



# A Plan For Senior Care's Guide To Having The Talk About Needing Care

Speaking to loved ones about the need for assisted living and care can be stressful for all involved. Seniors often resist the topic because leaving their home seems overwhelming and a loss of their independence. When the conversation is planned out well, you can avoid some anxiety and fears everyone may have. A positive and effective family meeting to plan for the care your loved one needs can be accomplished. Below are some tips to help get you started.

## **Set An Agenda For The Meeting**

Plan ahead for what topics will be discussed in order of priority. This will help you stay on track. Your conversation may need to be ongoing to tackle all of your concerns. Breaking your concerns down to a few smaller meetings over time can be less stressful and very effective.

## **Share The Reason For The Meeting**

Let your loved one know what you are meeting about to help reduce anxiety or being caught off guard at the meeting. Express that you want to be educated and prepared ahead of time about his/her wishes and what options are available. Having a plan in place and your research done allows you to make the best decisions when the time comes, or a crisis arises. Share with your loved one any concerns you have now and for the future. Plan the meeting when your loved one has eaten, is feeling well and is rested.



## **Before Meeting With Your Loved One**

Decide ahead of time who should be at the meeting and what each person's role will be. Have a meeting before without your loved one to discuss specific concerns each person is seeing.

If needed have your loved one's physical and mental health assessed before your meeting. Learn about the progression of your loved one's health conditions and what care will be needed.

Consider touring some communities ahead of time. This will allow you to be educated on your options. You will be able to see what care can be provided and the costs to expect.

Become united and in agreement before you meet with your loved one. Decide what each person's role for the meeting with your loved one, their job for the care plan and future caregiving. Always work out disagreements without your loved one present.

## **The Meeting**

Try to be calm, positive and loving when you share your concerns to your loved one. Allow one person to speak at a time. This will help your loved one feel that you are not all ganging up on him/her.

Let your parent know that you are aware this is a hard topic to discuss, and you want to honor his/her wishes. Share that you need to talk about what his/her wishes are so you can plan for the future. Express that nothing has to be decided at the meeting today and things can be changed. Encourage your loved one to interject and ask questions at any time.

Have drinks and snacks available. Take breaks when needed. Have someone take notes.

## **Keep In Mind**

Be mindful of your choice of words, tone of voice, and body language. Speak calmly and softly. You want to stay loving and positive at all times. If the meeting turns non-positive, arguments are starting, or your loved one becomes too upset, stop the meeting and try again later. Try not to have your loved one feel that you are in control, and he/she will not be heard.

Highlight the benefits of assisted living or having care. Use positive words when sharing about the options you have and when describing the communities. Safety and socialization are important to discuss. Also, discuss relieving him/her of household maintenance, chores, and cooking. Talk about being in an environment to help him/her thrive and be more independent. Discuss how change and a new chapter in life can be exciting and something to look forward to.

Have your loved one share his/her concerns and feelings. Acknowledge and respect all comments and feelings. There will be questions and objections now and later. Make your loved one feel comfortable to bring the topic up at any time.

## **Engage The Assistance Of Professionals**

When making life plans, seniors often feel comfortable speaking to individuals who are non-family members or are professionals. Family meetings can include your loved one's friend, doctor, clergy or caregiver. These trusted people can help with resistance from your loved one. A third-party, unbiased opinion is often valued by a senior. Speak to those whom you want to include ahead of time, so they understand your concerns and will be a positive influence at the meeting.

Encourage your loved one to share about his/her finances so you can accurately plan for the cost of care. It is helpful to meet with your loved one's attorney and financial advisor. By doing this, you will be able to see if your loved one has his/her finances and legal work in order. The professional advice and relationship will be beneficial to your plan.

## **Moving Forward With Your Plan**

It is important to keep your plan moving forward. Set some goals and a timeline for your care plan to be carried out. Keep an open dialogue with asking your loved one how he/she feels about the plan and address any concerns. Make changes to the plan as needed.

Try to engage your loved one to become part of the search for assisted living. Ask if he/she is willing to have lunch at a community or attend an event. Let your loved one know that there is no commitment expected when touring or visiting the communities. Share brochures and websites, so he/she has a visual of what you are speaking about. When out on drives or errands point out where the communities are.

## **Let Me Know Where I Can Help**

With having a plan in place, your journey begins. I am here to assist your family with advice, care options, and resources as needed. It is never too early to educate yourself on the options available. It is my pleasure to guide you on your journey to finding the best fit for care for your loved one.

## **Create Some Notes & Ideas Of Your Own Here**

***If your loved one is struggling at home to care for her/himself and you would like to explore senior care and housing options, please give us a call today. We would be happy to create a personalized care plan for your loved one.***