIKE TO TAKE --

>>Carol O'Dell: YES.

AND I THINK BY UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF THE CAREGIVER AND HOW VITAL IT IS TO THE LIFE AND THE VITALITY OF THE LOVED ONE AND THAT THEIR JOURNEYS ARE INTERCONNECTED, IT'S JUST GOING TO MAKE IT BETTER FOR THE LOVED ONE.

BUT MY DAUGHTER, I HAVE TO TELL YOU, WE WERE IN STARBUCKS THE OTHER DAY, AND MY DAUGHTER WAS GETTING A CUP OF COFFEE, AND THERE WAS AN ELDERLY WOMAN AND HER DAUGHTER WALKING IN AND TAKING THE VERY SLOW, SMALL STEPS AND HOLDING THE DOOR, AND WE KNEW THAT SO WELL IN OUR OWN LIFE, AND MY YOUNGEST

DAUGHTER GOT UP, HELD THE DOOR, SAT DOWN AND TALKED TO THIS ELDERLY WOMAN AND ASKED HER HOW HER DAY WAS AND COMMENTED ON HER CLOTHING.

AND THEN SHE CAME OVER TO MY TABLE AND SHE SAID, MOM, YOU'VE RUINED ME.

SHE SAYS, NOW I HAVE TO BE NICE, BECAUSE I UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY ARE GOING THROUGH.

AND I HOPE THAT THAT'S WHAT MY BOOK DOES FOR INDIVIDUALS AND FOR THE MEDICAL COMMUNITY IS TO SAY, I SEE THINGS IN A DIFFERENT LIGHT NOW.

>>Cathy Unruh: IT'S A GOOD WAY TO RUIN YOUR DAUGHTER, IF YOU HAVE TO RUIN HER.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE FOR THE CAREGIVER?

>>Carol O'Dell: WELL, FOR ONE THING, IT SOUNDS KIND OF FUNNY FOR ME TO SAY THIS, BUT THE CAREGIVER NEEDS TO GET MAD. AND I SAY THAT IN A WAY, THE CAREGIVER HAS TO FIGHT FOR THEMSELVES.

AND HAS TO SAY, I WILL NOT DIE.

I WILL FEED MY SOUL.

I WILL GATHER -- IN AMERICA, WE HAVE SUCH GREAT RESOURCES -- I WILL GATHER MY RESOURCES AND KEEP MYSELF GOING.

>>Cathy Unruh: BUT THIS IS ALL SELF-INITIATED.

YOU'RE SAYING I AS THE CAREGIVER MUST DO THIS.

WHAT SHOULD SOCIETY, NEIGHBORS, FRIENDS, FAMILY, MEDICAL, WHOEVER, WHAT SHOULD WE GIVE TO THE CAREGIVER WHEN WE KNOW

THEY ARE IN THAT POSITION?

>>Carol O'Dell: WELL, FOR EVERYONE IN THEIR LIFE, JUST LISTENING HAS SUCH AN IMPACT.

AND IT'S VERY HARD, BECAUSE YOU ARE SO EXHAUSTED AND YOU'RE WHINING AND YOU'RE COMPLAINING, BUT I COULD NOT HAVE GOTTEN THROUGHOUT WITHOUT MY LOVED ONES AND MY FAMILY.

THIS IS A TIME WHEN YOU NEED YOUR FAMILY MORE THAN EVER.

BUT FOR THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE, ONE THING THAT I TRIED TO DO IS I HOPE THAT DAY SPAS AND ALL KINDS OF COMMUNITIES WILL CALL THE CAREGIVERS OUT AND FIND SMALL WAYS TO GIVE THEM TREATS AND DISCOUNTS AND HELP AND SIT DOWN AND LISTEN, BECAUSE IN THE END, WE'RE ALL INTERCONNECTED.

>>Cathy Unruh: AND WE'RE GOING TO HAVE MORE AND MORE AND MORE CAREGIVERS AMONGST US AS WE GO THROUGH THE NEXT FEW DECADES.

WE USE THAT TERM, IT'S A POPULAR TERM, YOU FIND IT RATHER STERILE, THOUGH, CAREGIVER.

>>Carol O'Dell: YES.

ESPECIALLY WHEN MOST OF US, IT'S CARING FOR OUR FAMILY MEMBERS.

AND CAREGIVING IS SUCH A STERILE TERM WHERE WE STEP BACK AND WE ARE GIVING CARE, WHICH IS DIFFERENT THAN IF YOU CALLED MOTHERING CAREGIVING.

YOU WOULD SAY, I'M GOING TO GO AND CARE GIVE TO MY CHILD TODAY.

PEOPLE WOULD THINK YOU WERE QUITE ODD.

AND SO I BELIEVE -- I'D RATHER HAVE THE TERM I'M MOTHERING
OR FATHERING MY MOTHER.

AND I KNOW IT'S HARD FOR THE MOTHER TO SAY, I DON'T WANT TO
BE MOTHERED, BUT WE NEED TO REALIZE THAT'S PART OF THAT
CIRCLE THAT WE NEED TO CONTINUE.

>>Cathy Unruh: COME TO GRIPS WITH WHAT IT ACTUALLY IS.

>>Carol O'Dell: YES.

>>Cathy Unruh: YOU HAD MADE A PROMISE TO YOUR MOTHER THAT
YOU WOULD NEVER PUT HER IN A NURSING HOME.

YOU WERE FORTUNATELY IN AN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POSITION TO
BE ABLE TO DO THAT, TO STAY HOME.

YOU HAD SOME HELP ALONG THE WAY AT THE END WITH NURSING AND
HOSPICE AND BATHING.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT FACILITIES FOR PERSONS WHO HAVE NO
OPTION?

AND WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO THEM?

NOT EVERYONE CAN DO THIS.

>>Carol O'Dell: I ABSOLUTELY AGREE.

FOR SOME PEOPLE I TELL THEM, WHEN THEY READ MY BOOK, PLEASE
DON'T SAY, OH, I COULD NEVER DO IT THAT WAY, SO FORGET IT.

I DON'T CARE HOW YOU DO IT, DO WHAT IS RIGHT FOR YOUR
FAMILY, FOR YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT BECOME INVOLVED WITH
WHOEVER IS CARING FOR YOUR LOVED ONE, WHETHER IT'S YOUR
CHILD AS IN DAY CARE.

YOU WOULD NEVER JUST TURN YOUR BACK AND GO FOR A WEEK AND NOT CHECK ON YOUR DAY CARE.

YOU CAN'T NOT CHECK ON YOUR MOM FOR A WEEK.

YOU HAVE TO BE ACTIVE.

YOU HAVE TO MAKE SURE THAT THE FACILITY IS SAFE.

CHECK AT ODD HOURS.

DO YOUR RESEARCH.

MAKE SURE AND SEE THAT THEY ARE CARED FOR AND HAPPY AND SAFE, MOSTLY SAFE, THAT THEIR MEDICATIONS ARE BEING ADMINISTERED PROPERLY AND ON TIME.

THOSE THINGS ARE INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT.

AND I DO NOT CONSIDER ONE WAY MORE RIGHT OR MORE WRONG.

>>Cathy Unruh: DO THE BEST YOU CAN.

>>Carol O'Dell: DO THE BEST YOU CAN, BUT STAY INVOLVED.

>>Cathy Unruh: NOW, AS YOUR MOTHER'S LIFE WAS COMING TO A CLOSE, YOU OPTED NOT FOR A FEEDING TUBE.

>>Carol O'Dell: RIGHT.

>>Cathy Unruh: WHY?

>>Carol O'Dell: I KNEW THAT MY MOTHER WAS 92 YEARS OLD, AND THAT EVEN IF SHE PULLED OUT OF THIS PARTICULAR EVENT WITH HER HEART OR WHATEVER IT WAS IN THE END, AS HER ORGANS BEGAN TO SHUT DOWN, I WAS THERE EVERY DAY, AND I SAW THAT WHAT REALLY WAS TRANSPERING WAS THAT SHE WAS FORGETTING HOW TO EAT AND HOW TO BREATHE AND HOW TO FUNCTION.

AND THAT SEEMED RATHER NATURAL COURSE FOR THIS HORRENDOUS

DISEASE.

AND THAT BY JERKING HER BACK AND FORCING HER TO EAT OR TO BREATHE WHEN HER BODY WAS ALREADY FORGETTING AND LETTING GO PROCESS, THAT I WAS GOING AGAINST NATURE ITSELF.

AND I HAD TO ASK MYSELF, WHAT WOULD I BE BRINGING HER BACK FOR?

>>Cathy Unruh: WE HAVE LIVING WILLS, ET CETERA, AND THE TERRI SCHIAVO CASE BROUGHT THIS ISSUE TO ALL OF OUR ATTENTION, I BELIEVE.

WHO DO YOU THINK SHOULD MAKE THE FINAL DECISION?

>>Carol O'Dell: I DO REALIZE THAT IT IS THE LOVED ONE, EVEN WITH A LIVING WILL, THE LOVED ONE HAS A LOT OF POWER IN THAT SITUATION.

AND THAT CAN BE SCARY, BECAUSE SOME PEOPLE DO ABUSE IT.

BUT IN THE END -- AND I TELL PEOPLE AND I'M VERY MUCH ADVOCATING LIVING WILLS.

THAT'S ONE THING THAT EVERYWHERE I GO, I SAY, SIT DOWN WITH A LIVING WILL.

SIT DOWN WITH YOUR ENTIRE FAMILY WITH ALL AGES.

YOU CAN GET IT AT YOUR DOCTORS OFFICE OR AT THE LIBRARY, SIT DOWN AND TAKE THE STING OUT OF IT BY FILLING IT OUT TOGETHER, BECAUSE WE NEVER KNOW WHEN A TRAGEDY IS GOING TO STRIKE.

AND EVEN THOUGH YOU MAY HAVE TOLD ONE LOVED ONE YOUR WISHES, THAT DOESN'T MEAN THAT THEY ARE GOING TO BE THE PERSON AT

THE HOSPITAL THAT DAY.

>>Cathy Unruh: YOUR MOTHER DIED WHEN SHE WAS 92.

YOU HAD OVER THE COURSE OF THIS ACTUALLY FANTASIZED ABOUT
HER DEATH.

THAT'S ABSOLUTELY NATURAL IN YOUR POSITION.

HOW HAS IT BEEN SINCE HER DEATH?

>>Carol O'Dell: I BELIEVE IN SOME WAYS BECAUSE OF THIS
WRITING PROCESS AND BECAUSE OF MY AWARENESS AND OBSERVANCE
I'VE BEEN ABLE TO PICK UP AND BECAUSE I HAD SOMETHING TO DO
WITH THIS, I WAS ABLE TO PICK UP AND SAY I'M GOING TO TAKE
YOU, MOM, ON THIS JOURNEY NOW.

IN A WAY, SHE STILL GETS IN THE CAR WITH ME AND GOES WITH
ME.

I BRING HER WITH ME.

AND I IT BE TO -- AND I CONTINUE TO CARRY HER WITH ME, AND
HER STORIES ARE NOT GONE.

MY HUSBAND GAVE ME THE BEST COMPLIMENT BY SAYING, CAROL, YOU
HAVE KEPT YOUR PARENTS ALIVE BY TALKING ABOUT THEM AND BY
TELLING THEIR STORIES.

>>Cathy Unruh: AND SHE IS WITH US IN THE BOOK, WHICH IS
"MOTHERING MOTHER."

YOU'RE KEEPING HER SPIRIT ALIVE, ABSOLUTELY.

THANK YOU MUCH, CAROL, FOR JOINING US.

>>Carol O'Dell: THANK YOU.

>>Cathy Unruh: CAROL O'DELL, HER BOOK IS "MOTHERING MOTHER,"

A HEARTBREAKING MEMOIR.

IT'S AVAILABLE AT BOOK STORES NOW.

THANKS FOR JOINING ME FOR "UP CLOSE."

AND I'LL SEE YOU NEXT TIME.

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