

## Under One Roof Again: All Grown Up and (Re)Learning to Live Together Happily

**Susan Newman**

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Susan Newman's latest book, *Under One Roof Again*, is an indispensable how-to guide for the modern family. In this uncertain economy it is no longer taboo for families to live together as adults under one roof. Whether it's the college graduate who returns home to live with her parents, or in-laws moving in with their adult children, families are struggling to navigate their way through shifting familial roles in this rapidly changing social environment. Aimed at individuals who find themselves in this multi-generational family nucleus, Newman's book is a practical, no-nonsense guide to happy living.

Newman's range of discussion is comprehensive; the reader learns how North American attitudes of independence have adapted to become more family-focused, taking on characteristics of other cultures where values are aligned with traditions of familial cooperation, obligation, and assistance. *Under One Roof Again* explores topics that range from adjusting to family members' annoying bathroom habits to handling touchy monetary matters in a direct but diplomatic way. Each chapter delves into a specific issue by showcasing it from a variety of angles and focuses on helping the reader understand what other members of the family may be feeling and thinking. These discussions are followed by bulleted lists of clear, focused, and practical tips the reader can put into practice.

An experienced social psychologist and the author of several successful books on family relationships, Newman deftly addresses the sensitive issues that matter most. The shame and guilt of returning home after a failed marriage, the ego-smashing struggle to find a job in a stagnated economy, the overwhelming realization that you have fallen short of your own expectations—these deeply buried feelings are brought to the surface and validated. The viewpoints offered are direct quotes from real people in real situations; their voices bring vibrancy and a sense of genuine connection to the text. Newman, however, does not languish in these feelings. Instead, her focus is on arming the reader with the knowledge and confidence to work through the difficulties of living together to build healthy, lasting relationships. Although Newman does not devote a lot of attention to knowing when to call it quits—it seems every family can navigate through any situation and manage to live together—her advice to “try to ignore what you're pretty sure you or your relative can't or won't change” and to “focus on the positive aspects of the relationship” points to the necessarily dual nature of Newman's wisdom—it is both practical and positive and aims to both empower and facilitate.

This book will be a welcome read for anyone eager to understand how families can come together—and live together—in happy, healthy ways.

SHOILEE KHAN (July / August 2010)

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