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The Associated
Jewish Federation of Baltimore

Webinar Discussion Guide

Grandparents Are People Too: Balancing Roles, Responsibilities, and Your Own Life

April 2026

Purpose

This guide provides prompts for discussion of the JGN webinar **Grandparents Are People Too: Balancing Roles, Responsibilities, and Your Own Life** led by Michelle Goldberg, Beth Hecht, and Susan Kurlander of Jewish Community Services of Baltimore. Grandparent groups, social meetups, and program facilitators can view the recording together and use the following prompts to reflect on the legacy they want to leave and how they can engage their grandchildren in meaningful conversations about family values and stories.

Discussion Questions

1. What are the three most important expectations your children have for you as grandparents? (e.g., scheduled childcare, financial support, overnight visits)
2. What three boundaries will be most important for you to respect as grandparents? (e.g., meal choices, screen time, religious observance)
3. When is the optimal time to check in with your adult children about how your grandparenting is going?
4. How is parenting different for your children than it was for you?
5. What do you want your grandchildren to know and respect about you?
6. If it is difficult to move from conflict to cooperation, would you and your children be open to seeking professional help?
7. Would there be an opportunity or advantage for grandparents of the same grandchildren to share their "strategies" (e.g., related to gift giving)?

Strategies for Self-Care

- Stay connected with friends and family.
- Explore hobbies.
- Pursue personal growth and development opportunities which may include leaving your comfort zone.
- Practice and model self-compassion and mindfulness.

- Cultivate self-awareness and self-acceptance.
- Practice mindfulness and meditation techniques, including breathing techniques and walking.
- Stress the importance of exercise, diet, consistent medical care, and healthy eating.
- Be a role model for a healthy lifestyle for your grandchildren.
- Connect with grandchildren who live at a distance.

Lasting Legacy Information

Consider the following:

1. Identify your 4 or 5 most important values or beliefs and why each is important to you.
2. Describe how this value has impacted your life and who or what event or experience influenced the way you have incorporated this value into your life.
3. What message do you hope someone might think about from what you have written?

You may choose to write your answers in a journal-style notebook, record your thoughts orally, or be creative by focusing on a family heirloom, artifact, or family recipes that have been significant in helping you develop your values and beliefs. Examples could include a menorah that survived the Holocaust or recipes from a beloved great-grandmother who left her family to immigrate to the United States.

Once you have compiled your answers, share them with your loved ones, both children and grandchildren. For grandchildren, an optimal time is the early teen years, especially if and when they become a B-Mitzvah.

Besides providing this gift to your loved ones, take time in your self-care as a grandparent to affirm your value as a guiding force for those most important to you.

Breathing Exercises for Self-Care

Breathing techniques take little time to do but can help the body shift from a stress response to a state of relaxation as well as enhancing mental clarity.

4 – 7 – 8 Technique (takes under two minutes)

- **Inhale** for 4 seconds. Breathe in quietly through your nose.
- **Hold** for 7 seconds. Hold your breath gently (no clenching).
- **Exhale** for 8 seconds. Release your breath slowly through your mouth with a “whoosh.”

Repeat for 4 rounds, once or twice daily

Humming Breath

- **Inhale** and **exhale** with a soft hum for as long as you can sustain it.

Shoulder Shrug Breath

- **Inhale** and shrug your shoulders.
- **Exhale** through your mouth (audibly, if you want) as you lower your shoulders.

Box Breathing

- **Inhale** slowly through your nose for 4 seconds, filling your lungs and feeling your chest and stomach rise.
- **Hold** your breath for 4 seconds, keeping your body relaxed.
- **Exhale** slowly through your mouth for 4 seconds, emptying your lungs completely.
- **Hold** your breath again for 4 seconds.

Repeat the cycle for 4 minutes or longer.

Resources

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["5 Healthy Boundaries for Grandparents and How to Discuss Them Early"](#) by Ashley Austrew, 12/15/25

[Caring for Grandchildren Without Losing Yourself – MelodyRepeat](#) by Sarah Azman, 11/26/25