

How to Convince Your Parent it's Time to Move

Conventional wisdom says that most of our elders want to stay in our own homes for as long as we can, but it's not always in their best interest to do so. How do we talk with them about the realities and dangers of staying at home once their health and/or functional abilities decline? How do we convince them that a move to assisted living could benefit their mental and physical health?



Aging In Place vs. Assisted Living

Aging in place is an option for seniors who make proper home modifications, have a robust support system, and are realistic about their health and functional abilities. However, many older adults put themselves at risk by failing to plan for and acknowledge their growing needs. Even those who have done their best to prepare for their golden years may find that **their forever home is no longer safe** or suitable. What's more, their family caregivers are often run ragged trying to ensure their safety and well-being while juggling their own lives.

Part of the problem with convincing elders—and sometimes other family members for that matter—to give senior living a chance is that most have never been inside a modern assisted living facility. They still envision the “old folks’ rest homes” from decades ago, and the move from a family home is considered one more step away from independence and closer to death. This image and mindset are widespread but **misleading and detrimental** to seniors in need of support.



Contrast this life with living in an assisted living community like an Arcadia Community. In this situation, seniors can thrive. They don't have the responsibility of maintaining a home, so they are relieved of the pressure to hire help, tackle household projects themselves or let the house deteriorate. Assisted living is just that—assisted. Seniors **maintain more of their independence**, thanks to the added benefit of 24/7 access to trained staff in case they need medical help or other assistance. Nutritious meals and snacks are available in both community dining settings

and in residents' rooms. Perhaps most importantly, seniors have the opportunity to make friends with their new neighbors and an abundance of engaging activities at their fingertips.

But how do you go about convincing Mom and Dad that it's time think about moving to assisted living? Use the following tips to help a loved one recognize that the supportive services and amenities available in assisted living communities may be exactly what they need to stay safe, healthy and happy.

9 Tips for Getting a Parent to Move to Assisted Living

1. **Plant the seed.** Don't approach your loved one(s) as though you've already made the decision for them. It's best to start talking to parents about assisted living well before the need arises. If you haven't laid the groundwork for this possibility, simply mention that there are options out there that could make life easier, safer and more enjoyable for them.
2. **Do your research.** Research assisted living communities nearby and offer to take them on some tours. If they aren't willing, take the tour yourself so you can share your impressions.
3. **Wait for a "teachable moment"** to present itself. Did Mom fall but manage to avoid getting badly hurt? Say something like, "Wow, that was a close call, and I'm sure it was a very scary experience for you." Use this unfortunate event as an opportunity to give your loved one a gentle reality check.
4. **Ask for referrals.** Ask around to see if anyone you know has a loved one who is already thriving at An Arcadia Community. It's even better if one of your parent's friends has already moved here. Your parent would feel much better if there were a familiar face there.
5. **Take a tour.** Take your parent to enjoy a meal or participate in an activity to show off the social aspects of the community. Keep it light and don't force the issue while you're there. Demonstrate the same level of excitement you would if you were helping your parent move into a new apartment, because that's exactly what you are doing.
6. **Highlight the benefits.** Stress the benefits and peace of mind that increased assistance with activities of daily living (ADLs) and safety measures will offer both of you, such as that assisted living allows seniors to forgo daily chores, there's no yard work, and meals are available in the dining room. There's plenty of freedom to be alone, but company is just outside their door.
7. **Let it all sink in.** Give your loved one time to reflect on their current situation, how their health may change in the coming years, and the information they've received from you and the tours of prospective communities. This is a very serious decision that requires careful thought.
8. **Arrange a family meeting.** Don't make it seem like an intervention or a done deal that they have no say in. Allow everyone involved to discuss their concerns and anxieties. Try enlisting a family friend, doctor or spiritual leader to chat with your parent(s) and state the case for this move.
9. **Be patient.** Unless you consider your loved one's need for placement to be an emergency, don't push. Try waiting for an opportunity to offer assisted living as a solution to a problem your parent brings to you. For example, when Dad is bored and complaining about how he never sees his friends anymore. Many caregivers must wait for a fall, an accident or a medical setback to occur before their elders are willing to make the decision themselves.

The process of moving an elderly parent to Assisted Living can be very difficult for some older adults. It will take some time for your parent to settle into their new home, but they will probably enjoy the change once this transition period has passed.