



Live a
simpler,
safer,
less cluttered
life.

Solo vs Partnered **Aging**

Partnered Aging

- Spouse
- Live-in Children
- Room-mate(s) –The Golden Girls



Concerns of Partnered Aging

- How to manage health of partner
- Being care-giver means sacrificing your own self care
- Assumption by others that you don't need additional support – when you may need more
- If holding hands, if one falls, the other does too – often on top of the original person
- One person's medical/housing/mental health needs can wipe out the savings so nothing left for survivor
- Medical equipment clutter can cause trip and fall issues
- Keeping medication separated so you don't take each others meds. Color? Type of container? Names on top of bottles?

Solo Aging

If you have always been a solo ager, you won't have the grief and loss of the partner but you still need to prepare for your future needs. The odds are that at some point you will need someone else to manage for you, either temporarily or permanently

Mental Health of newly Solo

- Grieving loss of partner
- Feeling abandoned once initial period of offers of help has passed
- Being confused over the finances, technology, home care needs etc. that the other person took care of. It is common to make bad decisions now. Who can you trust to help? Are they willing to double check you?



Safety

- Do you have a special identifying word or phrase to ensure someone calling is who they say they are?
- Do you have good lighting inside and outside the house?
- Do you have cameras so you can see who is outside before you open the door?
- Are you staying up on the current scams being used against seniors?
- Are you shredding/ disposing of your paperwork appropriately?
- Do you have someone to check in with daily?
- Consider combination door locks – register with the county fire dept.

Fall Risk safety measures

- Emergency Button with fall detection
 - Watch – dedicated medical alert watch or smartwatch
 - Charge during the day while awake
- Daily check in call with friend/family member
- Declutter to avoid tripping or entrapment
- Add safety devices like grab bars in places other than shower (rated for 250lb min)
 - Near toilet
 - Next to door to garage steps
 - In pantry where you reach for upper shelves



Medications

- Management of your medications. Create lists, presort into daily boxes, keep in prescription boxes, Have a medical book, etc.
- Reminders to take them
- Pill dispensers? Pill packs?
- Different color containers for different time of day?



Finances

- When are the bills due? Some are monthly, some quarterly, some annually.
- How are they paid? Online, payment app, mailed out?
- What incomes/investments do you have and how do you access them?
- What is the budget you regularly spend?
- Do you have an emergency fund?
- What are all the passwords?
- Do you have/need an accountant? A Daily Money Manager?

Legal

- Who is your POA now that the partner is gone?
Do you want it to stay the same?
- Do you need to re-do your legal paperwork to set new successor positions? It's a good time to review your documents anyway.
- Do you need to find a Professional Trustee or Executor?
- Do you have a schedule for how often to update your documents?



Health Care Management

- Medical POA
- Care Manager



Travel

- Local travel
 - How do you get to where you need to be?
 - If you don't drive, is there public transportation?
 - Can you hire a ride share company? A Taxi company?
 - Can a friend take you?
- Long Distance travel
 - Making plans to travel alone –more complex when going alone. Safety. Does your monitoring equipment work where you are going?
 - Finding groups to travel with
 - Planning what to do if sick or injured on the trip and cannot finish it

If you go to the hospital

- Who has keys to your house?
- Where is the POA/DNR/ living will info for the first responders to find?
- Who can take care of your pets?
- Who can take care of your under-age children (grandchildren)
- When is trash pick-up?



Technology

- Who can double check that you aren't dealing with scammers?
- Who can set up your systems, repair them, perform backups, apply patches for you?



Home maintenance

- Changing filters on HVAC system, water purifiers, car, etc.
- Vent cleanings
- Inspections and Repairs to inside and outside of house. HVAC, checking for wood rot on porch, siding, stairs, roof, solar panels etc.
- Plumbing repairs – do you know where to turn off the water to every piece in case of a pipe rupture? Where's the main shut off Valve?
- Do you know where the breaker box is and what to do with it?
- How often do you need to do maintenance on the various systems?
- Landscaping maintenance including watering system
- Pest control



Start Now

- Create a comprehensive plan, schedule the work in stages so you can spread out costs
- Learn how to do yourself – adult education classes, this series, ask a pro questions, have a friend teach you, etc. You still need to be prepared for a time you may need someone else to do it.
- Assume you will need help earlier than you planned
- Start researching before you need the help
- Ask friends and trusted professionals for referrals
- Inspect the work they have done for others – if possible

