

Conversations to start now



Between ages sixty-five and seventy-five (“young-old”), you’re typically independent and clear about what matters most to you. That makes *now* the ideal time to talk with your family or chosen decision makers about your wishes for your future. Waiting until age eighty-five often means those conversations are driven by crisis, fear, or urgency. Starting as early as you can allows for calm and more thoughtful conversations.

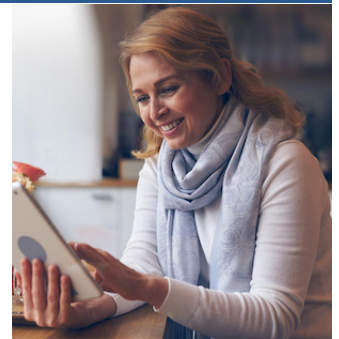
It’s helpful to use a values-based framework for these discussions. Reflect on what gives your life meaning. What does a good day look like? What supports your dignity and sense of purpose? Your answers provide context for these conversations and create a solid, personal foundation and roadmap for you and your support network.

Here are five topics for conversations to start sooner rather than later:

- **Roles, boundaries, and support.** Identify who in your family or network you would like to have help you—in the future—with financial oversight, healthcare decisions, appointments, or housing coordination. Ask them now whether they would be willing and able to do so. Discuss roles, limits, and privacy.
- **Health and future care preferences.** Even if you don’t have health issues now, this is the time to share your preferences for the future. Review/update and discuss your advance directive. Identify your healthcare proxy(s) and where you’d want to be cared for if very ill.
- **Living preferences and home safety.** Think about where and how you want to live in your later years. Would aging in place work with a few smart modifications? Or does a more social environment appeal to you? A move to be closer to family? And what would your budget allow?
- **Financial and legal planning.** Get your will, trust, and/or estate plan done! Then discuss them, not necessarily to reveal dollar amounts, but to orient others: where key documents live, who your estate-planning attorney and wealth manager are, and whether durable power of attorney is in place. Consider asset protection and whether you might need outside assistance in the future.
- **Transportation and driving transitions.** Most people stop driving years before they need other kinds of help. That’s wise, and hard. Talking about this early allows you to make an agreement with yourself about what signs would tell you it’s time to stop and what alternatives you’d use. To ease that transition, you might even investigate and practice rides, deliveries, or community transportation now.

Think of these conversations as *planning for possibilities*, not preparing for problems. You’re setting the stage so others can understand your values and support you *your way*.

Need a partner in planning? Give us a call at 913-213-8799.



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