

**Role Transitions in Adult Daughters Providing Care
to Mothers Living with Alzheimer's Disease**

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Adult children frequently become involved in the care of an aging parent living with Alzheimer's disease (AD). For daughters providing care to their mothers, we examined in detail the interplay among progressive stages of AD, changing mother-daughter relationships, and role transitions. Three recent caregiving memoirs published by daughters with close relationships with their mothers were selected. Narrative analysis of the texts confirmed transitions through three previously identified phases of caregiving while elaborating on caregiver thoughts and feelings and emphasizing the dynamic mother-daughter relationship. During the first phase (assumption of caregiving role), memoirs exhibit themes of denial and guilt evident in the daughter's inability to balance numerous role demands. Furthermore, the mother-daughter relationship is challenged by the daughter's resistance to accept major cognitive changes in their mother. Evident during the second phase of care (ongoing caregiver role) is a sense of loss among adult daughters in terms of both previously enjoyed activities and valued characteristics of their mother. During this phase daughters become completely engulfed by caregiving duties. In the final phase (termination of the caregiving role, i.e., role exit), great ambivalence shifts towards acceptance. The mother-daughter relationship becomes primarily intimate, non-verbal and nurturing. Despite the deep pain of losing a mother and an overwhelming long-term role, adult daughters are aware of the work ahead of them to redefine their sense of self outside of caregiving. Overall, findings display the need for dementia-sensitive caregiver support services, adjusted specifically to the evolving mother-daughter relationship during each phase of care.