

What are you waiting for?

“I’m not ready.” I hear this all too often. I speak with people every day who are thinking about their future or the future of a loved one. They are beginning to consider making changes in their lives that will affect their family, their health, and their well being. They recognize that things they enjoy doing may not be as easy as they once were, that their health may be beginning to decline, and that they have more difficulty remembering things in everyday life. Perhaps one day they will need a little assistance with aspects of their personal care.

Despite this realization, there seems to be a tendency to hang on to shreds of **“independence”**, as if asking for assistance means sacrificing all that is familiar and comfortable. We have been taught all of our lives to be independent and self-sufficient. To seek assistance seems to feel as if we have surrendered all of our decision making authority and capabilities. It is just our silly pride.

Mowing the lawn, cleaning the pool, pulling up weeds, painting the eaves, fixing the leaky faucet, taking the heavy trash container out to the roadside on a hot summer’s day, the list goes on. These are not badges of independence, they are chores. Then there are mealtimes- frequent trips to the grocery store, even when you’re not feeling up to it, it’s too hot outside, the car needs work, and making all those trips to carry grocery bags into the house . There is planning and preparation for meals, nutritional considerations, cooking time, and clean up to manage.

Getting around is a little difficult these days, a cane or walker helps, but it’s slow- going. Housework isn’t the snap it used to be. It’s difficult to reach the places that require bending or stretching now. Using a walker makes it almost impossible to transport the laundry hamper from room to room. But, “I’m still able to take care of myself”, no matter how difficult or uncomfortable, or perhaps even how dangerous it may be. Getting out of the house, attending social functions, having friends over, attending church, even running necessary errands may be avoided. **The results are isolation, poor health, and depression.**

What if? What if there was a place you could live where you did not have to worry about chores, or cooking, or cleaning, or laundry, or even transportation? What if this place had plenty of the residents with whom you had many common interests and abilities? What if there were lots of activities to entertain and occupy you? What if the food was fabulous?! What if there were caregivers and nurses on staff to look after you, help you, nurture you and make you feel loved? What if this place included your own private apartment, a warm and secure environment with more conveniences than at your current home? You could come and go as you please; you’d have many new friends, time to play and *most* importantly- peace of mind.

Quality of life. Are you ready now? What are you waiting for?



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