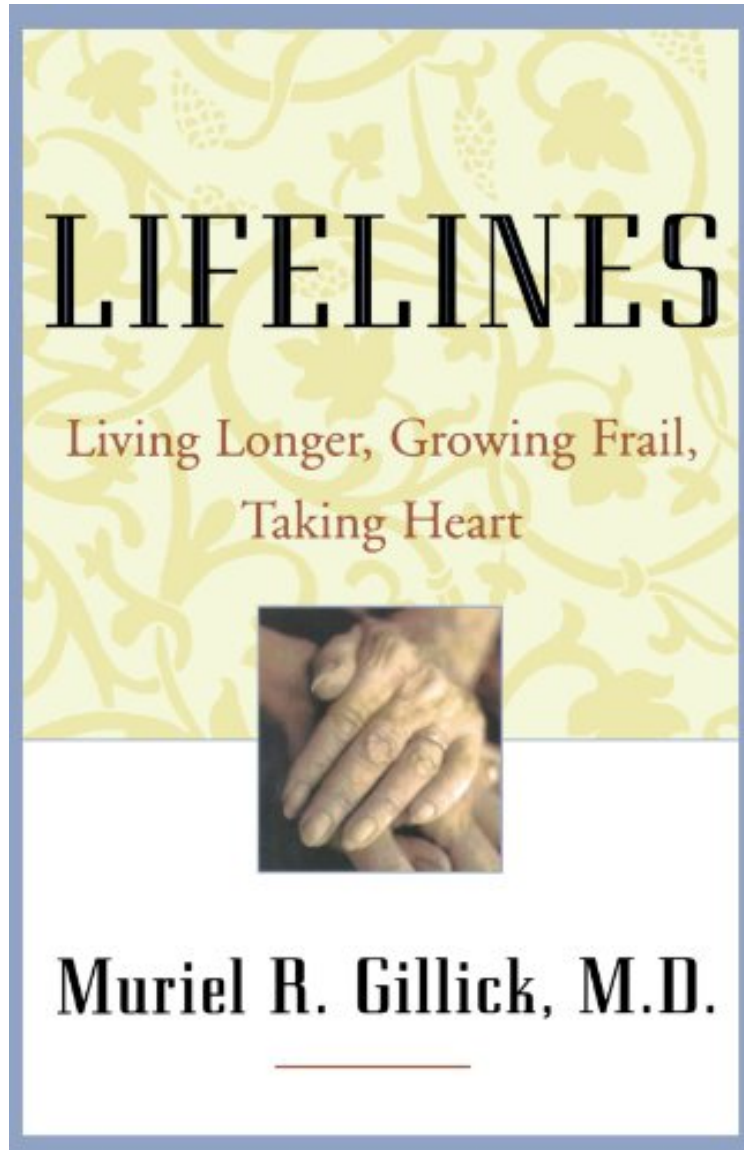


Lifelines: Living Longer, Growing Frail, Taking Heart

Muriel R. Gillick

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Muriel R. Gillick : Lifelines: Living Longer, Growing Frail, Taking Heart before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Lifelines: Living Longer, Growing Frail, Taking Heart:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Learning to cope as lives changeBy Reading AlongI first bought Muriel Gillick's book Tangled Minds in 1999 when my mother-in-law was ill with Alzheimer's, and I found it a sanity saver. Dr. Gillick alternates scientific discussions of the disorder with narrative about a patient, enabling the lay-

person to understand what is happening with a patient, and why. Her book saved my sanity: doctors and nursing home staff can be very reluctant to answer questions about end-of-life decisions, or even to tell you when the end is coming. After my mother-in-law's last stroke, they kept saying, day by day, "she seems much better". To me, she seemed to be dying, and Dr. Gillick's book confirmed my opinion. I was ready with information to support my husband and sister-in-law in end-of-life decisions when the time came, and to plan ahead for her death when they were too emotionally wrought to do so. As a result, she died quickly, peacefully, and painlessly in her own room, surrounded by family, and the funeral itself was not stressful and was a comfort to her family. I've been looking for similar help in dealing with issues surrounding my husband's stepfamily. Alzheimer's is not the issue here, but Parkinson's disorder and osteoarthritis have left his stepmother very ill and frail. Dr. Gillick's book *Lifelines* is in a similar format to *Tangled Minds*, and here, too, she is able to use her information to guide families in understanding the issues of these frail adults, and in working to provide them the best quality of life possible in their last years. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Most helpful perspective on aging and the concept of "frailty" By Karianne Noble Got this book to understand more about "frailty" as we visit nursing homes for a family member. This book has been a breath of fresh air in an otherwise complicated, heavy, depressing, and seemingly hopeless situation. Dr. Gillick has the medical expertise to write this book and it is clear that she also has the compassion and loving bedside manner every person wants from their loved ones doctor. I really appreciate her insights and feel more hopeful at this process begins. Even though this book was written over 10 years ago, I felt like the information was relevant to my current situation in 2013.

"Brilliant...an honest assessment of the pathways into and out of [elderly] disability." *Journal of the American Medical Association* A specialist in elder care, Dr. Muriel Gillick examines the complications of lives lived far longer than ever before. This book aims to help the frail elderly and their families cope with the often unforeseen dilemmas of aging: the most common chronic ailments, the acute problems, and their impact on living options. Tracing the stories of four people, Dr. Gillick highlights the various challenges and decisions that arise when frailty develops and discusses the importance of prevention and social responsibility in assessing, treating, and living with frailty. "[G]ives me hope that if the worst should come, there is help to be found and meaning to be derived." John Kotre, author of *Make It Count*

From Publishers Weekly The author (*Tangled Minds: Understanding Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias*, etc.), a medical specialist in elderly medicine, has written an accessible and instructive study of a subject that both individuals and society as a whole need to heed, particularly with the rising number of frail elderly (those who suffer from "impairment in multiple domains leading to a profound difficulty functioning in daily life") as life expectancy increases. According to Gillick, nearly two-thirds of women and almost half of men over the age of 85 are heavily dependent physically and emotionally on family members, who are frequently at a loss as to how to best help them. Through the stories of four patients drawn from her practice, Gillick combines professional experience, empathy and common sense to show possible ways that the elderly and their families can deal more effectively with the years of decline before death. Catherine Endicott and her daughters, for instance, struggled to face Catherine's escalating problems of breathlessness and pain caused by heart trouble. Although she rejected open-heart surgery as too risky, she finally compromised on a less intrusive procedure that allowed her to remain in an assisted living facility, where she found friends and a measure of security. Jack Simon, an energetic 84-year-old stroke victim, was expertly cared for by his wife; after her death, he had to adjust to life in a nursing home. The author deals forthrightly with the issue of sexual contact among the elderly through the unfolding of Jack's relationship with a female resident. Although Gillick cannot provide altogether happy endings to the lives of her elderly patients, she does illuminate their humanity as they and their families try to make the final years less frightening and more comfortable. (Nov.) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. Brilliant...an honest assessment of the pathways into and out of [elderly] disability. -- *Journal of the American Medical Association* [G]ives me hope that if the worst should come, there is help to be found and meaning to be derived. -- John Kotre, author of *Make It Count* About the Author Muriel Gillick, M.D., is physician-in-chief at the Hebrew Rehabilitation Center for the Aged in Boston, Massachusetts. She is associate professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School.