I highly recommend it for all parents in pursuit of that elusive goal, a united front.
—Arlie Russell Hochschild, author of The Second Shift

WHEN PARENTS DISAGREE and WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT

"We both know best"—how to kiss parental power struggles goodbye
Getting beyond the "Mom's in charge and Dad helps out" mentality
Down-to-earth solutions to the challenges of child rearing today
Raising healthy kids—while you strengthen your relationship

Dr. RON TAFFEL
with Roberta Israeloff
WHEN PARENTS DISAGREE
AND WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT
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To my wife, Stacey,  
and my two children, Leah and Sammy,  
whose tenderness, fire, and love  
found their way into these pages.  
—R. T.

For David, Ben, and Jacob:  
in disagreement and in harmony,  
always with love.  
—R. I.
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People help with the process of creativity in ways they can’t imagine and often don’t realize. This is my chance to thank them.

First of all, a brief conversation with Arlie Hochschild, author of The Second Shift, reassured me about the direction this book was taking. She probably doesn’t realize how much I needed her support at that exact moment.

My years of work with Betty Carter, whose guidance and clinical acumen, especially regarding gender, helped me put abstract ideas into concrete practice. Although we get to see each other too rarely these days, hers is a voice I will never forget.

Thanks also to:

My colleague and literary agent, Jim Levine, who got involved in the “hot” topic of fathering over twenty-five years before it became fashionable. Early on, he validated the unanticipated direction this book was taking.

Kitty Moore, my editor at The Guilford Press, who had the foresight to see the merit in this material.

My coauthor on When Parents Disagree, Roberta Israeloff, who worked with me as a real partner—struggling together over and over and over again until we got it “good enough.” Her combination of logic and lyricism moved us past the seemingly endless problems one must face in a process like this. And, in the end, a soulmate and loyal friend to boot.

My father, Leo, who, in what was unusual for the fifties, put in enough “mommy” time to help me see things just a little differently. He sat with me when I was sick, studied with me for those endless
tests, came into my room to kiss me and say prayers at bedtime every single night of my growing up.

My mother, Lottie, who, once when I was fourteen years old, went with the “girls” to Atlantic City on money from the canasta club—leaving the men of the family to fend for themselves. Despite neatly packaged and labeled meals, and her 101 other preparations, we wandered around the house that evening more than a little lost. One night over thirty-five years ago taught me how much we can all take for granted who does what around the house.

I am deeply grateful to both my parents for having said over so many years, “Ronnie, pick a profession when you grow up that you’ll love. And if you’re lucky, it will also do good for other people.” Unfortunately, they never got to see how much I took their values to heart.

And finally, my wife, Stacey. She saw how much this project meant to me yet expected my presence at home anyway. Even so, she covered for me in a thousand invisible ways, which is not surprising given what you’ll be reading in these pages. On top of it all, she went through every chapter with a sharp eye toward rooting out anything that might feel pretentious and unreal. Her love and gentleness found its way through me and into these pages.

As I said, we all learn differently and in such subtle ways that we often don’t realize it at the time. But you can’t do it alone and you’ve got to be a little lucky. You need to find some good, generous teachers along the way.

—Iron Taffel

I’d like to thank Liza Dawson for her expert editorial eye and guidance that was always on target; and Jim Levine for his tireless enthusiasm and faith in the book.

I’m especially grateful to Lynn Seligman, not only for her invaluable and inexhaustible advice, support, and levelheadedness, which helped see this project to fruition, but also for always being there—and for being so much more than an agent.

To Ron Taffel, a special thank you. Undertaking this journey together brought many rewards: my understanding of psychology, families, writing, and myself has deepened beyond measure; and what
began as a working relationship blossomed into friendship. From first word to last, the collaboration was by turns challenging, demanding, invigorating—but never dull, and always more of a pleasure than I had any right to expect it would be.

Finally, to my husband and partner, David Fleisher, thanks that will take a lifetime to fully express. Becoming parents is an odyssey we’re very much in the midst of; there’s no one by whose side I’d rather be.

—ROBERTA ISRAELOFF
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