

ON AGING - WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE "READY?"

By Donna Deos

In January we talked about what a Continuing Care Retirement Community or "CCRC" is and I told you this month we would cover what it means to be "ready".

When I worked in the CCRC I continuously heard, "what you have to offer here is absolutely wonderful, but I'm not *ready* yet." This was followed by "when I am *ready*, I will certainly consider coming here!"

It was a constant song from most all who entered and at first I thought it was hokey... just an excuse to not do it. They were politely trying to tell me "I'm not doing this." However, after watching people and finding some who were truly ready to move in right away, my opinion/perspective changed. People really did have to be ready to make the move. So, I was intrigued by this and decided to pay closer attention to what it was that made them ready.

I also learned that some will never be ready and that is okay. In the end, it's really their decision. I was just there to be the tour guide and lay out the pertinent information for them so they could make an educated decision on their own. That's really what we all want, right? To be provided the pertinent information to make our own informed decisions rather than be "sold" or "coerced" into something.

Okay, so what does it mean to be ready? It means that you have come to that place where you have looked at the options, sat with them, observed your



current situation, looked at the decisions other people have made and how that affected them and how it affected their loved ones. You have done the inner and outer work to get ready.

The inner work is looking at your life and what you want from it. What you truly want, not what others impose on you as what they feel you should want. It requires you to take an inventory and to weigh things out. To look at options, look at yourself and how you wish to spend your time here. To look at what you want your legacy to be to those you leave behind when your time here is done. It means figuring out what really makes up happiness for you and then being willing and able to say yes, I want that and I am going to get it. In other words, being ready takes courage and hard work.

The outer work is the cleaning out of the home, the downsizing, the financial planning and physical stuff. It's the things that obviously need to be done to make any move. This is where many people quit. They find it to be just too much to even think about so they decide staying put is the lesser of the evils. It's easier to just do nothing. After all, when you re-

view that paragraph of things to do, there's quite a bit there. One of my former residents reminded us "Not to decide, is to decide." Sit with that one for a minute please...

Okay, so, speaking of downsizing, I've also heard people say, "I'll just leave all of that for my kids to take care of." Nice! Kids who have been left holding the bag on downsizing are among the first people to say, "I've been there and had to deal with all of that. I will never leave my own kids in that position."

The people who have had parents who failed to make a move and then left them to handle everything, or the flip side, the ones who did all of the work and made the move, are the two main categories of people who do the inner work on themselves and make the move quickly and easily. People who don't have either of those examples to base their decision off of tend to be the "I'll just stay put people," in my experience.

Now remember, there is nothing wrong with staying put. Some people have done the inner work and the outer work and have still decided to stay put. There is no wrong answer here: to each, their own.

If staying put after you have weighed the options and hoed out the extraneous stuff you have accumulated during your lifetime is your decision, then good for you. That can work out well too. At least you did the work and reached that informed decision on your own.

I've seen many a success story there as well. We all want to just go to sleep some night and not wake up. Some of us are lucky enough to get our wish when the time comes. Some of us are not. We never know which we will be.

Going back to being "ready", let's wrap this up with thinking back to other times when we were just not ready yet. It could have been, not ready to give a speech because our confidence in ourselves was not up to it yet; or how about, not being ready to go to college, or not ready to get married, not ready to have children and so on.

There are many times in life where you simply are just not ready yet. In each of these situations you need to do more of the inner and outer work to get ready for them. Then, one day, out of the blue, a switch flips and all of a sudden you have arrived and are ready for whatever the challenge is/was. Hurray!

Here's to 2016 bringing you many positive flipped switches that move you forward into a happier and easier life. May you find much love, happiness and peace along the way. Good luck with the inner and outer work.

If you need any help with that, you know where to find me!

All my best, Donna



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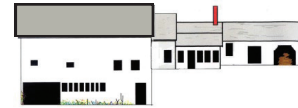
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