

THE PROS AND CONS OF STAYING HOME

By Donna Deos

When you are having important conversations with your loved ones the topic of moving or staying home will eventually come up. When this does come up many people have strong feelings about it. The mass media has done a great job in the past decade of vilifying retirement communities and making people feel like failures if they decide to leave their home. This, in my view, is very sad. Retirement communities have so much to offer it's not right for them to be positioned as a bad place. Likewise, staying in your home has some nice plusses, but it has some really big minuses too (most all of which are addressed and satiated when you move to a community).

I have also done quite a bit of research into In-Home Care companies just so I can be fair to all concerned when helping them with their own decisions. For a full detailed batch of information on this go to my U-Tube page and view the video interview I have there with Laurel Trahan, the owner of *Age at Home*, an in-home care company here in New Hampshire. She expertly handled all of my questions. I think you will really enjoy her information on in-home care. She's a wonderful lady.

SO, WHAT ARE SOME OF THE PROS FOR STAYING IN YOUR OWN HOME?

Well first, it's the path of least resistance. You don't have to move, you don't have to downsize, you don't have to feel inadequate or not independent, and you don't have to start over in a new place making new friends. Second, there are many services available to enable you to stay at home as your needs change. Things like, transportation, meal delivery service, in home care agencies, medication delivery services, etc. It's a booming industry for sure. Third, homes can be enhanced physically to make staying put easier as well. You can have ramps added, move your bedroom to what used to be your dining room so you can eliminate stairs. Also, you can install step in showers or other new-fangled bathing systems, and you can get a safety alert system. The options are almost limitless for the enhancements you can make to your house.



WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CONS?

Your children will worry more because there are less safety nets available and less eyes on you should something go wrong. When you become less mobile and/or give up driving you will become more socially isolated. If your vision fails the safety risks go up. When you need medical care down the road you have fewer options as you will be subjected to going wherever there is an opening available at that time versus where you may prefer to go because they have better care.

In home care tends to be non-medical because of licensure. They can help you with many wonderful things, but they are not allowed to be nurses and manage your medications for you. That requires the Visiting Nurses Association, which is a very good resource, but still, more different people in and out of your home and the costs coincide with the added expertise.

Your food choices become more limited as well as shopping and cooking. If you aren't able to easily get out your food options are more limited. I'm not saying this to depress you, it's simply factual. People who live in their own homes as senior citizens have more nutritional challenges and issues than those in communities where healthier options are more readily and easily available. People in their own homes also have a higher risk of accidents than those living in communities where household maintenance and yard work is provided by others. Which, naturally brings me to mentioning the headaches of home ownership and managing all of the people who do yard work, snow removal, repairs, etc. Plus, you have your property taxes.

As needs increase you also get to manage (or your advocate or

adult child gets to manage) your schedule of who is coming to help with what, when and what to do if/when someone calls out and cannot fulfil the service they were supposed to be providing for that day and time. The final downside I will list is that all those changes you make to your home for you to be able to stay there will affect the resale options for it. You will have shrunk your market to other seniors who don't want to leave their home either. Young families don't want all of those senior citizen changes to undo before moving in. They want to have something up to date and turnkey for ease of move in. Don't believe me? Watch HGTV. Please know that if you decide to stay put. That's okay. This is your life. It's your choice. It should be what you want it to be. All I ask is that you examine the WHY part of the decisions you make. Look at why you want to move or stay. Really explore it and make sure you are making the best decision for you. If there is anything I can do to help you figure this out, please reach out to me. I'm happy to help you find the right solution for you. I'm also happy to help you find the best way to communicate that to your well-meaning loved ones who may be of a different opinion.

Until we talk again, take good care!

When a man broke into a home in Bangor, Mich., he found himself staring down the barrel of a shotgun held by a female resident. The woman had been entertaining friends when they heard suspicious noises outside.

While the guests went outside to investigate, the woman grabbed her shotgun. After the stranger broke in, she held him at gunpoint until the police arrived. (WWMT.com, Kalamazoo, Mich., 3/7/16)

One employee responded to screams of "active shooter" at his workplace by running out to his car, retrieving his gun, tracking down the shooter and holding him at gunpoint until the authorities arrived. The incident occurred at a Jacksonville, Fla., landscaping company, when a disgruntled employee shot and killed his supervisor. Someone who heard the shots called 911, but it was the armed citizen's quick action that prevented the malcontent from fleeing the scene. The suspect was later arrested and charged with one count of murder. (CBS47 and FO30, Jacksonville, Fla., 3/10/16)

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