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Starting the Conversation

A GUIDE FOR TALKING WITH AGING PARENTS ABOUT SAFETY, SUPPORT & FUTURE PLANNING

Talking about aging, safety, and future planning can feel overwhelming. Many families worry about saying the wrong thing or causing conflict.



The goal is not to force decisions.
The goal is to start planning before a crisis happens.



Approach the Conversation as a Partner, Not a Parent

Your loved one is still an adult with their own preferences and right to make decisions. Instead of taking over, position yourself as being on the same team.

Helpful ways to say it:

- ♥ "We don't need to make decisions right now. I just want us to have a plan."
- ♥ "I want to understand what's important to you."
- ♥ "Can we explore options together?"
- ♥ "I want to make sure your wishes are honored."
- ♥ "I want to be prepared if something changes."



Helpful Conversation Tips



Start conversations early



Choose a calm, private moment



Ask questions instead of giving directives



Listen more than you speak



Avoid arguing or trying to "win"



Keep loved ones involved in decisions



Respect independence and personal choices



Remember



These conversations often happen over time — not all at once.



Sometimes the goal is simply to plant the seed and keep the conversation open.



Planning ahead is a process, not a one-time decision.



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Helpful Conversation Starters



Instead of:
"You can't live
alone anymore."



Try asking:
"How have things been
feeling at home lately?"



Instead of:
"You need help."



Try asking:
"What's becoming
harder than it used
to be?"



Instead of:
"You shouldn't
be driving."



Try asking:
"How are you feeling
when driving lately?"



Instead of:
"We have to make
a decision now."



Try asking:
"Can we start talking
about possible plans
for the future?"



Instead of:
"You have to
move."



Try asking:
"Would it help to explore
different options together,
just so we understand
what's available?"



Signs It May Be Time for Additional Support



Recent falls or mobility concerns



Missed medications or appointments



Difficulty managing meals or housekeeping



Memory or confusion concerns



Increased isolation or loneliness



Difficulty managing finances



Concerns about driving safety



Difficulty managing finances or bills



Changes in hygiene or appearance



Caregiver burnout or stress



Need Additional Guidance?



Free In-Home Safety Visits
Personalized recommendations
for a safer home.



Senior Living Guidance
Information on independent living,
assisted living, and memory care options.



Local Resource Connections
Connect to trusted community
resources and services.



Support for Seniors & Families
Compassionate guidance every
step of the way.



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