

SOONER OR LATER?

Have you been thinking that someday you'll look into living in a community like a Life Plan Community? Its one of those things you can think about after you retire and do all the things you want to do before moving into a "retirement" community. Who says you should wait to move into a Life Plan Community until its physically necessary? Let's look into why you would want to move in sooner than later.

Determining when you may want to consider moving to a senior living community is a very complicated decision process. Many people wait for a crisis to occur before considering such a move; while others plan and move before something happens. Planning requires that you look 'realistically' into the crystal ball.

Life Plan Communities are not nursing homes.

At the root of the timing question is the misconception that senior living communities are nursing homes and by moving to a retirement community, you will be losing your independence. Senior living communities offer a wide spectrum of services and amenities, including dining, social activities, fitness & wellness programs so residents can keep active and healthy longer.

Financial

Understand entrance fees. Life Plan Communities typically charge an entrance fee. For instance, you might pay a set amount for a two-bedroom place. When you move out or die, a certain percentage may go back to your estate. Ask what the entrance fee is and then look at how many more years you plan to work. If the entrance fee is higher than you expected, you might be able to pay for it now and then replenish your savings in the next few years with your income.

Check your current bills. If you live in an older, large home that requires an ample amount of upkeep, you might find it more expensive to stay in it while working. Upcoming repairs, such as replacing the roof or fixing the main floor, could translate to high future investments. If home maintenance costs are high and keeping up with the house bills is getting you down, it may be time to sell your primary residence and move sooner rather than later.

Consider these extended costs of maintaining your own home. Do the financial work and then compare to the costs of living in a retirement community.

Health

Try to imagine your life in 5 to 10 years from now. Looking in the crystal ball, you need to think about a scenario when you may not drive anymore or if your health starts to change, how will you manage? Try to imagine what your life will be like in a year if you or your spouse passes away or requires care. This may be difficult to for you to do, but it will help you develop your plan. It is important that you are realistic, so you thoroughly think through this process.

Who's going to change the light bulbs?

There are people who elect to “stick it out” in their own homes. This creates a tremendous burden on their family and friends. There is a great deal of loneliness and isolation that occurs and a level of vulnerability of abuse from outsiders. Access to services is limited and expensive, plus simple chores like driving to the grocery store or picking up your prescription medication becomes a major challenge. Home maintenance and repairs become major issues and a source of exploitation from unscrupulous vendors.

It is always better to be 5 years to early than 5 minutes to late.

Friendships

Create friendships while you're still younger, so they are strong as you age. If you're in your sixties or beyond, friendships aren't just the social glue and glitz of life. As you get older, good friendships can dispel loneliness, improve your health, boost your sense of well-being, and even add to your years. Loneliness stemming from having too few friends doesn't just potentially spiral you into a state of depression; it could even shorten your lifespan. For adults over 60, loneliness seems to increase the risk of dying earlier, according to a study in JAMA Internal Medicine, “Friendships Keep Your Brain Sharp.”

A study published in October 2018 in the Journals of Gerontology: Series B, similarly found that loneliness is associated with a 40 percent increased risk of dementia among participants in the ongoing “Health and Retirement Study.”

Friends encourage you to eat well, to get your checkups and exercise, and to go to the health club or play with your dog.

Other Considerations

Many senior living communities have medical acceptance criteria to be considered for residency. This is a very important factor to consider. People who wait for a crisis to occur or have progressive medical conditions are frequently denied residency.

If you are a couple, you need to look after each other and protect one another in case one of you requires care. More importantly, you need to make sure the healthy spouse has their future care plan in place. Unfortunately, many people fail to consider this scenario and the healthy spouse ends up in a dire situation (medically, socially and financially) after the non-healthy spouses passes away.

Am I'm ready to consider a move to a Life Plan Community?

The majority of persons that have moved to a senior community, have said prior to their move that they are not ready. It is a mantra that we hear all the time. “I love where we live, and I don't see any need to do anything right now.” “We're just not ready.”

If you speak with these folks today, 99.9% of them will tell you that it was the best decision they ever made, they only wished they would have made it sooner. So, here are intelligent and successful people all saying the same thing... “we wish we would have done it when we were younger .”

When is the right time?

There are different time frames to consider. When do you want to start your research, when do you see yourself narrowing down your choices and when do you want to move? By doing your research early, you may find that there is a waiting list or planning expansions or construction.

If you have a long-term plan to move, try to figure out what needs to occur between now and this date in the future to make you ready. Remember, you can always continue to work.

Select, don't settle

By selecting a senior living community before your health changes, you can choose the place that fits your needs and lifestyle the best. The longer you wait, the less selection you will have. If you are considering a new community, you can pick your desired location and floorplan, get medically accepted and have time to sell your home.

You don't have to retire. You can still work, travel and volunteer.

More people are either coming out of retirement and returning to the workforce or postponing retirement indefinitely. Some of the reasons may be financial, and others include staying active and involved and enjoying what they do. Some people see it as an opportunity for an encore career or to try something new.

One of the benefits of working in retirement is that you may have options you didn't have before. That could be doing a similar job to the one you had previously, just part-time, or trying a field you've wanted to explore. Maybe now you can work for your heart and not for the money.

Living in a Life Plan Community will likely save you a lot of time on yard care, cleaning and home maintenance – leaving you more time to explore your other interests, hobbies and travel.

See the costs you will save by moving in sooner than later.

Property taxes	Personal emergency response system
Security service	Various transportation options
Home, garden and pool maintenance and repair	Paid companion services
Water and refuse	Plentiful home grown fruits and vegetables
Food expenses reduced (main meal in the dining room)	Utility costs reduced – due to home energy upgrades
Fitness club membership	In-home healthcare: (included in your Monthly Resident Fee) includes house calls, lab-blood draws, assistance with doctor's offices and more.
Reading subscriptions reduced and/or eliminated	

Benefits of Moving into Pilgrim Place.

Pilgrim Place appeals to those who are committed to peace, justice and care of the Earth. These values are represented by the volunteering opportunities in which you can contribute.

What Pilgrim Place in Claremont offers:

- Walking distance to essential services
- Great location – 30 miles east of downtown LA
- Walking distance the Claremont Colleges
- Access to public transportation and the Metrolink
- Friends and a built in support system
- Activities that are intellectually stimulating
- Healthy ageing
- Good nutrition
- Access to health and wellness programs
- Exercise center
- Swimming pool
- Freedom from the responsibility of home up-keep
- Removal of the burden of finding reliable maintenance people
- Access to health care through the continuum
- A safety net

Final thoughts.

There's no reason to wait to move to Pilgrim Place later than sooner. You can do all the things you want to do from here! Find new friends, share time with like-minded people, work, volunteer and travel. We'll be here for you when you're ready.



PILGRIM PLACE

"Fostering a vibrant and inclusive senior community committed to Justice, Peace and care of the Earth"

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