



Ask an Expert When Choosing Where To Live, Check Your “Fit”

Question: My husband died last year, and I am feeling lonely in house where we lived for most of our marriage. My friend has asked me whether I might consider moving into a retirement community, as she has, but I have so many questions. I have visited my friend at her assisted living home, and I know that I would not want to live there. I want to avoid a bad retirement home. How do I choose a place that is right for me?

There are no "bad" retirement living places, but there are bad fits. As you sort through your retirement living options, here are some of the worries that may come up for you.

- What if I don't like where I am living?
- What if I don't get along with the people there?
- What if I'm unhappy with the food, or the way it's prepared?
- What if I don't get the care that I'm paying for?

Start Your Research Early

These questions are valid ones that you should ask yourself as you research potential retirement residences. Now is the time to start investigating, before you "need" to move. You will have more time, less pressure to make a decision and more selection, as your ideal place may have a waiting list.

Several Types of Living Arrangements

Keep in mind that there are numerous types of living arrangements that cater to seniors. Some feature mainly independent living, others take care of meals and others step in to take care of the physical/medical needs of seniors as they get older. You may decide to live in a more independent situation now, and choose a higher level care later. Sometimes senior living places specialize in one or the other, in which case you may move after a few years to more involved care, and sometimes it's all available at once facility. Which you choose is a matter of personal preference.

Bring a Trusted Advisor

Bring a friend, family member or other trusted advisor with you as you look for a new home. If meals are prepared for the residents, see if you can arrange to have a meal in the dining room. Take a look at the social activities - does it match your current interests? Is it close to places you currently like to spend your time, or to people you want to keep in touch with?

Remember: This Doesn't Have to Be Forever

While moving always brings with it some changes, if you are ever in a situation where you "don't fit", or your needs can no longer be met, it's ok to look for something different. You have already done the difficult work of downsizing once, and a subsequent move is usually much easier, especially if you have caring professionals working with you. The most important factor is your health, comfort and happiness.

Call Changing Places at 250-721-4490 for a free consultation. We're always happy to hear from you!