



Is It Time? The Aging Parent Safety & Care Guide

What to Do When They Say "*I'm Fine*"

TrueGuideSeniorAdvisors.com



The Aging Parent Safety & Care Guide

What to Do When They Say "I'm Fine"

A Step-by-step guide to evaluating safety, recognizing red flags, and having the hard conversations without damaging your relationship.



Every time you ask how they're doing, the answer is always the same: "I'm fine, don't worry about me." But your gut tells you otherwise. You notice the mail piling up, the subtle dent on the car bumper, or the expired milk in the fridge.

This guide was created to help families recognize important changes, understand available options, and navigate aging parent decisions with clarity and confidence.

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Contents

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Helping Central Ohio families navigate senior living, aging-in-place
decisions, and care transitions with clarity and confidence.

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The Conversation Guide

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The *"I'm Fine"* Reality Check

The Red Flag Audit

Older adults often reassure family members that everything is fine, even when daily tasks are becoming more difficult. Use this checklist during your next visit to help you recognize changes that may need attention.

Physical & Medical Red Flags

- Unexplained Weight Loss: Look for a shrinking frame or loose clothes (indicates poor nutrition or forgetting to eat).
- Changes in Mobility: Unsteadiness, holding onto walls/furniture while walking, or unexplained bruises (signs of recent hidden falls).
- Medication Mistakes: Pill organizers that are full when they should be empty, or expired bottles piling up.
- Poor Hygiene: Body odor, wearing the same clothes for days, unkempt hair, or neglected dental care.

Mental & Emotional Red Flags

- Missed Appointments: Forgetting doctor visits, social events, or mixing up dates and times frequently.
- Extreme Mood Shifts: Uncharacteristic irritability, paranoia, withdrawal from hobbies, or signs of deep depression.
- Repetitive Stories: Asking the same question or telling the same story multiple times within a short conversation.
- Scam Vulnerability: A sudden influx of junk mail, sweepstakes entries, or strange telemarketer calls.

Environmental Red Flags

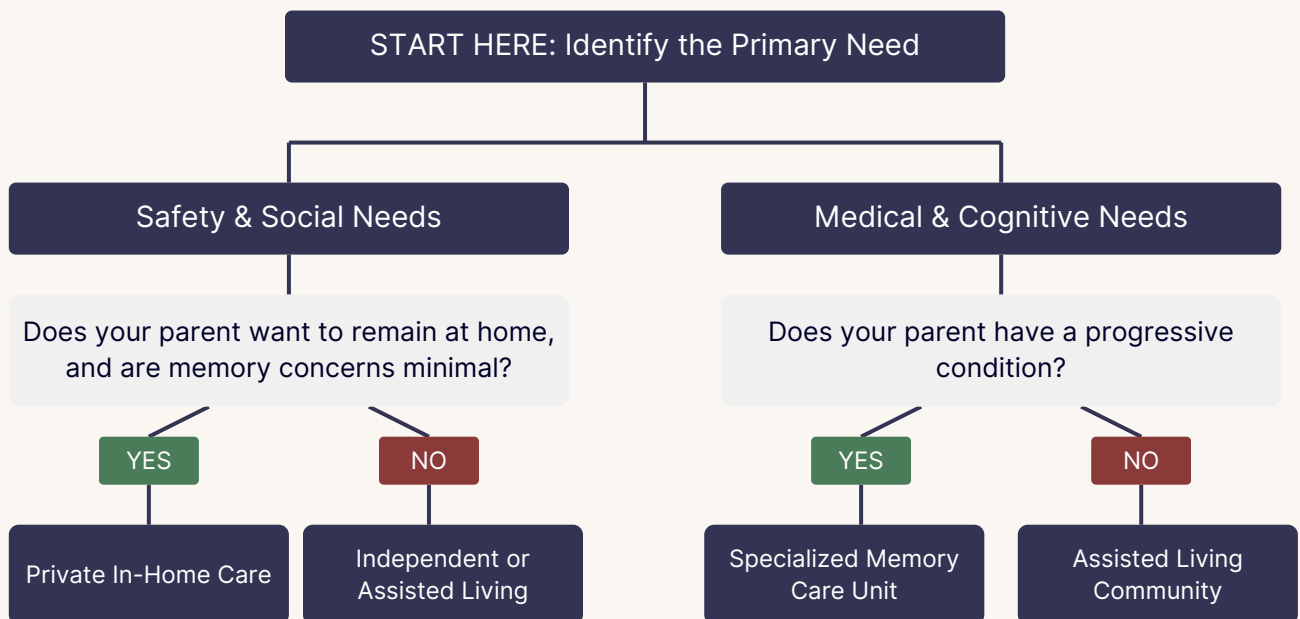
- Household Neglect: Scorched pans (forgotten on the stove), piles of unpaid bills, or a completely empty or moldy fridge.
- Vehicle Damage: Fresh, unexplained dents or scrapes on their car, or reports of getting lost while driving familiar routes.
- Clutter Accumulation: Trash not taken out, or stacks of unread mail.



The Care Crossroads

Choosing Your Path

Once you identify the key concerns, there are care options that fit as a solution. Here is how to determine the right level of support.



A

Additional Support at Home

Best for: Seniors who are generally independent but need help with daily tasks like meal prep, light housekeeping, bathing, or transportation.

What it looks like: Hiring a private care agency for 4 to 24 hours a day to keep them safe in their familiar environment.

Best for: Seniors who are becoming isolated, neglecting home maintenance, struggling with stairs, or experiencing frequent falls.

What it looks like: A vibrant apartment-style community offering 24/7 staff, shared dining, social activities, and structured care tiers.

B

Transitioning to Assisted Living

Best for: Seniors diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or other forms of dementia who experience wandering, increasing confusion, safety concerns, or require a secure environment.

What it looks like: Highly structured, secure communities with staff trained specifically in cognitive behavioral support.

C

Securing Memory Care

The Conversation Guide

Talking with a parent about safety or additional support isn't easy. These simple approaches can help you start the conversation with empathy, respect, and less resistance.

Focus on Independence, Not Limitations

Many older adults worry that accepting help means giving up their independence. In reality, the opposite is often true. The goal is to put the right support in place early enough to help your loved one stay safe, maintain their independence, and avoid a crisis that could limit future choices.

Instead of:

"You need help."

Try:

"I'm not trying to take away your independence. I'm trying to help you keep it."

Instead of:

"You can't do this anymore."

Try:

"What would make daily life a little easier or safer right now?"

Instead of:

"It's time to move."

Try:

"Let's talk about what might help you stay safe and independent for as long as possible."



Navigating Senior Care Options With Confidence

Why Navigating the Senior Care Industry Alone is Overwhelming

Searching for senior care can quickly become overwhelming. Families are often faced with dozens of options, conflicting information, and pressure to make important decisions quickly.

As an Independent Senior Care Advocate, my job is to bring clarity to the chaos:

- **Objective Guidance:** I help you filter out the marketing noise so you can see the real options available in your local area.
- **Red Flag Detection:** I help you know exactly what questions to ask and what to look for during tours, so you don't get distracted by fancy lobbies.
- **Family Alignment:** I help families navigate difficult decisions, build consensus, and move forward together.
- **Proactive Protection:** I ensure your family is prepared for future care needs, preventing costly mistakes made during a medical emergency.



The *"I'm Fine"* Reality Checklist

A Practical Guide to Recognizing Changes That Matter

When a parent says, "I'm fine," it is often because maintaining independence is important to them. Use this checklist during your next visit to help identify changes that may deserve a closer look. Check every box that applies.

Physical &
Medical Safety



- ☐ Frequent falls or difficulty balancing?
- ☐ Unexplained bruises or changes in the way they walk?
- ☐ Missing dosages or confusing pill schedules?
- ☐ Untreated pain or visible signs of discomfort?

Cognitive &
Emotional
Well-being



- ☐ Significant memory lapses or confusion?
- ☐ Increased isolation or withdrawal from hobbies?
- ☐ Frequent repetition or inability to follow conversation?
- ☐ Increased agitation, irritability, or mood swings?

Home
Safety



- ☐ Unusual clutter, mail buildup, or unsafe walkways?
- ☐ Unclean living space or spoiled food in kitchen?
- ☐ Appliances left on or safety hazards unaddressed?
- ☐ Signs of neglect or inability to manage chores?

Calculate your score on the next page

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Calculate Your Score

Count the total number of checked boxes above to find your family's current care phase:

1 to 3 Checks | Early Awareness Phase

Your parent is managing, but minor gaps are forming. This is the ideal window to introduce minor home safety modifications or light companion care before a crisis happens.

4 to 6 Checks | Time To Explore Options

Clear safety and cognitive risks are present. It is time to look into private in-home care agencies or tour local assisted living communities to protect their daily well-being.

7+ Checks | Significant Support Needed

Multiple concerns may be affecting your parent's safety, health, or daily well-being. This may be a good time to seek professional guidance and explore additional support options to help ensure their needs are being met.

No matter your score, you don't have to navigate this alone. Turn to the next page to see how we can build a safe roadmap together.



Family Action Kit

The worst time to hunt for an insurance card or a legal document is during a medical crisis. Use these blocks to organize your parent's critical details right now, while things are completely calm.



Legal & Financial Essentials

- ☐ Healthcare POA
(Signed & updated)
- ☐ Financial POA
(Designated proxy)
- ☐ Living Will
(End-of-life preferences)
- ☐ Account Inventory
(Banks & bills)



Medical & Health Records

- ☐ Master Med List
(Dosages & pharmacy)
- ☐ Insurance Cards
(Medicare/Private)
- ☐ Primary Doctor
(Name & direct phone)
- ☐ Known Allergies
(Clear medical log)



Emergency Information

- ☐ Trusted Neighbor
(Has a house key)
- ☐ Wellness Check
(Local non-Emergency)
- ☐ Portal Logins
(Health & utility)
- ☐ Home Access Details
(Hidden key or garage code)



I'm Angie Haynes, founder of TrueGuide Senior Advisors. As a Certified Senior Advisor, I know the industry side of senior care inside and out. But more importantly, I understand how emotional and overwhelming it can be when you're worried about a parent and aren't sure what to do next.

I built this guide to provide the independent, honest guidance families need to navigate these transitions with total confidence and peace of mind. You don't have to figure this out alone.

- CSA® -Certified Senior Advisor
- CDP® & DSS™ -Certified Dementia Practitioner & Dementia Safety Specialist
- SHSS™ -Senior Home Safety Specialist

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Take Your Next Steps With Confidence

Whether you're noticing a few small changes or facing more immediate concerns, having a plan can bring clarity and peace of mind.

At TrueGuide Senior Advisors, we help families understand their options, evaluate care needs, and make informed decisions at their own pace. If you'd like personalized guidance, we're here to help.

Schedule Your Family Strategy Call 614-383-9193

Start Your Free Aging Parent Roadmap



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