



A Sense of Place—and Purpose

What You Need to Know About Making the Move to Senior Living

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We can help!





A sense of purpose

Everyone, including your parents, needs purpose

The remark we often hear from our residents and the children who moved them is, “I wish I’d done this sooner!”

What’s your passion? Your purpose? You probably have more than one answer to that question: a job, a vocation, raising a family, a personal or professional goal, a favorite hobby. It’s no different for your aging parent. They need a sense of purpose as well. We all do.

At one time, one of your parent’s purposes was to raise a family. Another may have been to earn a living. Now that they’re retired and their children grown, however, many older adults find themselves missing some of what made them get up every morning. They cling to what’s left of all that—the home where they’ve lived. It’s not the same as it was, but at least it’s familiar.

Well now, roles have reversed and one of your purposes is looking after your parent’s wellbeing. You’re considering moving them into a senior living community. It’s really possible you may find this to be the best move you’ve ever made.

Why? Moving to senior living, where your parent becomes part of a community again, brings purpose back. They quickly establish their own daily routine, but even more, as they bring their own interests and energy, they become integral to their new community. They help build it. They influence the activities offered (they may even offer activities!), they help shape the dining menu, they get to lead clubs and other groups if they wish. Your loved one makes lots of new friends and is surrounded by folks they can relate to. They get to share their love and are loved.

Late as it comes in your parent’s life journey, a senior living community isn’t the end of the road. It’s a new road, freshly laid, leading in new and meaningful directions. Your loved one can find a renewed sense of purpose at Five Star Senior Living. A sense of belonging. We’ve written this guide to help you pave the way.

You're not alone

What your parent really wants—and how to help them get it

If you're reading this, chances are that like many adult children of aging parents, you've had The Talk: broaching the subject of a move to a senior living community for your mother or father or other family member.

Or maybe you're ready to have that talk but are dreading it because your loved one is adamant about staying put. Or you're worried that if they do move, will they join in and make friends? Or will they simply stay in their apartment because in their older years they've become set in their ways?

It's hard. You've been the child to your parent your whole life, and now you're the parent to your parent. It's emotionally confusing and draining, and it's not what you ever wanted or imagined.

Here's what you need to know: You are not alone. Many children of aging parents experience these same issues. That's because many older adults want to stay independent, keep their social life and, perhaps most important, have a sense of purpose. It's natural to think moving to a new community means giving all that up. What appears to be stubbornness may simply be social anxiety in disguise.

We know how you feel. We're here to support you in this journey as you determine what's truly best for your parent. That's why we partner with families to help their loved ones make a smooth transition—one in which they maximize their independence, have a great social life, and find a renewed sense of purpose. Our guide offers words of wisdom that you can use to help your parent settle into a great new life—one that is safe and happy—at Five Star Senior Living.



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Mrs. G: A true story

From digging in heels to rolling the bocce ball



“When I talk to my mom she assures me she’s doing okay, but I see that she’s actually thriving.”

- Mrs. G’s daughter

Mrs. G’s home was the gathering place for four generations, right down to her great-grandkids.

But then Mrs. G suffered a bad fall and went into the hospital. She came home but had another fall and another hospitalization. Then another. And another.

Mrs. G’s daughter told her she could no longer look after her and that worrying about her mother having another fall was ruining her own health. She asked Mrs. G to consider moving to a senior living community.

At first Mrs. G would have none of it. She insisted she wasn’t going anywhere. However, when she and her daughter visited a Five Star Senior Living Community, they saw a lively neighborhood with friendly residents out and about. Along their tour they met Five Star team members and were impressed with how long they’d been working there.

Mrs. G still was hesitant to make the change, but ultimately agreed to move into that community. Her daughter, worried that her mother wouldn’t venture out, called her every day. The program director checked in on Mrs. G daily to coax her

into joining up with other residents. Round-the-clock care and on-site physical therapy provided added assurance that Mrs. G could enjoy activities with a greatly reduced risk of falling again.

Before long, Mrs. G was sitting with her new friends in the dining room and joining others for games and get-togethers. The program director sent photos of her adventures to Mrs. G’s daughter, who commented, “When I talk to my mom she assures me she’s doing okay, but I see that she’s actually thriving.”

One day, Mrs. G’s daughter called the concierge desk, concerned that her mother hadn’t called her in two days.

“Have you seen my mother?” she asked the concierge.

“I can see her right now!” he laughed. “She’s across the lobby here, winning at bocce ball.”

Now Mrs. G talks to visitors who have their doubts about moving to a senior living community, as she once did. “I can’t believe what I put my daughter through,” she tells them. No more falls for her, she adds—not since she fell for Five Star.

A new home—with hugs

Some expert advice for a stress-free transition

There are many ways Five Star can partner with you to help your loved one acclimate to their new home. Here are some of our community advisors' favorite tips.

- 1. Take the focus off first-day nerves.** Ask to look at the schedule for your parent's community. Is there a movie night coming up? What about groups or field trips to join? Take the focus off the actual moving day by looking ahead at what your parent can look forward to once they're settled in.
- 2. Check out all the clubs your parent can join.** Book clubs, bridge, quilting, music ensembles ... Five Star communities are bursting with social opportunities. Your parent's special interests may even find new ground. Becoming a mover and shaker such as a club president or secretary can instill a renewed sense of purpose.
- 3. Talk about the "little things" in advance, like décor and activity planning.** Especially if your parent is making these decisions, choosing which photo goes on the nightstand or which clubs to join can help them feel more in control and also create anticipation.
- 4. Bring treasured items from the old place to the new.** Heirlooms, family photos, collectibles and other items with sentimental value can offer comfort and make your loved one's new surroundings feel familiar.
- 5. Schedule your move-in close to mealtime.** That way your loved one goes right from spending time with you to spending time with new friends in the dining room rather than be left alone on that first day. (Be sure to let community team members know of any special dietary needs in advance.)

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6. Meet your parent's move-in "buddy." A move-in buddy is a resident who will greet you on the first day and encourage your parent to get hold of them with any questions about getting settled. (They were once a "newbie," too, so they know what it's like!)

7. Meet your Resident Ambassadors. Resident Ambassadors are volunteers who can check in on your parent, help them learn the ropes and ease them into social life. (If you take a tour, you and your parent may be invited to join them for a meal and an activity after.)

8. Plan an overnight. If possible, plan on spending at least one night with your parent in their new home. The transition will likely feel major for both of you, and being able to sit and talk after the move is finished can bring a sense of accomplishment and relief.

9. Arrange visits with friends from the old neighborhood. Your parent doesn't have to leave old friends or groups behind. Arrange a gathering around a birthday or other event to make it special.

10. Check in with your community advisor. Five Star advisors specialize in happy. They can make sure your parent is meeting other residents with similar interests, check in on them regularly, and do whatever it takes to help your parent's transition go smoothly. Consider them your partner in your parent's joy and wellbeing at Five Star.



Ready to make a smooth transition

We can help!

Moving to a senior living community is a big decision and it's natural to have a lot of questions. A Five Star Senior Living advisor will be happy to help you weigh your options and decide what is best for your loved one and you. We'll answer all your questions and be a resource for you. We'll also share more about all that we do to help every new resident feel at home right away.

And if you decide Five Star is for you, let's work together to give your parent what they want—a happy, independent lifestyle and the chance to continue doing what they love and exploring even more. The best transitions are those we look forward to. Your loved one will find much to look forward to at Five Star.

To get in touch, visit us at [FiveStarSeniorLiving.com](https://www.fivestarliving.com).

“We couldn't have been more pleased with the caring, efficient staff that helped our aunt make the decision to come to Five Star, and then helped with every detail to make the move as smooth as possible. We feel blessed to have such a wonderful place for her to call home.”

— Five Star resident's family



Learn more about Five Star Senior Living or find a community near you at [fivestarseniorliving.com](https://www.fivestarseniorliving.com).