

Retiring Well:

5 Tips for Planning a Purpose-Based Retirement

People often spend more time planning a vacation or researching a car purchase than they do on how they'll spend their time in retirement. But just as you've carefully planned for your financial well-being in retirement, it's important to plan for your personal well-being during your post-work years.

Retiring Well Starts With a Plan

Without a plan for life in retirement, many retirees may find themselves feeling a sense of discontent or that something is missing but not knowing what. So, whether you crave a life of relaxation or seek to put your passions to work helping others, you'll want to design the retirement you desire before you get there.

Here Are 5 Strategies to Help You Craft Your Plan:

1. Create a Schedule
2. Cultivate New Social Circles
3. Stay Active—Physically and Mentally
4. Spend Quality Time With Family
5. Meet With a Life Coach

1. Create a Schedule

If you're still working and feel constrained by a schedule-driven life, the last thing you may want to do is create a schedule for how to spend your time in retirement. Some retirees might intentionally decide not to plan and instead see where life takes them. But for most, there's a limit to the amount of puttering around the house, running errands and the like that they can fill their days with.

To create a schedule, start by asking a simple question: What do I want to do in this next phase of my life?

Retirement is a time to explore new options and pursue personal interests. Beyond striving to “stay busy” by stuffing your calendar with recreation, travel and classes, consider spending your time in meaningful ways that reinforce feelings of usefulness and purpose. Think about engaging in or deepening a spiritual or religious practice, beginning or expanding volunteering or continuing your education. Those who do report being healthier and happier and tend to live longer.

2. Cultivate New Social Circles

Preparing for retirement calls for an assessment of your social capital as much as your financial capital. Much of your social capital while working is built on relationships with coworkers and colleagues. But once you retire, some of those friendships may end, particularly if those friends are still working. Likewise, friendships with retirement-aged neighbors could be lost if they decide to downsize and move away or most of their time is spent caring for an elderly parent or spouse who is ill or incapacitated.

Try to avoid letting the loss of old friendships prevent you from making new friends. Although that can be harder to do when you're retired, volunteering, taking classes, joining clubs and serving on boards can provide opportunities to form new friendships. Given that your social network is one of the most important aspects of retirement well-being, you'll find it's worth the effort.

3. Stay Active—Physically and Mentally

Whether you've always put a premium on staying fit and healthy or could benefit from a fresh diet and exercise regimen, the phrase “use it or lose it” is particularly meaningful as you approach retirement or have recently retired.

Starting or maintaining good health habits now will pay dividends in the future in enhanced quality of life and perhaps a longer life. If you need advice on upping your game, searching the internet for diet and exercise tips or classes could be a good place to start. Of course, it's a good idea to consult with your doctor to make sure that whatever program you decide to follow is a sound one and right for you.

Equally important is keeping your mind sharp through intellectual pursuits. Consider learning how to play an instrument or speak a new language. Take up a new hobby that requires engaging your brain. Enroll in an intellectually challenging class or two at a local college. Dive into that stack of books on your nightstand. Research suggests that activities providing mental stimulation could be beneficial to your long-term cognitive health.

4. Spend Quality Time With Family

According to a 2020 thought leadership study by Edward Jones and Age Wave, the four pillars of retirement are: health, family, purpose and finances.¹ In keeping with that finding, retirees reported deriving their strongest sense of purpose from spending time with loved ones.

Just as your relationship with your spouse changed as your family grew and later evolved after your children left the nest, it also changes once you're retired. You're spending more time together and, in a way, reconnecting and getting to know one another again. You might find that when you start to talk about how you'd like to spend retirement, you're not in sync. So, it may be wise to begin these

conversations sooner to prevent discord later. And, if you're not married, retirement can be a good time to reconnect with extended family like cousins, aunts and uncles.

If you have children and grandchildren, retirement may also prompt changes in your relationships with them, such as deciding how much time you want to spend together.

5. Meet With a Life Coach

During your working years, you may have consulted a coach for advice on how to advance your career. If you've experienced bumps in your relationships with your spouse or children, you might have sought out the help of a personal relationship coach. But did you know that there are life coaches who specialize in helping you successfully transition to life after retirement?

You may expect the transition to be easy, but unless you have a plan, that might not be the case. It requires adjusting to a new life pace and lifestyle. And often, it means undertaking a thoughtful self-assessment to identify what you're most passionate about and how you'll pursue your passions to find and maintain a sense of purpose in retirement.

Given that almost half of new retirees struggle with finding purpose after leaving their job,² a life coach could help you ask the right questions, uncover answers and navigate the intangibles that could enable you to find value and purpose in how you spend your time in retirement.

Plan Well to Retire Well

Although retiring well starts with a thoughtful and thorough wealth plan that will put you on a sound financial footing when your working life ends, the personal side of your plan is just as important and can serve as a guide to allocating your assets so you can pursue your passions—and your purpose—in retirement.

For more information visit: marinerwealthadvisors.com

^{1,2} “[Longevity and the New Journey of Retirement](#)”

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