

Compromise

By Donna Deos

Compromise. Such a tough word. When we want someone else to do it, it sounds nice. When they want us to do it, it brings on dread. Why is this?

It's because it implies that you are not getting what you want. You are giving up something you prefer so that someone else can have part of what they prefer as well.

Now, how does this apply to us and our aging loved ones? Well, in that case I think it's something we need to consider more. You see, usually when we are wanting them to do what we think they should do we never even consider their side and compromise. We usually just tell them they "ought to do this" or "they need to do that." We try to force them into doing what makes sense to us instead of stopping to think what they really want and need.

We don't even consider compromise, instead we argue and try to bully them into doing what works out best for us. How do I know this? I worked in the senior living industry for a decade. I watched people come and check out our community. I saw the interactions with family. The people who came in of their own accord to check things out were the happiest.

The ones who came in with their well-meaning adult children, yet had no interest what-so-ever in the lifestyle or even in making any type of change, were miserable and the arguing ensued.

You see, we like to do what we think is best. We all do. We have preconceived ideas – formed by the life we have lead up to that point – that formulate what we prefer to see happen. If we come up with something new on our



own we are much more likely to consider it. If someone uses words that try to pressure, persuade or even push us into something we will resist.

Nobody likes to be told what they should do. My mom had a friend who liked to try and call a spade a spade. She was very funny about it too. It was amusing, unless, what she said offended you or you disagreed with it. This is when I learned the difference between "saying it how it is" and "saying it how you see it". My mom would always say, "Pat just says it how it is." After one time when I didn't agree with Pat I said, "No, Mom. Pat says it how she sees it."

So, what's the lesson here? Well, if we really want to get what we want in life we need to take a step back and look at the bigger picture. What really is the biggest goal for us? Is it that we want our loved ones to be happy, safe and well cared for? I'd say that, in my experience, 90%+ of the time that is the case.

So, when you think your parents are no longer safe in their home and should look at a different situation; or when you think they should save a ton of money and

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stay right where they are (even if it isn't safe or providing the social outlets they may prefer); or when you think something else that they don't seem to want to go along with, it's time to go back to the bigger issues and find a way to compromise with them.

My mom wanted to stay home. I wanted her to be where she could be happy with lots of people to do things with where she didn't have to drive, she would be safe and still active. She wanted to stay home. My compromise was trying to find ways where I knew she was happy, safe and well cared for at home while finding ways to get her everywhere she needed to be without her needing to do the driving (because that was no longer safe).

It created far more work for me to make sure her meals were there and easy for her, to have her medications all set up, to arrange and mostly provide all of the transportation she needed and so on. It nearly killed me to pull that all off while working full time and maintaining two households, but we did accomplish what she wanted.

In the end, I'm glad I gave in and

she was able to have what she wanted. Will I ever put my kids in that position? Absolutely no way! We live and we learn. We give and we take. We figure out what works and what doesn't and we do the best we can from there.

If you remember nothing else from this missive, please remember that we need to think about what we really want for our loved ones on the highest level and then do everything we can to help them get that.

If you want someone to bounce ideas off of or talk strategy with, I am always here for you.

All my best,

Donna

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

No matter what you've done for yourself or for humanity, if you can't look back on having given love and attention to your own family, **what have you really accomplished?**

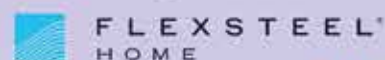
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