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Helping Sandwichers cope

For the Sandwich generation — boomers responsible for caring for their children and parents — the day-to-day pressures can be overwhelming.

“Coping skills and a little planning can greatly assist this over-taxed group,” says Kelley Keehn, author of the 2006 book *The Woman’s Guide to Money* and a faculty



member with the Canadian Initiative for Elder Planning Studies in Edmonton.

Keehn says that the first step is awareness. “Boomers with children and

Kelley Keehn’s book *A Woman’s Guide to Money* was released in April.

(Kim Carmichael, Urban Concept Photo)

parental responsibilities have a great deal on their plate ... It’s often the parents of the boomers that are left behind or forgotten. In the end, this group ... faces potential burnout and often feels an enormous sense of guilt.”

The author suggests three simple strategies for boomers to consider:

- Choose a date to plan an outing and stick to it. Arranging a time each week or bi-weekly gives elderly parents a date to look forward to, as many retired individuals have less mobility, friends and social activities to fill their days. Knowing when to expect a visit from children and grand-

children can be a comfort.

- Plan activities in advance while involving parents. Implement a detailed social calendar for them that may include attending grandchildren’s concerts, a family vacation or a day trip to their hometown. Giving the parents a number of pursuits to focus on in the future will encourage them to remain positive and hopeful.

- Consider hiring extra help. Chores such as raking leaves, driving parents to doctors and assisting in grocery shopping can eat up precious hours. If income allows, hire a driver to escort parents to complete errands.

Keehn’s website — KelleyKeehn.com — offers advice about elder issues and coping skills for baby boomers caught in a sandwich lifestyle. ●

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