



Feeding My Mother: Comfort and Laughter in the Kitchen as My Mom Lives with Memory Loss

Jann Arden

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#1 NATIONAL BESTSELLER

Based on her hugely popular Facebook posts and Instagram photos, *Feeding My Mother* is a frank, funny, inspirational and piercingly honest account of the transformation in Jann Arden's life that has turned her into the primary "parent" to her mom, who is in the grip of Alzheimer's.

Jann Arden moved in to a house just across the way from her parents in rural Alberta to be close to them but also so they could be her refuge from the demands of the music business and a performing career. Funny how time works. Since her dad died in 2015, Jann cooks for her mom five or six times a week. Her mom finds comfort in her daughter's kitchen, not just in the delicious food but also just sitting with her as she cooks. And Jann finds some peace in caring for her mom, even as her mom slowly becomes a stranger. "If you told me two years ago that I'd be here," Jann writes, "I wouldn't have believed it. And yet we still fall into so much laughter, feel so much insane gladness and joy. It's such a contrast from one minute to the next and it teaches me constantly: it makes me stronger and more humble and more empathetic and caring and kind."

The many people who are dealing with a loved one who is losing it will find inspiration and strength in Jann's wholehearted, loving response and her totally Jann take on the upside-down world of a daughter mothering her mother. *Feeding My Mother* is one heck of an affirmation that life just keeps on keeping on, and a wonderful example of how you have to roll with it.

Feeding My Mother: Comfort and Laughter in the Kitchen as My Mom Lives with Memory Loss Details

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From Reader Review Feeding My Mother: Comfort and Laughter in the Kitchen as My Mom Lives with Memory Loss for online ebook

Stephanie says

I really enjoyed this, and it was eye-opening for me. My mother had read it, as she is wife/caregiver to my dad, who has Alzheimer's. For me, it was less about the Alzheimer's, as that is familiar enough, and more about how Jann responds to being an adult child caring for her aging parents. I have liked her for a while, just in little visits to tv talk shows etc, I'm not sure where I would have seen her, I don't particularly listen to her music, but I feel like she's a Canadian who's always been in the background for me. But now, I really like her--she's hilarious! And humble. And I may seek other books by her :)

❁ **Susan G says**

<https://ayearofbooksblog.com/2018/02/...>

"I can't imagine how maddening it must be for her. I mean, I get so anxious I feel like crying most of the time. The disease is taking me over too, even with the help I have. None of that changes the fact that I am losing my mom, an inch, a thought, a memory at a time".

Feeding my Mother: Comfort and Laughter in the Kitchen As My Mom Lives with Memory Loss is a very heart-felt, well-written memoir with the added bonus of a few comfort food recipes. Written in a journal style, it is honest, emotionally charged and highlights both the struggles and appreciation experienced by Canadian singer-songwriter, Jann Arden.

Fans may appreciate Arden's music and have no idea of the challenges she has experienced. They may not know that her older brother was in prison for murder, that her father was an alcoholic and that her mother held everything together. They might not know that she chose to live across the street from her parents, checking in on them and cooking for them. They might not know how difficult it was to place her dad in long-term care and to have help at home to care for her mother as her dementia exacerbated. They also might not realize her tenacity as she struggled to balance her family responsibilities with her music career. The memoir is eye-opening and provides readers with a new perspective on Arden's life.

The few recipes are simple and made with common ingredients that readers likely have in their homes. This is appreciated by readers who can easily decided to try to replicate a dish. I read this book for a Canadian BINGO reading challenge for the CanadianContent Goodreads group. The square was to read a cook book AND cook or bake one of the recipes. I have read the book and am contemplating which recipe that I will make – I will post a picture later!

Working in healthcare for over 2 decades, I have met many patients diagnosed with dementia and families struggling with their role of caregivers. It can be heartbreaking, frustrating, exhausting and rewarding and this memoir puts a face to those challenges.

Feeding My Mother would be helpful for other families to read. There is no instruction manual for dealing

with dementia but this book will remind them that they are not alone. Arden has done a great job of sharing her experience in an open, honest and at times, humorous way.

Janice says

Such a beautiful read and as in typical Jann Arden style she makes you laugh, cry, laugh and cry again! Her story resonated so deeply with me as I learn to come to terms with my own mother's recent diagnosis (although dealing with issues for sometime). There were so many moments over the last two years when I felt alone, afraid and totally unprepared but after reading this book I realized, nobody is ever prepared and "it's the hardships and the sadness that show us the beauty of joy and happiness. You can't have one without the other". Thanks Jann for reminding us that we all have to work with this disease and our loved ones with grace, courage, compassion and empathy, and that isn't always easy. Beautiful book, recipes and pictures, a wonderful gift ♥

Orla Hegarty says

Ms. Arden is a fantastic storyteller whether in prose or in lyrics and prose.

Jennifer says

What a gifted writer! Jann's experiences of living with the incremental, depressing, slow, painful loss of her mother are expressed with honesty and gratitude. There are many lessons there, for all of us. Having lived through a similar experience of being caregiver to my mother inflicted with the same dreaded disease, I only wish I had been able to demonstrate the grace and even joy that Jann expresses in this lovely book. Loved this book, will share it with many - but always keep the book for myself. I know I will find peace in rereading it

Katie says

I loved this book! I laughed so hard and cried even harder. Jann Arden is an incredible song writer, musician and story teller. She is able to find humour in the hardest situations. She conveys how beneficial it is to find the silver linings even amidst the darkest times. The whole book is so refreshingly honest and real. I would recommend this to anyone.

Lester says

THANK YOU JANN ARDEN!!!

I miss my Mamma every day. We looked after her for her last year..and there were/are no regrets. It was every emotion possible, all over the map.

If we live long enough..we do become parents to our parents..or..parents to our siblings!! (actually..I

accidentally typed 'dibblings' there first!!...and that suits my family better!)

Yes..you sharing your family life has shown so many people that..this life is normal..live each day and night..laugh and cry..and laugh again.

Also..this book is so beautiful looking..it made me happy every time I looked at it..loved the photos and the recipes too. Thank you Jann. One day you will visit the Yukon Territory and come to do a book reading..maybe at our tiny library..eat at our table and laugh and love.

Laura says

My grandmother, who lived to be 99, or so, started going downhill in her 90s. She was sharp as a tack, up until then. She drove a truck. She ran a small farm. She painted, and played cards, and made friends wherever she went. But, when she started to go down hill, she was put in a "home", by my aunt.

My mother hated that. She resented that, and said she never wanted to be put in a home, ever. So, we agreed to let her live with us, after she suffered a series of strokes. She can still mostly get around, and we sent her off to senior classes during the day, to keep her busy, otherwise she will just sleep. She has not been diagnosed with dementia or alzheimers, yet, but I feel it will come to that, soon.

I bring this up, because Jann could be writing about my mother. Reading this book, reminds me of the things my mother has said, though her memory loss isn't quite as bad as Jann's mom. I could so relate to everything thing in this book, could so sympathize with Jann, and what she was going through.

And the quotes she brings up are great. I have written down my mother's best ones, but not often enough to make a book like this one.

I have so many favorites, it is hard to pick the best, but here is a timely one. THEY are discussing the state of the world.

"You have to keep going no matter what," she says as she looks out the window at two squirrels racing up a tree."He should spend a few hours every day watching squirrels—that would help him."

I think she is talking about Trump and that makes me kind of snort.

"You never know, Mom. That might help him."

And then she says, "Well, they must have squirrels on the planet he comes from."

Although there are recipes, don't pick up the book for that. Pick it up for the humor, and stay for the philosophy.

You can read my more complete review on this book at my website, [Reading for you](#).

Nikki Stafford says

This is a beautifully written, open, and honest account of Jann Arden's story of being with her parents through their diagnoses of dementia, her father's stroke, and her mother's diagnosis of Alzheimer's. As someone going through some of these things with my parents right now, there were times I felt sobs catch in my throat as she explained how much you have to keep your sense of humour through all of this (yes!) and how you have to try to find the joy in the little moments with them, and try to brush off the pain and heartbreak when the disease takes over and they say or do things they don't mean, but which hurt terribly. She includes some recipes in there that she began using to feed her parents, and they seem very easy and delicious. I'm definitely going to try some of them. I'm thankful for this book for feeling less alone in all of this.

Joanne MacNevin says

Beautifully written. Heart-breaking, but beautiful. Some passages had me tearing up, some had me laughing. And many made me remember certain days with my grandmother. A really great book.

Robyn says

3.5 stars really, but rounded down for being slightly repetitive. I feel bad about it as I really do like Jann, but there you have it.

This would be interesting to read back-to-back with Roz Chast's book *Can't We Talk About Something More Pleasant* (I may have that title slightly wrong)

Len says

When I was younger, I wrote a very long, heartfelt letter to Jann Arden about what "Good Mother" meant to me, and dropped it into the mailbox, not thinking a celebrity letter would ever get me a reply. In short order, I received back a signed copy of the CD single of Good Mother, with a warm message written on it.

This book has now done for me what that CD did so many years ago. It opened me up, dragged the darkness out into the light and helped me to heal. Losing my father last year to pneumonia (as did Jann), the love, strength and hope that are at the centre of this beautiful memoir have been a balm to me.

This is fearless, gut-wrenching and filled to the brim and over with true love, generosity, compassion and understanding. What could have been only sad, frustrating and bitter becomes, instead - through Jann's pen - a story of survival (of all involved), of perseverance, and of facing the darkness head-on.

Though the entire book was a beautiful example of why we read, Chapter 14 touched me deepest, and moved me in a way that no other book has this year, or perhaps in a very long time.

Thank you - again - Jann!

Teena in Toronto says

Jann Arden is Canadian singer, songwriter, broadcaster, actor and author. She lived next door to her parents in rural Alberta. Her father, Derrel, passed away in August 2015 after years of being ill, including dementia. Her mother, Joan, still lives next door. She is battling Alzheimer's and needs round-the-clock care.

This book is Jann's journey of taking care of her parents and watching them decline over the last eight years but being helpless to do anything about it. She started cooking for them (there were days when they couldn't remember how use a can opener) and throughout the book are recipes of some of things she's made ... like turkey chili, chicken parm, split pea soup and pulled chicken noodle soup. Also scattered throughout the book are pictures of Jann, her parents and their pets.

This is the second book of Jann's I've read (I read *Falling Backwards* a couple years ago and enjoyed it). Despite the difficult subject, I enjoyed this book and Jann's personality comes through and I felt like she was sitting with me and chatting. I liked the writing style ... it was amusing at times and honest.

Blog review post: <http://www.teenaintoronto.com/2018/02...>

Laurie • The Baking Bookworm says

Disclaimer: This book was generously provided by the publisher in exchange for my honest review.

When I think of Jann Arden I think of one of my favourite singer/songwriters who also has an awesome sense of humour. She seems like a regular Canadian gal who just happens to have a cool job. I have enjoyed seeing her perform live twice, currently have her Christmas album on repeat and continue to be entertained by her funny tidbits on social media.

As a songwriter Jann is used to sharing her feelings but this time she makes it even more personal. With this memoir/cookbook, she takes us into her home and opens up about her relationship with her parents, especially her mother as she struggles with Alzheimer's. Jann is candid about her feelings and anyone who has had a loved one with Alzheimer's will empathize with Jann's feelings of helplessness, frustration, fear and sadness. But Jann (and her mother) also show their unrelenting spirit to persevere and find love and laughs in even the smallest of moments. Hopefully readers who have experienced Alzheimer's in their families will find a sense of healing, validation and comfort reading this book. But it is equally important for those not yet touched by dementia/Alzheimer's as it gives a candid look at how this disease encompasses the entire family.

Feeding My Mother is a touching and inspiring read that chronicles the Arden family's journey with Alzheimer's. Along with some of her favourite recipes, this book is filled with hope and the importance of perseverance and is told with heart, honesty and her signature Canadian humour.

Colleen says

Singer/songwriter/comedienne Jann Arden is also a daughter who is helping her mother through the last stages of her life with Alzheimer's. Jann's account of life with her mom is heartbreaking, but is also

interspersed with humourous and inspirational moments that are so completely honest, you feel like you're right there with her. Jann pulls no punches in describing her new norm, but let's face it: it's Jann Arden. We wouldn't expect anything less. I love Jann and my respect for her has only deepened after reading this book. This is a must-read for anyone with a family member who is going through a similar experience.
