

# HELPFUL HINTS FOR SENIORS

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## ***Getting Ready to Get Ready!***

Seniors, like never before in history, are living longer, healthier, and better lives. They have the opportunities and the means to find purpose, friendship, and joy for a generation or more beyond the typical age for retirement. They want a lifestyle and an environment that supports and enhances these choices. Not satisfied to let the hourglass simply run its course, many and more seniors are making the transitions necessary to embrace all that life has to offer them in the decades ahead.

So how do you get there? I call the transition period between the time when you are still fighting every gray hair, senior discount, and wrinkle and the time when you are fully embracing the best parts of being a Senior: ***Getting Ready to Get Ready***. Maybe you aren't ready to move into a condo by the golf course, give up your annual vacation to the sunny south, put a deposit on an apartment at a continuing care retirement community, or tell the kids they can go ahead with their plans for the in-law suite. *But you are thinking about it*. You haven't booked that once in a lifetime trip, or enrolled in the life-long learning class at the community college, or started sorting the boxes in the attic. *But you are thinking about it*. You aren't quite ready to install the ramp, the electric stair lift, the grab bars, or the special tub. You don't want to give up the garden or the gutters or the lawn. *But you are thinking about it*. Congratulations! You are ***Getting Ready to Get Ready***.

There are some action steps during this transition period that will help you emerge on the other end with a great outcome. Some of these are not easy and may seem overwhelming. Turn the journey into small steps and you will make progress.

First, you must ***Get rid of your pre-conceived ideas***:

- To you it's a Home. To everyone else, it's a piece of real estate.
- You don't get to decide whether or not your life will change. The question is will you manage the change or will it manage you?
- Senior Living is not what it used to be.
- Things are going to cost more. Just a fact of life.
- You can downsize.....everyone does.
- You can bring your memories wherever you go.
- Information is power. Information ahead of an urgent need is true empowerment.
- In many ways, you may be on the threshold of the best days of your life.

Second, you can ***Open yourself up to a new way of thinking***:

- Instead of impending limitations, what are the opportunities that may be open to you?
- Dream what you could, would, and want to do with another thirty years of your life?
- Give yourself the expectation to maintain your self-sufficiency and the permission to ask for help
- Do not allow age to rule out any possibility that you might want to pursue, including: employment, education, activities, hobbies, or adventures: Just about anything you can imagine is being enjoyed by someone, somewhere who is older than you.

- Don't panic because the clock is running...but don't waste time on non-essentials.

Third, ***Spend the time to gather information***

- Get on the mailing lists for the senior happenings in your area
- Become familiar with the Council on Aging, Senior Centers, and other community resources
- Visit the places where you may want to move. Is it possible you will want to live near the kids? Find out about what is available for seniors in their area.
- Explore the many senior living options that are available. For example: Talk with other seniors who have chosen a continuing care retirement community, or an active senior neighborhood. Find out from someone who installed one of those lifts. Check out websites and review satisfaction survey results. Never settle for just 2 options. There are always more than two.
- Subscribe to magazines of interest. Find out the latest trends in the areas of interest

Fourth, **Above all, it's all about your Relationships.**

- Develop the trusting relationships you will need with people such as a reliable realtor, elder care lawyer, medical specialist, financial advisor, moving company, etc.. Once you trust them, accept their expertise.
- Have the difficult conversations with family members and spouses so that everyone is clear about your intentions in light of any unforeseen contingency.
- Be clear about who you want around you for support, friendship, and joy in the decades to come.

**Here is some Best Advice Take-Away Tips that I have heard from others:**

- The race of life is often won or lost in the transitions.
- If you get ready and then you can always be ready.
- Sometimes you must let go of the secure dime in your hand to accept the dollar in front of you. You cannot avoid every hint of risk; but you can turn the odds in your favor with good information.
- Some of the world's best ideas and most creative improvements came from people older than you. Don't ever give up your imagination.
- We all need others. Look for people you can trust. The time and effort will be well spent. Start now.
- More than ever, time is precious. Make it count.

***HAPPY TRAILS***