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Handling Objections When a Loved One Resists Making Needed Lifestyle Changes

What Objections to Expect

If some of the warning signs that a loved one needs help are present, don't panic. Instead, sit down with your loved one and share your concerns. Develop a plan before it becomes an emergency. Older adults still living in their own homes are often afraid to verbalize the question of whether or not they need help while their adult children are more proactive and out in the community looking for options. Adult children see their mom or dad living alone or losing touch with their peers, so try to present options to loved ones in a positive way so as not to bring pressure.

Common objections

1. I'm not ready yet.
2. Moving from a large home is too overwhelming.
3. I can't afford it.
4. I don't know anyone there.
5. I don't want to give up my independence.
6. I need to be close to my doctors.
7. I wouldn't know how to scale down.

Be respectful of feelings and attitudes. Many people have unpleasant memories "nursing homes". To paraphrase an award-winner General Motors commercial, "this isn't your grandfather's retirement home" any more, so be patient with outdated concepts others - and even you! - may have. You may be challenged by your loved one's struggle to maintain his/her independence as well as outdated ideas about senior living communities. The new senior housing communities are modeled on the hospitality industry and away from the old medical model people remember.

Communicating as a Family

If the first or second attempts at conversations with family don't product smiles, willingness or gratitude, be patient. Suggest an outing to simply "explore future options" or "see what others find so attractive". Explain that you haven't reached any conclusions and that you too would like to understand what retirement communities are all about. Look at websites together and gather information.

The move to a retirement community is more than just a move. It represents the next step closer towards changes in live that most of us don't want to spend too much time thinking about. Ideally, we could all talk about these issues with emotional distance; with the dispassionate logic needed to reach logical conclusions. But we're human beings with our fears and concerns. We're attached to our homes, our neighborhoods, our cities, our things and our life. We resist change. But with humor, love and patience brought to these difficult conversations, solutions can be reached.

Read "**A Systematic Method for Making Difficult Decisions**" which provides a 6-point step by step process that helps you and your family keep an emotional distance while assessing the situation, gathering information and coming to difficult decisions.