

⇒ Your parents may object

Very few parents want to move away from home – theirs or yours – no matter how much help they need. It's a life-changing move.

As a son or daughter, it takes courage to say that you can no longer care for them safely. If you handle it wrong, they will object, saying "You want to get rid of me...I would rather die than go there...That's for old people...I won't go...You don't want me around anymore...I'm just a burden to you...I can't afford it." And more.

When I told Ma that she couldn't stay in the apartment and that I was going to move her to assisted living, she did the guilt trip on me. I tried to explain, but it fell on deaf ears (both literally and figuratively – she didn't wear her hearing aids)! But we worked it out, and it turned out great. It was the right decision. She was even eligible for Veteran's assistance since my Dad served in wartime.

⇒ Getting started – and a caution

If assisted living seems to make sense for your parents, then it's time to get help. But, be careful!

There are a lot of internet companies that will collect your personal information and sell it to facilities. That can lead to a lot of phone calls to you, and maybe even your parents.

When I started my search, I didn't even know what to look for, and there was no one to guide me. My husband went online and downloaded brochures, but when I went for visits I often left disappointed and confused. After many days of effort, I did find just the right place, or so I thought. It wasn't.

⇒ I will help you – at no cost

Once you've decided that assisted living is right for Mom or Dad, it's time to find the right place in the right location. Surprisingly, cost is not usually a major problem – many parents will be eligible for Medicaid or VA assistance if needed. I will brief you on that.

I'll introduce you to key people at assisted living communities that meet your needs. These are people that I know and trust.

You'll save a great deal of time by working with me, and it is likely that you will pay less for assisted living than if you do the search on your own.

I'll coach you about how to talk with your parents about assisted living, when to take them for a visit, and how to move them in.

And I'll also recommend others with whom you might want to speak, such as an elder-law attorney.

There is no cost to you for my help. I am compensated by a group of personally-selected assisted living communities. For some of my placements I receive nothing at all except the satisfaction of helping families in a difficult time.

Carol

Email or call Carol for help
carol@ask-carol.com
1-732-982-1616
www.seniorlivingguidance.com



Carol's Guide to Assisted Living

*Is it the right choice?
How much does it cost?
When is the right time?
Where can I get help?*

Call Carol!
REAL PERSON, REAL EXPERIENCE

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Days, Evenings, and Weekends

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MOST OF US face the physical and mental issues of aging parents, and we go through the same difficult thought processes as we struggle for solutions that work for the entire family.

Unfortunately, many of us wait much too long to make important decisions. My own story is below and I hope it helps you. Feel free to email or call me for help. Or visit my website.

⇒ **The usual scenario**

Aging parents usually live at home until a major emergency strikes, and even then they often return home after recuperation. That can cause problems for both them and *you*.

After Dad died, Ma spent the next ten years living at home, alone, while I lived 300 miles away. She fell twice, breaking a shoulder each time. Whenever she got injured or sick, I went to visit, leaving my family.

When parents can no longer take care of each other, many move in with their children (or vice-versa). For some this works – for a while.

My husband and I relocated to New Jersey and moved in with Ma. But she was used to her independence and none of us was happy. She wanted to move to an apartment, and we went along with that. Big mistake! She fell there, and broke her hip.

The next and often final move is often into a nursing home. The cost is unbelievable.

After surgery and a short stay in the hospital, Ma was moved to rehabilitation in a nursing home. It was nice, as nursing homes go, but it wasn't at all like home. And, it would be terribly expensive once Medicare ran out.

⇒ **There is a better way**

Seniors are staying healthy longer, but still often need more help than they have at home. Home health care is one alternative, but it is very intrusive, expensive, and can be unreliable.

I knew that when Ma reached the end of her rehabilitation she would still need help, but I didn't want her to stay in the nursing home, so I decided to let her go back to her apartment and hired live-in help from an agency. That didn't work out, so I looked for an alternative. A nurse told me about assisted living and I started checking into it. I liked it.

Assisted living communities differ from nursing homes by offering suite-type rooms or even apartments, community dining, recreation activities, trips and more.

They have a nurse on duty for emergencies and medications. Surprisingly, assisted living is much less expensive than a nursing home.

Once I made the decision to move Ma into assisted living, I started visiting local ones. I quickly realized I should have started sooner. It was time-consuming and confusing.



⇒ **Getting down to the basics**

Unless you have the ability and desire to deal with the continuing emergencies of illness, falls, and worse, then your parents *will* be better off and happier in an assisted living community.

They will get good care, make new friends, stay active, and enjoy life, probably more than before. There will be less stress for everyone.

It isn't just the needs of your parents that are important – it's yours. And if you don't think about that, you can make a very bad decision that may cost you not only your parent's health and well-being, but your own.

As soon as I visited an assisted living community, I knew that it was the right thing, both for Ma's health and mine. So at that point my energy was directed at finding the right one for her – and her boyfriend, who wanted to stay near her. It was a lot of work.

⇒ **What about Home Care?**

Parents like the idea of home care, but it is a very expensive 'solution.' Your parents need socialization, exercise, activities and medical attention that they don't get with home care. The aides come and go, and your parent may need as many as four different ones during the week for full time care. My advice usually is, don't do it.

⇒ **Timing is everything**

Most assisted living facilities will take your parents only if they are somewhat mobile and do not require constant care. Walkers and canes are acceptable, and often wheelchairs. If you wait too long, a nursing home will be your only option.