

# On the Road to Retirement



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## Today's Retirement

- Is an ambiguous transition
  - Few social guidelines
  - Many different “types” of retirement
- Lasts longer than ever before
  - Historically, it lasted about seven years
  - Today, you'll be doing 20 to life

## Today's Retirement

- Presents many complex social, emotional, and financial issues
  - Marriage and other familial and social relationships
  - Caregiving responsibilities and living arrangements
  - Role loss/gain
  - Decreased abilities and loss of independence
  - Grief
  - Time management
  - Re-work
  - “Fixed” income

## Retirement Impacts Marriage

- Marital quality influences retirement decisions for both genders
- Lack of consensus on retirement expectations will cause problems
- Wives complain of husbands invading their “domain” and requiring attention
- The relaxing of traditional gender roles is common and can improve marital quality
- Reduced work-related tensions and shared leisure time can improve marital quality

## Retirement is a Process

- People frequently underestimate the significance of this transition
- Myth of the perpetual “honeymoon”
  - At least 1/3 of retirees experience difficulty making the transition to retirement
- Planning makes a difference

## Prepare for Social Changes

- With whom will you keep in touch?
- From whom do you receive support?
- To whom do you provide support?
- How do you plan to meet new friends?
- How will you keep in touch with old friends and former work colleagues?
- Do you plan to be involved in your community?
- How do you plan to fill your time after the “honeymoon” phase?

## Make an Activity Inventory

- List those activities you expect to do in retirement and categorize them:
  - Type “E” = Energizing
  - Type “A” = Acceptable
  - Type “O” = Obligatory
- Do you intend to “strike a balance?”
- What strategies will you use to maintain this balance?

## Make an “AID” Inventory

- Make a list of all the people you will interact with in retirement
- Categorize those people into:
  - Type “A” = Acquaintances
  - Type “I” = Intimates
  - Type “D” = Drainers
- Who do you want to spend time with in retirement?



## Prepare for Family Change

- How will you realign your marital relationship?
- How will you renegotiate the division of household chores?
- What activities will you do jointly and individually?
- How will you set limits and boundaries around your new-found “free” time?
- What caregiving tasks will you have to assume?
- Have you planned for you own end-of-life?
- Are you meeting your own needs as well as those of others?

## Prepare Psychologically

- What is your attitude towards retirement?
  - Is it an ending, a beginning, or both?
- How do you define yourself now?
  - Will retirement change this definition?
- How will you structure your time?
  - How will you balance your need for freedom and routine?
- How will you challenge yourself?
  - In what ways will you continue to learn?
- Where would you like to be in five, 10, and 20 years?

## Suggested Resources

- *I'll Retire Tomorrow* by Daniel Seagren (1997)
- *How to Retire Happy* by Stan Hinden (2000)
- *The Retirement Sourcebook* by Helen Smith & Shuford Smith (1999)
- *For Better or Worse: But Not For Lunch* by Sara Yogev (2002)
- OSU Extension <http://extension.osu.edu/>
- AARP <http://www.aarp.com>