



ELDER DECISIONS

Adult Family Conflict Resolution • Training
A Division of Agreement Resources, LLC

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Elder Decisions® Mediators Offer Tips for Families with Aging Parents to “Talk Turkey”

The holidays can be a time to start conversations with loved ones about the future. As difficult as it may seem, having conversations early can help families work together and avoid crises down the road. Mediators from Elder Decisions® share some tips for getting started.

Norwood, MA - November 28, 2011 - The turkey and stuffing leftovers may have already disappeared, but there may be something else lingering after your family Thanksgiving gathering: a growing concern about aging parents or loved ones.

It's a common scenario. Family who are geographically spread gather at the holidays, and notice changes in a loved one's memory, physical health, or abilities. Suddenly they realize that Mom or Dad or Aunt Margaret may need more help than they used to.

What to do?

- Begin by having short, informal conversations with your family members to explore what their concerns are.
- Gather information about what help might be needed and contact your local elder service agency (see below) to learn about options available.
- Consider holding a family meeting to talk about the present and the future. Work with your family members to create a list of topics to discuss, and get Mom and Dad – or Aunt Margaret – involved, too. Once you figure out what's important to everyone (for example, a balance of safety and independence), brainstorm some next steps that are comfortable for everyone.

Seem impossible or overwhelming? Seek some expert help. Below are some ideas of where to turn:

1. **Not sure where to start?** Your local elder service agency can provide lots of information and resources. Check out www.eldercare.gov for the agency near you.
2. **Dreading the conversation?** What if family members disagree about next steps? Or maybe they don't think anything needs to be done? Check out the book “[*Mom Always Liked You Best: A Guide for Resolving Family Feuds, Inheritance Battles & Eldercare Crises*](#)” by Arline Kardasis, Rikk Larsen, Crystal Thorpe, and Blair Trippe. It's a practical “how-to” guide for having difficult conversations, written by experienced

(MORE)

mediators at www.ElderDecisions.com, and it includes chapters on family meetings, overcoming barriers, and what other families have done. If you want more outside help, consider hiring a neutral mediator who specializes in elder issues to facilitate the conversation. Find a mediator at www.eldercaremediators.com or www.mediate.com, or search online for “elder mediation.”

3. **Concerned about a senior’s driving?** AARP offers a short online seminar – complete with videos – that can help. It’s called “We Need to Talk” – and can guide you in “how to assess your loved ones’ driving skills and provide tools” to approach and discuss this challenging subject. See www.aarp.org/home-garden/transportation/we_need_to_talk.

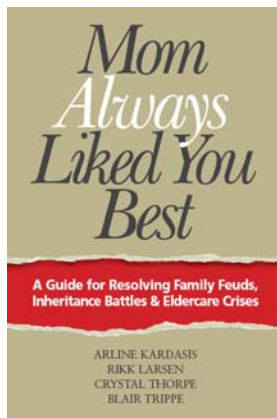
One thing’s for sure – as difficult as it may seem, starting the conversation before a crisis will help everyone in the long run.

Elder Decisions®, a division of Agreement Resources, LLC, is a leading provider of elder mediation services nationally. Its mediators facilitate family discussions around matters relating to finances, property, living situations, driving, caregiving and guardianships. The firm also offers conflict coaching to individuals when family meetings are not practical or desired, and regularly provides trainings in Elder Mediation for experienced mediators from around the world. Its partners recently published the book: *"Mom Always Liked You Best: A Guide for Resolving Family Feuds, Inheritance Battles & Eldercare Crises."*

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