

# THE GUIDE TO TALKING ABOUT **ASSISTED LIVING**

## HOW TO HAVE THE DIFFICULT CONVERSATION

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Sponsored by Sonata Senior Living



# Transitioning To Assisted Living:

## **5 STEPS FOR SUCCESS**

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# PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR FAMILIES

The thought of having to tell our parents that they can no longer live independently in the family home can be overwhelming and emotional. At [Sonata Senior Living](#), we understand how difficult this conversation can be and want to help.

Your parents may be feeling a mix of emotions and fear of the unknown about aging and change. Finding the courage to have the difficult conversation about their future health care needs is not easy, but at some point, it will be necessary, particularly if they are no longer safe living in the family home without assistance.

Our guide provides insight from experts on how to prepare yourself for the difficult conversation, set the right tone, handle resistance, cope with the transition, and take care of your mental health throughout the process.

**Sonata will provide you with the guidance and support you need to have an open, honest, and productive conversation with your parent. By approaching this discussion with compassion, patience, and planning, you can provide your parents with the support they need in this new phase of life.**

Are you ready to start the conversation?  
Our long-term care planning experts  
are ready to help you in the journey.  
Reach out for the help you need now.

**GET HELP NOW**





# PREPARING FOR THE TALK

As our parents age, it can be difficult to accept that they may need additional support beyond what we can provide. It can be even harder to bring up the topic of assisted living with them. To have a productive conversation with a successful outcome, you should prepare yourself beforehand. Here's how:

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**Process Emotions.** It can be an emotional time for both you and your parent, so be mindful of your own feelings. Take time to reflect on how you're feeling and try to process those emotions before your conversation. This will help you stay calm and focused.

**Do the Research.** When talking to your parent, it's essential to have all the information at your fingertips. Do your research before you initiate the conversation. Gather details about what an assisted living community can offer, the levels of care provided, and the cost of services. This will prepare you for questions your parent may ask and make the conversation more productive.

**Prepare for Resistance.** Remember that your parent's resistance to the idea of assisted living is not personal. They may feel like they are losing control and independence, which is difficult for anyone to accept. Be prepared to listen to their concerns and be sensitive to their fears.

**Involve Siblings.** If you have siblings, invite them to participate in the discussion. This will ensure everyone impacted is on the same page and can give you the support and confidence you'll need to move forward.





# SETTING THE TONE

When it comes to talking to your parent about assisted living, setting the right tone is crucial. You'll want your discussion to address their concerns, while emphasizing the benefits. Here are some suggestions for setting the tone.

**Start with Empathy.** It's important to show empathy for your parent's feelings. Acknowledge the fact that this is a challenging and emotional time for you both, but that you have their best interests and safety in mind. In fact, senior living is designed to keep older adults safe!

**Emphasize Benefits.** Assisted living will provide your parent with socialization opportunities, help with daily tasks, home maintenance, and assistance with personal care. Highlighting these benefits can help your parent understand the advantages of assisted living support.

**Quality of Life.** Share your concerns about your parent's safety honestly and respectfully. Let them know that you're motivated by love and want them to have the best possible quality of life. Share the three fundamental ways senior living can improve life for older adults.

**Stay Positive.** While it's important to convey concerns, focus on the positive aspects of assisted living. Remind your parent that this is an opportunity to enjoy new experiences, make new friends, and gain access to additional support that will make life easier.

**Address Fears and Concerns.** Your parent may have concerns about assisted living that are preventing them from considering it as a long-term care option. Be sure to address each one during the conversation or request a home visit from Sonata Senior Living to help facilitate the discussion.



# OVERCOMING RESISTANCE

You may have all the logical and practical reasons why a move to assisted living makes sense, but your parent has an emotional response based on a lifetime of living independently. It's not uncommon for a parent to resist the idea of moving into assisted living. Here are some suggestions to help ease their resistance.

**Provide Reassurance.** If your parent is resistant to the idea of assisted living, listen to their concerns and reassure them that their opinion matters. Assure them that you understand their perspective and that you're not trying to take away their independence.

**Address Concerns About Cost.** Your parent may worry about the affordability of assisted living, but it also presents an opportunity to educate them about the different types of assisted living contracts. A rental community with a lease option and monthly fee, for example, may be a better fit with their budget to avoid the large upfront fees associated with entrance-fee or "lifecare" communities.

**Levels of Care.** Your parents may appreciate knowing they will have access to care as they age. Many communities provide increasing levels of support in the community as health care needs change. Many older adults find this reassuring, knowing that onsite health care and wellness services will prevent the need to move again in the future.

**Involve a Professional.** Enlisting the help of a senior living community can help alleviate the pressure and stress of the conversation. The professionals at Sonata Senior Living can provide expert advice that can make the decision-making process easier for everyone.



# BUILDING TRUST

When discussing a transition to assisted living, it will be important to build trust with your parent and keep the lines of communication open. Moving to assisted living can be an emotional time for both the parent and the family. Here are some suggestions to make the transition as smooth as possible:

**Align Interests.** Make sure your parent is involved in the decision to move and choice of community. Ask for their input on the types of activities and amenities that interest them. They should feel included and valued. It will also ease anxiety associated with moving.

**Visit Communities.** Visit a few different assisted living communities to find the one that best suits your parent's needs and preferences. Take the time to explore the facilities, speak with staff and residents, and ask questions about services, care, and costs.

**Be Patient.** Remember that the transition to assisted living can take time. Your parent may need time to adjust to their new home and social circle. Be patient and supportive, and give them space as they navigate this new phase of life.

**Stay Connected.** Once your parent is moved in and settled in an assisted living community, it's important to stay connected. Visit frequently, call often, and continue to involve your parent in family activities and outings.

**Play Up The Positives.** Remind your loved one what they're gaining by moving to senior living in Florida. They'll enjoy a worry-free lifestyle with restaurant-style dining and plenty of amenities, plus home maintenance, housekeeping and laundry services. This allows ample time for enjoying life on their terms.





# PROTECTING MENTAL HEALTH

If you've been caring for an aging parent, you may already be experiencing stress and anxiety. Helping a parent move to assisted living is one of the best ways to prevent caregiver burnout. Whether you are caring for a parent at home or transitioning to assisted living, taking care of your mental health should come first so you can continue to be there for your loved ones.

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**Prevent Burnout.** As a caregiver focused on caring for your loved one, you may not recognize the symptoms of caregiver burnout. Providing care and helping a parent transition to assisted living is an act of love, but should not come at the expense of your own health. Learn the essential strategies for coping with caregiver stress.

**Practice Self Care.** Be sure to practice self-care during this stressful time. Eat a healthy diet, get enough sleep, exercise, and make time for hobbies and activities that you enjoy.

## Seek Support

It's important to remember that you're not solely responsible for the well-being of your parents. Caregiving is a difficult job and nobody can do it alone. Reach out to a senior living community like Sonata for resources and assistance. When you are ready, we're available to help.



## Give Up Guilt.

Take time to reflect on your relationship with your parent and how it may change when they move to an assisted living community.

Consider talking to a therapist if you're struggling with feelings of guilt or grief.

# REQUEST A HOME VISIT



Assisted living communities such as Sonata Senior Living offer families resources to navigate the difficult conversation about moving. One such resource is a home health and wellness visit. A home visit is an assessment performed by a senior living advisor or nurse and involves an evaluation of your parent's physical, mental, social, and emotional health.

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**Wellness Assessment.** During a home health and wellness visit, our advisor will provide an objective evaluation of your parent's needs and offer advice on the best course of action. They can also provide information about your care options, required paperwork, and more. The goal is to provide a recommendation that will meet your parent's long-term care needs.

**Needs Assessment.** Sonata Senior Living can help families better understand the different types of care available, such as independent living, assisted living, and memory care, and determine which level of care your parent may need.

**Medical History.** There are no forms required for a home visit, however, knowing your loved one's medical history can assist in the home health and wellness visit. It helps to have documentation related to your parent's medical history ready and available, including a list of medications, chronic illnesses, and doctors and specialists they may see.

**Moving Assistance.** Sonata Senior Living can offer valuable resources and support for families such as guidance on how to handle the transition to assisted living, help with downsizing and packing, or a moving service to make the transition smoother.

**Family Partnerships.** Sonata Senior Living cares for older adults like family by including family. In fact, an in-depth interview with family members is the first step of our partnership. Families provide important details about their loved one's history, cultural background, dining and activity preferences, spiritual needs, routines, hobbies, and habits.

Families are also given the opportunity to define what they believe a meaningful quality of life looks like for their loved one to ensure a successful transition to assisted living.



Sonata Senior Living is designed for all who believe each day should offer up more opportunities to live life to the fullest. With multiple independent living, assisted living and memory care communities throughout Florida, find a Sonata community near you to learn more.

**FIND A COMMUNITY**