



Talking About It When A Parent Needs Help

(NAPSA)—If your family is like many, talking about what can happen when someone is old and frail is not something you like to do. With a little thought and preparation, however, any family can start an open and honest dialogue that can lead to a plan for the future that everybody agrees to and understands. Start by asking questions about what your loved ones enjoy doing and how they can keep their treasured independence for as long as possible.

This approach can involve the entire family in a constructive discussion about what the older person needs and wants and set priorities for making specific choices in the future. It's best to have this conversation well before there's an immediate need for assistance or any intervention.

Here are a few conversation starters to consider that can let the discussion unfold naturally and comfortably.

1. Talk about the home. This line of discussion can help identify any immediate needs. Are certain tasks becoming more difficult? Is your loved one finding it difficult to operate or maintain anything in the home? Are senses, balance and stamina where they should be?

2. Talk about appliances and household fixtures. How often do they use them? What are they cooking? This can be a starting point to talk about whether your senior is properly taking care of him- or herself nutritionally. Understanding the challenges our seniors are facing now can help them anticipate their future needs. Even for a younger person, doing the laundry can be an exerting chore. For an older adult living alone, it may become easier to let physically challenging tasks slide when they become more difficult or inconvenient.

3. Talk about the people they know. What is Ted up to?



Talking to your aging loved one about his or her self-care and planning for the future should be an open dialogue about the needs and capacities of all concerned.

How is Marian coming back from her surgery? Socialization is important at every age. Often, a loss of mobility, a lack of energy, or the health of friends and acquaintances can limit a senior's ability to maintain relationships, with a negative effect on his or her physical and emotional well-being. This conversation might also reveal insights into any seasonal or ongoing difficulty an older person is experiencing getting around in the neighborhood.

Expert Advice

Talking to your aging loved one about self-care and planning for the future shouldn't be a one-time major event. It's a process of keeping an open dialogue and honestly discussing the needs and capacities of all concerned, suggests Emma Dickison, president of Home Helpers, one of the nation's leading home care franchises. It specializes in comprehensive services for seniors, new and expectant mothers, those recovering from illness or injury, and individuals facing lifelong challenges, with its sole mission being to make life easier for its clients.

Learn More

For a copy of the free Home Helpers guide "Eight Ways to Start the Conversation," visit <http://homehelpershomecare.com/resources/tough-talks>.